

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) PLANNING AND PRE-IMPLEMENTATION

The Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) provides comprehensive supports to districts and schools as they engage in Planning and Pre-Implementation Activities. CEC's support in this area has three key features:

- **Collaborative Relationships**

CEC's work is firmly grounded in the concept that effective school change is only possible when the "three anchors" of the school board, school district leadership, and teachers union representatives are working effectively together. CEC works with SIG districts and schools, in addition to other schools and districts across the country, to develop and support this essential collaborative relationship.

- **Comprehensive System Assessments**

CEC's team can facilitate comprehensive audits of curricular areas (ELA, math, and others, as well as both regular and special ed) and systems (such as school and/or district policies and structures). CEC, with its partner SMART Learning Systems, also recommends school and district training on the SMART School Improvement Process. The training includes work off-site in a cohort and on-site coaching visits from a certified SMART school coach. CEC's system assessment process includes organizational self-study, written assessment, site visits, and collaboratively written feedback based on continuous improvement criteria that integrate with the Baldrige Performance Excellence Criteria, the Characteristics of a Professional Learning Community, or the 5Essentials for School Success.

- **Coaching and Training for Sustainable Implementation**

CEC helps SIG teams to form effective School and District Leadership teams to plan, implement, align, and sustain SIG transformation work. In addition, CEC is a leader in implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) at the school level.

CEC's model is based on more than 20 years of work in schools in Illinois and nationally and is founded on research-based best practices, including the work of DuFour and Eaker, Charlotte Danielson, W. Patrick Dolan, Michael Fullan, Saul Rubinstein and others. CEC serves as the lead partner on several current SIG grants, and is a nationally recognized leader in the field of labor-management collaboration.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) GOVERNANCE

The Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) provides comprehensive supports to districts and schools to implement effective Governance structures for SIG transformation work.

CEC begins by establishing collaborative structures and processes to support a **shared leadership model** within SIG schools. CEC works with districts and schools to create four teams that work collaboratively to oversee the entire SIG transformation process:

- **Professional Learning Communities** (classroom level)
- **School Leadership Team** (school level)
- **District Leadership Team** (district level)
- **Partnership Council for Continuous Improvement** (community level)

As new structures and practices implemented in classrooms and schools begin to “stick” and show improvement in student performance, the aligned communication of these teams will allow these practices to be expanded throughout the district to ensure that results will be comprehensive and widespread.

In addition, CEC works with the District Leadership Team to develop systems to monitor progress, support fidelity of implementation, identify and address barriers to effective implementation, and identify and report successes. CEC provides on-site organizational facilitators in SIG schools, as well as a Transformation Project Manager, who coordinates efforts within the district.

To produce long-term sustainable and systemic change, the school change strategy must include the surrounding community. The community-level Partnership Council for Continuous Improvement will bring together representatives of the administration, board of education, union leadership, school staff, and parent and community leaders to focus on changes that impact the individual school as well as systemic issues that impact the entire community. It will identify areas where learning from SIG schools can be shared across the district, as well as with community partners, in ways that encourage opportunities to share resources more effectively throughout the schools, district and community.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) **OPERATIONAL FLEXIBILITY**

CEC's work is firmly grounded in the concept that effective school change is only possible when the "three anchors" of the school board, school district leadership, and teachers union representatives are working effectively together. By supporting these relationships, CEC helps ensure that SIG schools and districts can negotiate effectively about changes to operational structures to support transformation efforts.

CEC has worked with districts to establish operational flexibility in many areas, including:

- **Staffing** (e.g. adding staff to support SIG initiatives, transferring teachers who are not a good fit for the transformation, redefining and reallocating staffing positions)
- **Time** (e.g. use of in-service days, adjusting school day/year, adding time for collaborative professional development and common planning time)
- **Capital Budgets** (e.g. prioritizing building facility improvements)
- **Evaluation systems** (e.g. implementation of new feedback systems for teachers, incorporating measures of student growth, effective use of formative and summative feedback to improve teaching & learning)

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**Consortium for Educational Change (CEC)
TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION
WITH STUDENT GROWTH COMPONENT**

CEC has worked with over 100 Illinois districts to develop and refine teacher evaluation systems since the passage of the 2010 Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA). CEC supports this work with a cadre of trainers and facilitators across Illinois, including CEC consultants, school and teacher leaders, and union staff members.

CEC is the lead agency of the Illinois Performance Evaluation Growth Through Learning Partnership Group, and has received the contract from the State of Illinois to develop a pre-qualification training program and assessments for both professional practice and student growth (www.growththroughlearningillinois.org.) In addition, CEC has worked with union partners to put in place the Illinois Teacher Evaluation and Development Program (ITED), providing a comprehensive guidebook (<http://ited.cecillinois.org/>) for district joint committees designing teacher evaluation systems that include student growth measures.

