

Maximizing the Use of Teacher Time: A Toolkit

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POWERED BY



TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS

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“Fostering positive teacher working conditions is not only important for strengthening the well-being of teachers, but it is essential for promoting an equitable, high-quality education for all students.”

–2023 South Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey report

Explore the Survey and Toolkit

The overarching goal of the SC Teacher Working Conditions Survey (SCTWCS) is to assess conditions that affect teachers’ effectiveness, efficacy, and retention, providing a platform for teachers to share their perceptions. It also offers data that can help schools and districts support and retain staff.

Schools and school systems are often rich with data but can be short on opportunities to turn those data into actionable information that guides practices and policies. This toolkit is designed to help educators and other decision-makers find meaning in their survey data and integrate it into work already being done to improve schools, support all educators, and boost teacher retention.

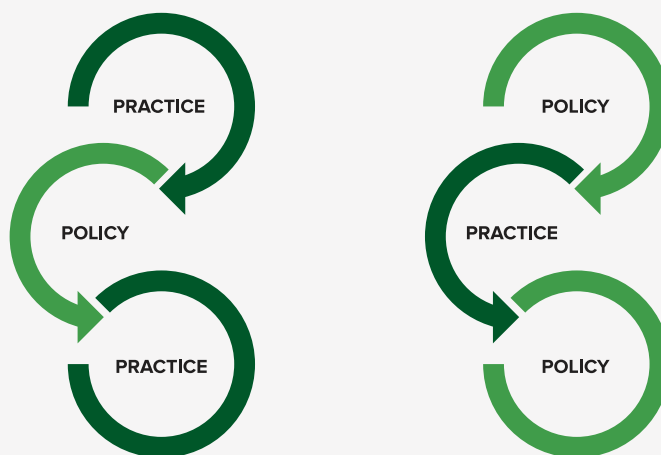


Figure 1. *Interplay Between Practice and Policy*

This toolkit is structured in a way that can move your team quickly from analysis to action on issues related to teacher time. In it, you will focus primarily on “microactions” that, when consistently applied, are likely to have a macro effect. Your team is encouraged to align these efforts with ongoing continuous improvement efforts. Our purpose with this toolkit is not to add another thing to your plate but rather to integrate these efforts with strategies that are already in motion.

You are strongly encouraged to engage with this toolkit with a team of educators who bring diverse perspectives and insights about working conditions. Engaging a team from the start of this work will build collective ownership which is more likely to result in collective impact.

As your team uses this toolkit, you will work through a cycle similar to the processes recommended in other school and district toolkits that are a part of this series:

These icons illustrate the cycle of acting and collaborating on SCTWCS data. Icons appear throughout this toolkit to signal which part of the cycle is the focus of the tool(s) and content on that page.

1. BUILD

a team that includes multiple perspectives.



3. SELECT

an area of focus for improvement.



5. IDENTIFY

actionable next steps to address a specific area of focus.



2. ANALYZE

data to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.



4. CONNECT

results with improvement efforts already in process.



To access the report for the SC Teacher Working Conditions Survey, visit sc-teacher.org/twc-survey.

Maximizing the Use of Teacher Time

Working through this toolkit will focus your team’s attention on how practices, policies, and decisions made can contribute to improving the use of teacher time, a working condition highlighted as a key area for improvement in the SCTWCS. It is intended for use by school or district teams to create plans for school or district efforts, rather than plans for individual educators. The focus is on creating conditions that support whole staffs of educators by structuring time for instruction, focus, and leadership—not shifting how those individuals structure the limited discretionary work time they have each day or week.

This section of the toolkit is intended for use by educators in both formal and informal leadership roles, who are responsible for addressing the use of teacher time in alignment with continuous improvement efforts. The first step is to define who is, or should be, part of this work. While administrators may initiate or lead efforts to improve teacher working conditions, you are encouraged to include at least two classroom teachers and one or more educators in other roles within your school who can provide insight into specific structures and schedules.

