In this presentation, we will...

- Review current student achievement data.
- Discuss the opportunities created by the Common Core State Standards.
- Focus on system-level responsibilities and opportunities.

Where are we now?

We've seen some real improvement in math achievement, especially in the early grades.

The trends are clear: all groups have improved significantly since 1990.

Results and progress are weakest in high school, as students are preparing to leave our systems.
US African American and Latino 15-year-olds perform similarly to students in developing countries.

There are areas of progress.

Minority students taking and passing Advanced Placement exams has *tripled* in the last 10 years.

African American and Latino students passing AP exams has increased over 300%.

Students who take AP courses and pass the corresponding exams are more likely to earn a college degree, be employed, and earn higher wages—effects equivalent to reducing the black-white wage gap by one-third and eliminating the Latino-white wage gap entirely.

Exposure to Rigor Helps Struggling Students

Students who take AP courses but do not pass the exam (e.g. score of 1 or 2) tend to enroll in more selective colleges and persist in college at higher rates than similar students with no AP experience.

These data are for the nation as a whole.

What about urban districts?
There is significant variation even among low-income African American students.

Urban district gains are driving state and national gains in improvement over time.

Students of color are less likely to graduate on time.

Despite the range and the overall progress, one thing unites all of our districts:

Too many students aren’t prepared for what comes next.

Too many HS grads don’t have academic skills for military service.
Good news: College-going is up among all groups.

African Americans and Latinos are more likely to take remedial courses in college.

And black and Latino young people are 1/2 and 1/3 as likely as white students to earn bachelor’s.

Bachelor’s attainment for high-income students is 68 points higher than for low-income youth.

Why Common Core?

• The CCSS are focused on high-level thinking, problem-solving and communication skills and benchmarked against the highest-performing nations.
• The rigor of the CCSS presents multiple opportunities to ensure that all students get the “good stuff” that historically was reserved for the privileged few.

It’s not all about school.
CCSS Require Everyone to Change

- CCSS can’t be “teacher proofed”; requires expert practice and judgment in classrooms, placing huge new demands on the profession.
- System leaders have to determine what’s best done at the system-level to support efficacy on the front lines.
- Where possible, CCSS should be integrated—not rolled out as its own separate initiative.

What are system-level levers for integrating CCSS into Teacher Effectiveness work?

- Curriculum
- Teaching Frameworks
- “Additional” Assessments for assessing teacher effectiveness
- Principal Support and Supervision

CCSS and Curriculum

“The [CCSS] must... be complemented by a well-developed, content-rich curriculum consistent with the expectations laid out in this documents.”

CCSS ELA & Literacy, p. 6

“At a curricular or instructional level, texts—within and across grade levels—need to be selected around topics or themes that systematically develop the knowledge base of students.”

CCSS ELA & Literacy, p. 33

Curriculum Matters

The choice of instructional materials can have as much or more of an impact as teacher quality.

The effects of participation in the International Baccalaureate Programme in Chicago are encouraging.

Students who enrolled in non-selective IB versus IB-qualified students who did not enroll:
- Achieved at higher levels.
- 50% more likely to gain admission to more selective colleges.
- 40% more likely to attend 4-year colleges.
- Were more likely to persist in college.


Some possible explanations?

- Comprehensive and coherent programming across subjects and grades
- High-quality curriculum and rigorous assessments
- Strong match between IB and the skills and behaviors required for college success
Exemplar units and lessons are not a system. Schools need coherent curriculum within and across content areas and grade levels.

Is your curricular approach a systemic one or a collection of discrete resources?

Now, it's your turn!
• How well-developed are your plans to embed CCSS into curriculum?
  A. “There is—or will be—comprehensive curricula for all teachers in all subject areas aligned to the CCSS.”
  B. “There is—or will be—a content framework that sequences subject-matter content and Common Core expectations across subjects and grades that will guide schools’ work.”
  C. “The district will provide exemplars of CCSS-aligned units, but not a comprehensive set of materials.”
  D. “Many discrete programs and subject-specific curricular materials have been approved. It’s up to teachers and/or schools to select materials and find links with the CCSS.”

Good Teaching Matters
Students assigned to high value-added teachers:
- Are more likely to attend college.
- Earn higher salaries.
- Live in better neighborhoods.
- Save more for retirement.
- Are less likely to have children as teenagers.

Systems have not been managing for results.

Contrary to prior conventional wisdom, “teacher effects” in reading are dramatic.


Current state ELA assessments are not capturing teacher contributions.

Most of us are now implementing new teacher evaluation and effectiveness systems.

As we get serious about performance expectations and evaluation for teachers, we need to make sure teaching is aimed at the Common Core.

Common Core Addresses the How, Not Just the What

CCSS Instructional Shifts
- How do these shifts get communicated to teachers?
- How do these shifts get reflected in expectations for teacher practice?

Teaching Frameworks
- Broadly adopted, previously broadly ignored.
- Teachers are now getting the message that instruction should hew closely to framework descriptions— their jobs depend on it.
MET research finds pervasive patterns in teaching.

Average teacher is proficient at classroom management, but struggles with the kind of high-level, engaging instruction that will lead to student success against the Common Core.