CEC sees teacher and principal evaluation as part of a collaborative structure for comprehensive school reform, not simply as an accountability tool. Using a research-based 360 model, CEC helps districts align the teacher and principal evaluation systems to focus on developing a culture of continuous improvement. The primary levers for change are focus on student growth, data-driven goal setting, quality observations, effective formative and summative feedback, school-based professional communities, a 360 administrator evaluation, relationships between the principal and the teachers, and professional development based on identified needs.

CEC is a state leader in teacher and principal evaluation, and has worked with SIG districts to refine their evaluation systems to include student growth as a significant factor, multiple observation-based assessments of performance, ongoing collection and analysis of student achievement results, teacher ratings with high standards and expectations, and collaboration with teachers, staff, and principals.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC)
RECRUITMENT, HIRING, AND RETENTION INCENTIVES AND STRATEGIES

CEC's work is firmly grounded in the concept that effective school change is only possible when the "three anchors" of the school board, school district leadership, and teachers union representatives are working effectively together. By supporting these relationships, CEC helps ensure that SIG schools and districts can negotiate effectively about changes to hiring and retention strategies.

CEC has worked in SIG districts to recognize and reward highly effective teaching, increase opportunities for career growth, and support the recruitment, placement, and retention of staff with the skills necessary to support the transformation model and improve student achievement.

Some examples, which might vary based on district needs, include:

- Flat rate salary increases for teachers in SIG schools to support teacher investment in transformation efforts
- Operational flexibility around teacher planning time
- Financial incentives for excellent teachers to serve as mentors or coaches for new and improving teachers
- New avenues for career advancement for veteran teachers
- Financial incentives for teachers who serve on SIG and other transformation committees.

CEC also works with districts to develop a comprehensive data system to collect and analyze program implementation and impact, in order to evaluate and refine the program's return on investment in the long term.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC)
REWARDS ASSOCIATED WITH IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT OR
GRADUATION RATE

CEC works with districts to create a shared leadership governance model, including structures, processes, and staffing to support and sustain a culture of learning focused on improving teacher practice and student achievement. In this shared leadership model, opportunities are created for effective teachers to become leaders in their buildings.

These teacher leaders become qualified for these roles based on a Teacher Evaluation System that includes measures of student growth, and may also be nominated for these roles by administrators or peers. These new roles come with financial incentives, and CEC helps districts identify the best way to structure these (i.e. one-time rewards vs salary adjustments). One example of using the Teacher Evaluation System to reward improved student achievement is to create enhanced roles for teachers receiving high evaluation ratings. These qualified teachers can become certified and trained to provide feedback on instructional practice by completing the Growth Through Learning training. In this way, excellent teachers are rewarded for their performance while simultaneously taking on leadership roles to benefit other teachers.

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Consortium for Educational Change (CEC)
EXTENDED TIME

CEC's work is firmly grounded in the concept that effective school change is only possible when the "three anchors" of the school board, school district leadership, and teachers union representatives are working effectively together. By supporting these relationships, CEC helps ensure that SIG schools and districts can negotiate effectively about changes to instructional time and explore multiple options to expand time for student learning and faculty collaboration.

Working from an in-depth systems audit of SIG schools and districts, CEC can help create a plan to increase instructional time, and leverage it to build an intervention and enrichment structure to increase academic achievement, attendance, graduation rates and social emotional needs

CEC, based on experience and the research of the National Center for Time and Learning, firmly believes that supporting time for teacher collaboration provides the most effective academic return on investment. Utilizing additional time for the faithful implementation of highly effective and sustainable Professional Learning Communities is an evidence-based investment in increased learning for students. Simply adding classroom minutes for students is unlikely to produce results, but when this is paired with additional time for teachers to learn from one another, examine data, and refine their practices in response to data, student achievement will increase.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC)
COMPREHENSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL REFORM

As a lead facilitator of the Teachers Union Reform Network (TURN), a network of union-district-school collaborative teams focused on improving effective teaching and student learning, CEC is uniquely positioned to help SIG schools and districts implement the highly regarded *On The Same Page 2.0: Field Guide for Implementing College and Career Ready Standards Through Labor-Management Collaboration*. This guide helps stakeholders at the district, school, and classroom level to “deeply implement higher, more rigorous standards systematically and systemically.” The Guide works through seven stages, each leading to a deeper, more comprehensive instructional reform:

Stage 1: Forming Committees/Teams

Stage 2: Understanding and Implementing Standards

Stage 3: Determining Assessment Methods and Practices

Stage 4: Aligning Instructional Practices with Standards and Assessments

Stage 5: Reviewing and Selecting Resources

Stage 6: Engaging Parents/Guardians and Community

Stage 7: Establishing a System for Continuous Improvement

In SIG districts, CEC has helped teams to unpack the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for ELA and mathematics, Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and Illinois Learning Standards (ILS) in other subjects. CEC also facilitates the work of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to examine the progression of learning from grade to grade for vertical alignment, and to “repack” the standards into coherent instructional units.