1. BUILD



+ BUILD A SCHOOL OR DISTRICT TEAM

Assemble a team of educators that represent diverse perspectives and areas of expertise to engage in the work of analyzing and addressing the demands on teachers’ time in your district or school. While survey data were gathered only from teachers, many members of a school’s staff—including education support professionals, coaches, and administrators—are likely to have helpful perspectives on opportunities for increasing the efficiency or decreasing the demands on teacher time. Improvement efforts will be stronger for the engagement of professionals in numerous roles. Using Worksheet 1 that follows, you will see recommendations for some perspectives and expertise that ideally would be included on the team.

It is important for each team member to understand that, while they have their individual experiences and expertise, the purpose of the work is to engage in continuous improvement efforts that can positively impact demands on teachers’ time across the school or district, not only situations that impact individuals or small groups.

As you build your team, consider where and how the work of addressing demands on teachers’ time may integrate with other structures within your school or district. Considering these questions will help you undertake this process in a way that itself uses time and expertise well:

- Does a team already exist with the recommended roles and perspectives as part of its composition?
- Is there a team that, with a few adjustments, would have the recommended composition?
- Where in your school/district is work already focused on something related to the demands on teachers’ time?
- Is there a team or meeting time where it makes sense to integrate addressing this issue?

You are encouraged to be strategic about weaving the work of this team into the work structures that already exist in your school or district. In doing so, you will ensure that the efforts addressing the use of teachers’ time are strategically aligned with ongoing initiatives and not an isolated approach.



WORKSHEET 1: TEAM MEMBERS

| Perspectives/ Expertise Needed | Name | Role/Title | Perspectives/Expertise |
|---|------|------------|------------------------|
| Knowledge of continuous improvement efforts taking place across the school/district | | | |
| | | | |
| Classroom practitioners | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Educators with perspectives beyond the classroom | | | |
| | | | |
| A position of formal authority to ensure action plans will be implemented | | | |
| | | | |



For additional information about the survey and presentation of results scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/SCTExaminingData>.



2. ANALYZE

+ ANALYZE DATA

There are a number of analyses in which your team can engage to learn more about the unique challenges teachers in your school or district are facing related to demands on their time. The logical place to start analysis is with the results from the SCTWCS—both the condition that addresses teacher time, **and** the specific survey prompts that may be contributing factors to the challenges teachers encounter in finding sufficient time to do their work well. In addition, there are a number of tools and processes that your team can use to delve more deeply into specific challenges. Your team may choose to engage with all of the resources provided or select those specific to the needs in your context. We recommend that whatever additional analyses your team opts to engage

in, they be thoughtfully integrated into already-existing improvements efforts. In our efforts to address demands on teachers' time, we want to avoid inadvertently increasing the demand by adding something else that does not result in increased efficiency.

SCTWCS Data

The condition from the SCTWCS that directly addresses the use of teacher time is Amount of Paperwork and Routine Duties. This condition is intended to address the degree to which teachers believe they have adequate time to complete the day-to-day tasks of their work.

CONDITION: AMOUNT OF PAPERWORK AND ROUTINE DUTIES

Let's take a closer look at the survey items included in this condition. Use Worksheet 2 to capture the average score from your district/school dashboard for each survey item. Once the first two columns are complete, engage in a discussion with your team about which items represent an area of strength and which represent an opportunity for growth. Also discuss the criteria on which you based your responses. Come to a consensus with the team about the greatest area of strength and greatest opportunity for growth. This information will be used later in this toolkit when your team selects an area of focus.