Integrate Common Core INTO Teacher Effectiveness

- This is SYSTEM work.
- Present CCSS and TE efforts as coordinated aspects of a single, coherent improvement agenda.
- Not always necessary to talk about CCSS explicitly—sometimes it’s more effective to embed CCSS expectations into the language of teacher evaluation systems.

Hillsborough seized the opportunity to embed CCSS in teacher effectiveness work.

- Recognized teachers struggled with particular sub-domains of Domain 3—Instruction, including:
  - Communicating with Students
  - Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
  - Engaging Students in Learning
- Embedded CCSS content into PD modules that teachers accessed to get better against Danielson framework.

Now, it’s your turn!

- When it comes to teaching frameworks and the CCSS in your district, they are:
  A. “Already one and the same.”
  B. “It’s an ongoing discussion.”
  C. “There’s a team focused on that.”
  D. “Common Core is led by content-area teams who aren’t at the table for selecting/adapting teaching frameworks.”
  E. “People in my district don’t know what this is about.”

“Additional” Assessments

- Most of us are working in states that require student achievement to factor into teacher evaluations.
- Most teachers aren’t covered by “value-added” or other growth data, which usually covers grades 4-8 in Reading/ELA and Math.
- Even in grades with value-added data, most state policies require another measure of student achievement.
How will “Additional Assessments” advance the CCSS? What are the options?

- National assessments (i.e. AP, IB)
- District-level benchmark assessments
- Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

- SLOs are measurable goals for determining whether student achievement/learning meets expectations.
- SLOs can be developed against any kind of assessment.

SLOs: Critical Attributes

- Clear identification of students included in measure, with analysis of prior performance data and articulation of priorities to address.
- A definite time period for achieving goal (usually a school year, sometimes a semester).
- Assessment used to measure student progress.
- Rigorous yet reasonable expectation of student performance on the assessment:
  - Explicitly tied to specific standards, with rationale for this prioritization.

SLOs: Important Considerations

- Easy for SLOs to be disassociated from instructional practice; goals are set because they have to be, and are ignored until the end-of-year assessment.
- Connection to professional growth and development throughout the year should create reciprocal responsibilities for teachers AND administrators.
- Important to have specific, agreed-upon strategies for meeting SLOs.

SLOs: Key Challenges

- Principals and teachers will struggle with lack of capacity and lack of useful tools.
- Many have never set measurable student learning goals... and now they will be doing it for evaluation.
- The first year will be especially challenging.
- Strong systems to track and audit SLOs do not yet exist—need to consider system capacity needed to support and improve practice in this area.

SLOs: Questions to Consider

- What resources does your district use to focus on quality control/consistency in SLOs? How many central-office staff work on this and what do they do?
- Are there strategies that have helped to make SLOs an integral part of instructional improvement/professional growth (in contrast with goals that are set and then forgotten until the Spring assessment and determination)?
- Are there system-level resources or guidance that make it more likely that SLOs are used as a vehicle for focusing on instructional improvement?
- How can SLOs be used to advance the Common Core?
Now, it’s your turn!

• When it comes to “additional assessments” in my district:
  A. “Reliable and valid assessments are in place for every subject and grade, and the Common Core knowledge and skills are well reflected.”
  B. “We have a system (or a plan) to cover every subject and grade, but Common Core is still on the horizon.”
  C. “We don’t yet have plans for all the assessments we need, and it’s unclear how Common Core will be reflected in the new assessments.”
  D. “This must be someone else’s responsibility.”

Role of the Principal

• Major reforms, like new teacher evaluations and the CCSS, rely on principal leadership to enact them.
• New teacher evaluation systems and the CCSS will demand A LOT of principal knowledge and time to manage effectively.
• Need to think about the ongoing support and development principals need to succeed.

Principals Are More Proficient at Rating Performance Than Improving It

• Principals can be trained to reliably administer Danielson rubric, distinguishing between levels of practice.
• Principals had great difficulty constructing actionable advice based on scores.
• Constructive conversations with teachers was not something most principals were good at.

Principals on average spend more than half their time on Administration and 11% of their time on Instruction.

How do principals improve achievement?

• Despite the new emphasis on principals as chief evaluators, research suggests that student achievement gains correlate more strongly with effective organizational management, including:
  – Creating high-quality learning environments for teachers and students.
  – Hiring, supporting, and retaining effective teachers.
• Principals’ focus on day-to-day instructional activities is often negatively related to outcomes.

Shifting Understanding

• A new study of Chicago high schools finds only indirect and small relationship between principals’ instruction and student learning.
• Principals exerted their greatest influence—and impacted student achievement most positively—when they focused on:
  – Overall program quality and coherence.
  – Providing teachers high-quality professional development.
  – Creating a safe, orderly, college-going culture for students.
Now, it’s your turn!

• How equipped are principals in your district to manage the demands of new teacher effectiveness work and the CCSS?
  A. “It’s their problem.”
  B. “We’ve explained integration and prioritization, but principals need to figure this out.”
  C. “We’re investing in capacity-building, but demands are growing faster than support.”
  D. “We’ve reorganized centrally to make the principalship manageable.”