In addition, CEC helps schools implement data-based intervention systems to support students at all levels of mastery and readiness, and provides comprehensive assessment, literacy, and development training that supports educators to identify and write rigorous assessments.

CEC is a state leader in teacher evaluation work, and a comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Plan is a key component of its approach to instructional reform. The process is designed to promote professional dialogue about instructional improvement between teachers and between teacher and evaluators.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) JOB EMBEDDED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CEC is a leader in the implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), a framework for high quality job-embedded professional development that empowers and engages teachers in collaborative conversations focused on improving teaching effectiveness and student learning. This approach is ongoing, rather than episodic, and encourages organic opportunities for coaching and leadership development. CEC believes strongly in a coaching model for professional learning, where teachers quickly develop the capacity to create continuous improvement within their PLCs, rather than simply talking about it in isolated professional development sessions.

CEC's Framework for High Performing Organizations in Schools and Districts as well as the *On the Same Page 2.0 Field Guide* inform CEC's work with SIG districts and schools around professional development in three key areas:

- School culture
- Data-based decision-making
- Instructional alignment.

CEC works with districts to align professional development with the school's transformation plan, ensures that LEAs provide the needed operational flexibility to implement PLCs effectively, and implements a PD plan that builds on the expertise of the administration, staff, and teachers. CEC's approach ensures a focus on student learning with a constant eye on outcomes, as well as effective collaboration among professionals.

In addition, CEC is a leader in principal leadership development, and works effectively with principals and assistant principals in their growth as transformational leaders. CEC provides job-embedded coaching and mentoring for school leadership in tandem with its work with teachers to ensure that the entire school is working effectively to implement the transformation.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) USE OF DATA TO DRIVE INSTRUCTION

CEC recognizes the importance of good data to school transformation, and works with schools to implement comprehensive data collection systems to inform and drive instructional practice.

This support is provided in four basic areas:

- **Supporting PLC Teams:** CEC assists PLCs as they learn to effectively analyze data on reading, math, and student behavior. This includes training in the SMART School Improvement Process to identify the Greatest Areas of Need (GAN) for setting and assessing goals. CEC also trains PLCs in the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle.
- **Data Management System:** CEC consultants and partners can work with schools to implement a technology-based data management system, or upgrade and streamline an existing system, in order to collect and disseminate data to drive dialogue about student performance and instructional improvement.
- **Aligned Assessment System:** As part of its support of comprehensive instructional reform at SIG schools, CEC works with schools to align their assessments horizontally and vertically, including both formative and summative assessment processes.
- **Data-Driven School Improvement:** CEC helps SIG schools implement a School Improvement Plan (SIP) Cycle that includes school-wide data reviews based on key indicators, measures, and targets aligned to the school improvement goals set through the SMART School Improvement Process.

CEC is a state leader in the incorporation of student growth measures in teacher and principal evaluation systems. CEC is the lead agency of the Illinois Performance Evaluation Growth Through Learning Partnership Group, and has received the contract from the State of Illinois to develop a pre-qualification training program and assessments for both professional practice and student growth (www.growththroughlearningillinois.org.) In addition, CEC has worked with union partners to put in place the Illinois Teacher Evaluation and Development Program (ITED), providing a comprehensive guidebook (<http://ited.cecillinois.org/>) for district joint committees designing teacher evaluation systems that include student growth measures.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) PROGRAM MONITORING

CEC recognizes the importance of collaborative relationships in ensuring fidelity of program implementation, and works with SIG districts to create effective teams for progress monitoring. CEC will meet monthly with teachers, students, parents, community members, school administration, union leadership, and district administrators to make sure that all stakeholders are able to communicate their analysis of that month's successes and areas of improvement.

Progress monitoring will be organized to focus in key areas/initiatives of the transformation, and includes components such as:

- Classroom learning visits
- Programmatic audits
- Stakeholder interviews
- Data collection and analysis
- Action planning

In addition, CEC, the principal, and school leadership will engage in weekly short-term progress monitoring meetings to ensure accountability. CEC can help SIG schools implement a data dashboard to assess leading indicators of progress toward meeting and exceeding LEA and SEA goals set through the SMART School Improvement Process. These meetings might include a review of targets from priority areas identified the previous week or month, as well a creative problem-solving sessions to create action plans and allocate resources to make sure progress is made.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC)
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

CEC works with schools to employ a variety of family and community engagement strategies. A key strategy that CEC has used with success in districts with SIG schools is a Partnership Council for Continuous Improvement (CCI) whose intent is to bridge the community with the schools. These councils include members from the LEA, school administration, faculty and staff, students, parents, community leaders and business owners, and are determined through a series of community forums and with invitation from the district. CEC supports the development and implementation of the CCI, provides training for CCI members, and facilitates CCI meetings. In addition, CEC helps CCIs from across the state and nationally network with one another to share best practices.