WORKSHEET 2: AMOUNT OF PAPERWORK AND ROUTINE DUTIES

| Items: You have additional time to... | Average score for each item |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Complete required administrative work/forms. | |
| Create lesson plans. | |
| Take care of your classroom (e.g., cleaning the classroom, sanitizing materials). | |
| Complete most of your job-related work (e.g., grading) at school. | |
| Which prompt is your district/school's area of greatest strength? On what did you base your response? | |
| | |
| Which prompt is your district/school's greatest opportunity for growth? On what did you base your response? | |
| | |



Team Reflection Protocol: Think—Pair—Share

1. **Think:** Each person on the team captures individual notes about the questions:
 - a. What are likely some contributing factors to your area of greatest strength?
 - b. What structures or supports are in place that may account for that area of strength?
2. **Pair:** Team members pair up and share their responses with each other.
3. **Share:** Pairs share takeaways from the conversations and a group member captures key takeaways from the group in Worksheet 3.
4. **Think:** Each person on the team captures individual notes about the questions:
 - a. How might your team leverage the area of greatest strength to address an opportunity for growth?
 - b. What structures or supports from your area of strength might carry over to the opportunity for growth?
5. **Pair:** Team members pair up and share their responses with each other.
6. **Share:** Pairs share takeaways from the conversations and a group member captures key takeaways from the group in Worksheet 3.

WORKSHEET 3: LEVERAGING THE AREA OF STRENGTH

| | |
|---|--|
| What are likely some contributing factors to your area of greatest strength? | |
| Are there structures or support in place that may account for that area of strength? | |
| How might your team leverage the area of greatest strength to address an opportunity for growth? | |
| What structures or supports from your area of strength might carry over to the opportunity for growth? | |



What is on Teachers' Plates

We know from the statewide data that time presents the greatest opportunity for growth across schools and districts. It is likely that time is also a challenge for teachers in your school or district. The process outlined in this section can be used by schools and/or districts to identify all of the different efforts, initiatives, and responsibilities to which teachers must attend. Once everything is identified, teams can engage in an analysis to strategically determine which items must stay, which could be consolidated or integrated with something else, and which can be eliminated or reimagined to increase efficiency and effectiveness and decrease the demands on teachers' time.



PROTOCOL

Step 1: Identify all requirements

District and school teams

- As a team, identify all of the different efforts, initiatives, and responsibilities teachers have that are required by the **state**.
- Add each item from the bullet above on a separate sticky note of the same color.
- Place all of the state-level efforts, initiatives, and responsibilities on a chart paper in one column.
- Identify all of the different efforts, initiatives, and responsibilities teachers have required by your **district**. These may include smaller segments of items identified as state requirements.
- Using a different color sticky note, create a separate sticky note for each item required by your district.
- Place all of the district-level sticky notes on the chart paper in a second column.

School teams: Continue through the steps below. District teams: Go to step 2.

- Identify all of the different efforts, initiatives, and responsibilities teachers have required by your **school**. These may include smaller segments of items identified as district requirements.
- Using a different color sticky note, create a separate sticky note for each item required by your school.
- Place all of the school-level sticky notes on the chart paper in a third column.



Step 2: Sort teacher requirements

- Count the total number of requirements and capture that number at the top of the chart paper.
- Review all of the items on the chart paper and discuss your thoughts about the number of items to which teachers must attend.
- Sort all of the requirements into the following three groups:
 - Must keep as is,
 - Could be consolidated or integrated with something else, and
 - Could be eliminated or reimaged.

Step 3: Identify requirements to consolidate or eliminate

- As a team, identify at least two items from the consolidate or eliminate sections on which to take action.
- Capture those items in Worksheet 4.

WORKSHEET 4: ITEMS TO ELIMINATE OR CONSOLIDATE

| | Items | What action steps would need to be taken to eliminate or consolidate each requirement? |
|----------------|-------|--|
| Requirement #1 | | |
| Requirement #2 | | |



How Time is Currently Used

“School and system leaders should start by assessing how teachers currently spend their time. This can reveal how much time teachers actually spend doing things that may not support their core work of instruction, such as duties or generic PD activities. This also creates a baseline for making a case for change and measuring progress. Armed with data on current use of time, leaders can get to work creating schedules that maximize effective collaboration and support professional learning” (Rosenberg et al., 2018).

Schools and classrooms are dynamic places where even the best laid plans are frequently interrupted by emerging needs of students. That is the nature of working with young learners and part of what can make aligning intention with reality so challenging when it comes to how teachers’ time is spent.

This section focuses on tracking how teachers’ time is currently used within your school or district. Rather than rolling out another assignment, your team should thoughtfully consider how to strategically engage teachers in this process. Actively including teachers in the design and implementation of the plan is an effective strategy for creating co-ownership of the effort, thus avoiding the need to seek “buy-in.” (See SC TEACHER district and school toolkits for additional resources.) While it may not be the team’s intent, a time tracking process could be perceived as a way to monitor or micro-manage teachers’ time. It is important that teachers who engage in this process understand that this is an effort to capture and analyze data so that working conditions can be improved.

As your team considers use of the time tracker to analyze how teachers’ time is currently used, discuss who and how many teachers will be involved in the time tracking effort. While teachers complete the time tracker individually, analysis of the data from multiple teachers and across roles can provide significant insights into how much the use of teachers’ time aligns with your school or district priorities. Discuss the questions and capture the team’s responses on Worksheet 5. Your team will use your responses later in this toolkit to develop an action plan.

WORKSHEET 5: ANALYZING TIME CONSIDERATIONS

What benefits does your team anticipate gaining from a time analysis effort?

Teachers in which types of roles will track their time? Why were those roles selected?

How many teachers will be involved in tracking their time?

How will your team actively engage participants in the design of the time tracking effort? What explicit actions will be taken to ensure that this is accurately perceived as an effort to improve conditions for teachers?



The following exercises utilize Mira Education’s Educator Time Tracker tool. The tool is structured so that teachers can track, analyze, and reflect on how their time is spent over a period of three days. Once that process is completed, the information gathered can be analyzed and the results used to identify opportunities to increase efficiency and/or effectiveness in how teachers’ time is spent.

The first step in determining the shifts needed in how time and schedules are structured is to determine how time is currently being used. We suggest collecting data over three or more days to better understand how time is spent throughout the day.

- It is important for you to create clear, appropriate headers for each column. Be as specific as possible to “drill down” to how your use of time aligns with your primary role, responsibilities, and goals.
- Use the tracker below as an example.
- Collect data each day at 15-minute intervals by noting the activity in the corresponding box and totaling at the end of each day. You may type in the document or print this file and then handwrite and submit a scanned copy.

SAMPLE

| Time (15 min interval) | Bus Duty | Check/ respond to email | Attend meetings | Observe classroom | Complete paperwork | Engage in coaching/mentoring | Handle unplanned business | OTHER |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|--------|
| 15 min. (Start time: 7:30 AM) | X | | | | | | | |
| 15 min. | | X | | | | | | |
| 15 min. | | | X | | | | | |
| 15 min. (PDR 1) | | | | X | | | | |
| 15 min. | | | | X | | | | |
| 15 min. | | | | X | | | | |
| 15 min. (PDR 2) | X | | X | | | | | |
| 15 min. | X | | | | | | | |
| 15 min. | | | X | | | | | |
| 15 min. | | | X | | | | | |
| 15 min. (PDR 3) | | X | | | | | X | |
| 15 min. | | X | | | | | | |
| 15 min. | | X | | | | | | |
| 15 min. (PDR 4) | | | X | | | | | X |
| 15 min. | | | | | | X | | |
| 15 min. | | | | | | | | Lunch |
| 15 min. | | | | | | | | Lunch |
| 15 min. (PDR 5) | | | | X | | | | |
| TOTALS | 45 min | 75 min | 90 min | 15 min | 0 min | 15 min | 30 min | 30 min |

SAMPLE

Copyright © 2023 Mira Education. All rights reserved.
 This tool was adapted from the book *Small Shifts, Meaningful Improvement*. For assistance in using this tool, e-mail us at info@miraeducation.org.
 For more resources, visit www.miraeducation.org/2023/

Click the image above to download or visit: toolkit.sc-teacher.org/references

PROTOCOL (INDIVIDUAL TEACHERS)