CEC is committed to helping SIG schools implement a comprehensive approach to whole child wellness, through its work as a lead partner on the Southland Education and Health Initiative. This work has given CEC a wealth of resources and knowledge on the impact of inadequate primary health, lack of parent involvement, and Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs), and effective strategies for involving the family and community to reverse this cycle.

CEC will work with the CCIs of SIG schools to develop an integrated Communications and Outreach Plan to inform, involve, and include parents, guardians, businesses, school partners, and civic and religious groups. The communication plan will convey the goals and objectives of the transformation, and will be translated as needed to fully involve parents whose first language is not English. It will identify areas where learning from the SIG school can be shared across the district, as well as with community partners, in ways that encourage opportunities to share resources more effectively throughout the schools, district and community.

In addition, CEC works with SIG schools and districts to create opportunities to engage parents, community members, and organizations, including quarterly meetings to review school performance with respect to the SMART goals, special efforts to involve hard-to-reach parents, events to welcome and inform newcomers, a range of academic and non-academic family involvement opportunities, and opportunities to use the school building for family and community meetings.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) SUSTAINABILITY

CEC is deeply committed to capacity-building in its partner schools. By working to build ongoing collaborative structures, including working partnerships between key district and union representatives, CEC aims to ensure that the work of the SIG grant is carried forward seamlessly after the grant period is ended. CEC also provides a process and tools for an annual cost/benefit analysis with a focus on academic return on investment. This process allows LEAs to effectively determine which resources need to be reallocated or sustained through other funds, and to prioritize academic and social interventions, personnel investments, and non-personnel investments to sustain lasting transformation.

At every level of its work with SIG partners, CEC builds sustainability planning into its process. Some examples include:

Professional Learning Communities

Rather than focusing on high-cost one-off professional development with little long term impact, CEC focuses on establishing effective PLCs within SIG schools. These groups, once trained and established, are an ongoing locus of high quality professional development that has great impact on student achievement.

Progress Monitoring

CEC supports SIG schools and districts in creating effective data-driven progress monitoring systems that enable effective sustainability planning by identifying the cost-benefit ratio of various interventions, allowing districts to prioritize resources and staffing more effectively.

Partnership Council for Continuous Improvement

To produce long-term sustainable and systemic change, the school change strategy must include the surrounding community. CEC will also work with the district and union leadership to establish a Partnership Council for Continuous Improvement which will bring together representatives of the administration, board of education, union leadership, school staff and parent and community leaders to focus on changes that impact the individual school as well as systemic issues that impact the entire community. It will identify areas where learning from the SIG school can be shared across the district, as well as with community partners, in ways that encourage opportunities to share resources more effectively throughout the schools, district and community. In addition, the council can work on creating conditions for success, ensuring sustained commitment, monitoring implementation, and proactively engaging the community.

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) LEAD PARTNER

Founded in 1987, CEC has dedicated itself for almost 30 years to assisting schools and districts through its twin pillars of *collaboration* and *capacity-building*. CEC's work in school districts is predicated on its ability to work with the "three anchors" — the board of education, the school administration, and the teacher' union. Years of experience and research have shown that this three-pronged approach is an essential precondition for sustainable school change.

CEC is an experienced SIG lead partner having worked with a number of Illinois schools and districts in the implementation of SIG. The CEC teams supporting SIG work are guided by the organization's vision which is to be a best practice exemplar of a system of support to build capacity in districts and schools in Illinois and across the country in order to move them to higher levels of performance. The work of SIG-support teams is built upon three CEC core values -- **Purposeful Collaboration, Research-based, Effective Practices and Interactive Partnerships.**

CEC SIG-support teams have identified a number of beliefs that are coherent with the overall mission and vision of CEC. These beliefs are reflected in the core values that provide the framework for CEC SIG-support team work with partnering schools and districts. These beliefs include:

- **All means all.** Every student can learn at high levels.
- **We own what we create.** All voices, including those of union members and leaders, must be in the conversations where we name and plan our work.
- **Effective leaders see themselves as learners.**
- **Every school is capable of improvement and excellence.** Teachers welcome the opportunity to improve practices that will enhance student learning.
- **Together, we all accomplish more when we collaborate.**
- **Students who own their own learning have the best chance to succeed.** A role of teachers is to partner with students to support their ownership of learning.

As a partner with schools and districts that strive to move to higher levels of performance, CEC's SIG-support teams build collaborative structures, processes, and cultures with and among key educational stakeholders, including labor and management, to transform educational systems to continuously improve student learning and achievement.