- Teachers should capture the following information prior to completing their time trackers:
 - Describe the intended flow of most days in your classroom, including the daily schedule for the class(es).
 - Identify all of the different priorities and responsibilities you are expected to handle.
 - How do you typically organize your time in order to meet the multiple demands of your responsibilities?
- Before using the time tracker, identify the main categories/headers for each of the columns on the tracker. These categories/headers should reflect the different types of work in which you engage on a daily basis. The categories will vary by grade level, content, and other contextual considerations.
- In 15-minute intervals, capture the category of each activity in which you engage throughout the day.
- Complete the time tracker for three “typical” days within a two-week period of time.
- After completing the time tracker, add the total number of minutes spent in each category for each day.
- Respond to the following questions, which are on the last page of the time tracker tool:
 - As you review your data, describe what the information reveals about the distribution of your time.
 - How does that compare to how you perceived your time was being spent? (Address any surprises, barriers, or challenges.)
 - What are the implications for your ability to attend to core goals and responsibilities you are expected to address each day?
 - What is the most important core priority that is NOT being attended to as a result of how your time is being spent?




PROTOCOL (TEACHER TEAMS)

1. All teachers on the team use the protocol above.
2. Once all of the teachers on the team have completed their time trackers and completed the reflection questions, create groups of three.
3. In small groups, each teacher shares what they learned about how their time was spent as compared to how they perceived it was being spent. Commonalities are captured on a chart paper or in a shared document.
4. In the whole group, small groups share the information they gathered.
5. Everyone listens for commonalities among the groups and the team captures common themes across all groups.
6. The group engages in a dot voting exercise to identify the top priority to address.
7. Capture this priority. We will return to it in the Select portion of this toolkit.

A SOUTH CAROLINA EXAMPLE

Walker Gamble Elementary School in Clarendon County engaged in this process using the Educator Time Tracker tool. Several teachers, administrators, and their superintendent participated. The information garnered from the process resulted in their school completely revising their master schedule so that all students had additional support and all teachers had more collaborative planning time. To learn more, see the Walker-Gamble case study (<https://miraeducation.org/leading-improvement-together-walker-gamble-elementary-and-the-sc-collective-leadership-initiative/>).



Walker-Gamble Elementary Schedule

| Teacher | 8-8:30 | 8:30-9 | 9-9:30 | 9:30-10 | 10-10:30 | 10:30-11 | 11-11:30 | 11:30-12 | 12-12:30 | 12:30-1 | 1-1:30 | 1:30-2 | 2-2:30 |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|---------------------|----------|---------------|----------|---------------------|----------|---------------------|--------|---------------------|--------|
| K4 (300) | Instructional block | | | Interventions | | Recess | | Lunch | | Instructional block | | | |
| K4 (305) | Instructional block | | | Interventions | | Recess | | Lunch | | Instructional block | | | |
| K4 (306) | Instructional block | | | Interventions | | Recess | | Lunch | | Instructional block | | | |
| 5K (501) | Academic Arts | | | Reading | | Interventions | | Writing | | Lunch | | Mathematics | |
| 5K (502) | Academic Arts | | | Reading | | Interventions | | Writing | | Lunch | | Math | |
| 5K (503) | Academic Arts | | | Reading | | Interventions | | Writing | | Lunch | | Intervention | |
| 5K (400) | Academic Arts | | | Reading | | Interventions | | Writing | | Lunch | | Recess | |
| 1st (401) | Interventions | | | Academic Arts | | Reading | | Lunch | | Recess | | Mathematics | |
| 1st (402) | Interventions | | | Academic Arts | | Reading | | Lunch | | Recess | | Interventions | |
| 1st (404) | Interventions | | | Academic Arts | | Reading | | Lunch | | Recess | | Interventions | |
| 1st (405) | Interventions | | | Academic Arts | | Reading | | Lunch | | Recess | | Interventions | |
| 2nd (408) | Mathematics | | | Interventions | | Academic Arts | | Lunch | | Interventions | | Instructional Block | |
| 2nd (409) | Mathematics | | | Interventions | | Academic Arts | | Lunch | | Interventions | | Recess | |
| 2nd (410) | Mathematics | | | Interventions | | Academic Arts | | Lunch | | Interventions | | Instructional Block | |
| 2nd (413) | Mathematics | | | Interventions | | Academic Arts | | Lunch | | Interventions | | Instructional Block | |
| 3rd (204) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Recess | | Lunch | | Academic Arts | | Interventions | |
| 3rd (205) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Recess | | Lunch | | Academic Arts | | Interventions | |
| 3rd (206) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Recess | | Lunch | | Academic Arts | | Interventions | |
| 3rd (207) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Recess | | Lunch | | Academic Arts | | Interventions | |
| 4th (100) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Recess | | Lunch | | Academic Arts | | Interventions | |
| 4th (102) | Instructional Block | | | Interventions | | Lunch | | Recess | | Instructional Block | | Academic Arts | |
| 4th (105) | Instructional Block | | | Interventions | | Lunch | | Recess | | Instructional Block | | Academic Arts | |
| 5th (107) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Lunch | | Instructional Block | | Interventions | | Recess | |
| 5th (108) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Lunch | | Instructional Block | | Interventions | | Academic Arts | |
| 5th (109) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Lunch | | Instructional Block | | Interventions | | Academic Arts | |
| 5 th (111) | Interventions | | | Instructional Block | | Lunch | | Instructional Block | | Interventions | | Academic Arts | |

Walker Gamble's Master Schedule After Analyzing Time

MICRO-CREDENTIAL CONNECTION

These time tracking processes and protocols align with the Analyzing Time micro-credentials in the mCrED catalog. Connect with CarolinaCrED at carolinacred.org for more information on how to access and earn these micro-credentials.

3. SELECT



+ SELECT AN AREA OF FOCUS

Like money, time can be invested, spent, or saved. Also, the way teachers' time is allocated and used is indicative of priorities. As you move toward identifying an area on which to focus improvement efforts, consider what the analyses in earlier sections of this toolkit indicate about how teachers' time is currently allocated and used. Consider the following:

- Did the analysis reveal that time is allocated and used in alignment with your school or district priorities?
- Is teacher time being invested in ways that advance student learning, or spent inefficiently in areas with little or no impact on student outcomes?
- Where are there opportunities to save time so that it can be invested wisely?

Now that your team has analyzed SCTWCS data along with some additional resources via processes in the previous section of this toolkit, it is time to identify a focus area for your team's working condition improvement efforts. Complete Worksheet 6 by revisiting discussions and information gathered earlier in this toolkit.

WORKSHEET 6: SELECTING A FOCUS AREA

From Worksheet 2: Item of greatest strength and item of greatest opportunity for growth

From Worksheet 4: Two items identified for possible elimination or consolidation. Identify the connection to a SCTWCS condition or item

From the How Time is Currently Used activity: One identified priority that emerged from a time analysis



As you work to identify an area on which to focus improvement efforts, we encourage your team to start small. Small wins help build momentum and allow for sustained effort over time. Keep in mind the more focused your improvement efforts are, the more quickly you are likely to see results.

We also invite you to consider a range of factors beyond a numerical score to guide your selection of a focus area. Discuss the following questions with your team:

- What shift is likely to make the biggest difference in teacher working conditions?
- If improved, what shift might make a difference most quickly?
- What could we do most readily to improve a situation that impacts something within a survey item?
- Which shift may connect with existing efforts and values if focused on?
- What actions to improve something related to survey items are likely to most clearly signal intent to support?

Based on the discussion of the previous questions, complete Worksheet 7 to identify an area on which to focus your team's improvement efforts.

WORKSHEET 7: AREA OF FOCUS

The worksheet is a flowchart with three steps, each in a light green box with a white text area to its right. The boxes are connected by arrows pointing from left to right.

- Step 1:** "Our team will leverage these strengths:"
- Step 2:** "To improve or change this situation:"
- Step 3:** "Which will improve responses on this/these survey item(s):"



4. CONNECT

+ CONNECT RESULTS WITH IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

Align With Ongoing Improvement Efforts

The information your team has gathered and analyzed from the SCTWCS and other processes in this toolkit are likely to provide insights about school or district improvement efforts already in progress. Your team is strongly encouraged to integrate efforts related to these data with ongoing improvement efforts in your school or district, rather than adding another initiative to address.

Use the prompts below to host a discussion with your team about the ways in which information garnered from the SCTWCS can be integrated into school/district continuous improvement efforts.

WORKSHEET 8: CONNECT WITH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

| Discussion Prompt | Notes |
|--|-------|
| Where might data related to the use of teachers' time already be reflected in our school/district continuous improvement processes? Which goal and/or strategy includes the related information? | |
| Which goals and strategies within our continuous improvement efforts are informed or impacted by the use of teachers' time? | |
| How might information about the structure and use of teachers' time help inform current school/district continuous improvement work? | |
| How might our team integrate SCTWCS information related to teachers' time into what is already being done through our school's/district's continuous improvement efforts? | |
| What school/district practices might be contributing to challenges with how teachers' time is used? How might those practices shift to improve? | |
| What school/district policies might be contributing to challenges related to the use of teachers' time? To what degree can those policies be shifted to improve working conditions? | |
| What other teams are doing aligned work in our school/district? How might we strategically integrate our efforts? | |

5. IDENTIFY



+ IDENTIFY ACTIONABLE NEXT STEPS

Now that your team has identified a single, data-informed area of focus, identify three actionable next steps to take that will begin the process of improvement within your school/district. For each step, identify a person who will be responsible for ensuring movement forward. Additionally, identify the next date and time for your team to convene (or check in asynchronously) to discuss progress.

Worksheet 9 can serve as an action console that signals your progress in applying SCTWCS data to your ongoing work. Reviewing status, learning, and impact at each leadership team or improvement team meeting may be one way to apply efforts in the context of your regular work cadence. New action items that emerge from each meeting can be filled in on the next meeting's

console for review at that time. Between meetings, the most recent version of the console can serve as a reporting tool, allowing any member of your team to share current progress and next steps with district leadership, school-based teams, community members, or others you may wish to engage in the effort.

As your team identifies actionable next steps and moves toward creating a comprehensive action plan, we invite you to investigate the Resources section of this toolkit. There you will find a number of professional publications that have research, information, and strategies for increasing effectiveness and efficiency of teachers' time.

WORKSHEET 9: NEXT STEPS

| Area of Focus | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| Action Steps | Person Facilitating Efforts | Status (Started, In Progress, Launched) | Notes on Impact and Learning |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Next meeting date and time:

Develop a Comprehensive Action Plan

For those teams interested in developing a more comprehensive action plan, SC TEACHER will work in partnership with CarolinaCrED and Mira Education to supply more in-depth support over time, including access to micro-credentials and supports for capacity-building, strategy design, and implementation. These facilitation partners also provide coaching for district and school improvement teams using these data.

Resources

CarolinaCrED Resources

mCrED/Micro-Credentials

mCrED hosts a robust micro-credentials library created for SC leaders and learners by SC leaders and learners. Introductory webinars, access to a growing micro-credential library, and wrap-around services provide the support you need to build capacity within your schools and district.

CarolinaCrED CORE

CarolinaCrED CORE connects learners and leaders to the personalized support they need to accelerate career opportunities. CarolinaCrED CORE provides personalized, professional learning solutions to meet the unique needs of educators in the form of flat-rate contract courses, customized degree programs, and packages that lead to add-on certifications and endorsements in South Carolina.

Professional Publications

The Gift of Teacher Time: Making Teachers' Time a Valued Resource in Your School

This article contains a list of ideas for how school leaders can make the most of teachers' time. <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/19/09/gift-teacher-time>

The NO in Innovate

This blog shares a strategy for identifying priorities so that teams can strategically abandon efforts that do not align. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/no-innovate/>

Planning time may help mitigate teacher burnout—but how much planning time do teachers get?

This blog provides an overview of a number of studies related to the use of teacher time and includes a list of questions for districts to explore. <https://www.nctq.org/blog/Planning-time-may-help-mitigate-teacher-burnoutbut-how-much-planning-time-do-teachers-get>

Reimagining the School Day: Innovative Schedules for Teaching and Learning

This article contains several examples of innovative schedules, as well as information about operations, cost considerations, and outcomes. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/reimagining-the-school-day/>

Teacher Vacancy Task Force Final Report—February 2023 (pp. 35–38)

This report contains concrete recommendations for system leaders on how to actualize the overall recommendation to "demonstrate respect and value for teacher time." <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/tvtf-final-report.pdf>

Teaching Together for Change: Five Factors That Make Teacher Teams Successful—and Make Schools Stronger

The five factors articulated in this article can help ensure that the use of teacher time while engaged in teamwork is effective and efficient. <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/16/02/teaching-together-change>

Three Steps to a Strategic Schedule: Creating Effective School Schedules

This website contains numerous tools and resources that outline a three-step process for school scheduling that maximizes available resources (people, time, and money) and meets the needs of students and teachers. https://www.erstrategies.org/toolkits/strategic_school_scheduling_tools

Leading Improvement, Together: Walker Gamble Elementary and the SC Collective Leadership Initiative

In this case study, read how engaging in a time study and the South Carolina Collective Leadership Initiative helped this school leverage the expertise of its staff to sharpen focus on instruction, boost achievement, and narrow achievement gaps. <https://miraeducation.org/leading-improvement-together-walker-gamble-elementary-and-the-sc-collective-leadership-initiative/>

Professional Research

Hargreaves, A. (2021). Teacher collaboration: 30 years of research on its nature, forms, limitations and effects. In Day, C. (Ed.), Policy, teacher education and the quality of teachers and teaching. Routledge.

Based on 30 years of research, Hargreaves discusses the explanatory and strategic power of three concepts in particular—contrived collegiality, professional capital, and collaborative professionalism. Much of teacher time has been contrived collegiality. As the teaching profession advances, teacher time needs to enhance professional capital built on collaborative professionalism, which will require more meaningful collaborative time.

Admiraal, W., Schenke, W., De Jong, L., Emmelot, Y., & Sligte, H. (2021). Schools as professional learning communities: What can schools do to support professional development of their teachers? Professional Development in Education, 47(4), 684–698. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2019.1665573>

In a study of 14 Dutch schools, the authors found that collaborative work and collaborative learning were the most frequently mentioned interventions to promote professional development. They found that formal and informal teacher working groups were beneficial for embedding sustainable interventions.

Merritt, E. G. (2016). Time for teacher learning, planning critical for school reform. Phi Delta Kappan, 98(4), 31–36. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721716681774>

The author finds that teacher collaboration time is essential for school improvement. She recommends expanding time for teacher collaboration by shortening the school day for students, embedding more teacher work days into the school calendar, or increasing staff.

Lee, M., Kim, J. W., Mo, Y., & Walker, A. D. (2022). A review of professional learning community (PLC) instruments. Journal of Educational Administration, 60(3), 262–287. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEA-03-2021-0060>

A key element of teacher planning time in many schools is the professional learning community (PLC). The authors examine the use of tools used in PLCs and recommend that particular attention be paid to the types and uses of those tools. Most meet basic standards for being valid and reliable, but they find variation in concepts and key components of the PLC. Overall, they find that the tools use teacher time to examine 1) shared vision, 2) student learning, and 3) collaboration.

References

Rosenberg, Daigneau, and Galvez (2018). Finding Time for Collaborative Planning. *Connected Professional Learning in Depth*, Retrieved from:
<https://www.erstrategies.org/cms/files/3876-finding-time-for-collaborative-planning.pdf>

SC TEACHER and its partners will continue to release related research and tools. For the most recent resources, please visit sc-teacher.org.



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