



EXTERNAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR SCHOOL(S) IN YOUR DISTRICT

PROPOSAL: An in-depth view of student achievement, teaching and learning, and organizational effectiveness



The Center for Educational Effectiveness

External Needs Assessment for School(s) In Your District

A PROPOSAL FOR AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT, TEACHING AND LEARNING, AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

INTRODUCTION

For the 2009-2010 or 2010-2011 academic-years, your district leadership might be seeking an external review of practices, attitudes, and outcomes for selected schools in your district.

CEE's approach to what is often referred to as an "external needs assessment" is to provide a valid, in-depth, cost-effective process that is customized and provides value-add to activities underway within the district.

Needs Assessment— a *Formative View*

While the ultimate measure of teaching and learning should be student achievement, we are proposing a multiple measure, multi-mode (quantitative and qualitative) approach to this process. CEE employs a collaborative design process with district and building leadership to create a process that will achieve objectives and is highly tuned to the local context of the district and each building. CEE is highly sensitive to **cookie-cutter** approaches which can feel "done to" a school in a needs assessment process. Client satisfaction – the preservation of relationships with teacher groups, unions and leaders – is important to CEE. Helping those groups collaboratively identify the needs within their building and embrace the process of improvement is an essential step. It is our goal that CEE representatives interacting with your school personnel be individuals highly familiar with school contexts and challenges because of their vast experience as professionals in public education.

STUDENTS CANNOT BENEFIT FROM EFFECTIVE PRACTICES THEY NEVER EXPERIENCE (FIXEN, 2007)

To that end, this needs assessment design has several over-arching design objectives:

- **Collaborative Design:** the measurement tools, the methodology, and the interpretation of significance of results will be in partnership with leadership from the district and building teams.
- **Fiscally efficient and economical:** Needs assessment processes have historically been tied to large private and public grants and typically represents 12% to 20% of overall intervention budgets. In this time of economic constraints and budget-cuts, we will utilize economies of scale provided through the use of technology, previous R&D activities, and local resources to provide high-quality needs assessment in the most cost effective manner possible.
- **Multiple measures** of both direct and indirect impact of the current reality of each school. The ultimate measurement needs to be increased student learning and achievement. However, it is important to measure the attitudes, practices, and impact of those directly serving and served through the teaching and learning process.

- **Valid and reliable measurement:** Research-supported practices for both the measurement tools and the analysis methodology.
- **Low-impact** and intrusiveness into day-to-day activities of leadership and teaching staff. We will utilize a methodology employing qualitative and quantitative tools in order to balance impact on the school and the quality of the results..

Measurement Design

The measurement activities are designed to determine the current reality within each building. CEE has the largest repositories of organizational effectiveness and student achievement data in the state of Washington.

Measurement Architecture

Quantitative measurement of attitudes, dispositions, and practices: survey methodology- organizational effectiveness through the research basis of the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools-- utilizing leadership, staff, student, and parent surveys. These standard surveys (most widely used educational surveys in the western U.S) provide norm-referenced data and serve to create a baseline data-set for measuring future improvement. Quantitative design features standard Likert-scale items for attitudes and dispositions (e.g. almost always true, often true, etc) as well as frequency based items for practices (e.g. is a practice done: daily, weekly, bi-weekly, etc).

Qualitative measurement: Quantitative data both guides the needs assessment process—and is triangulated with qualitative data based on the on-site focus groups, interviews, and review of evidence (artifacts from the process).

Specific Measurement Instrumentation

EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS SURVEY- STAFF, STUDENT AND PARENT EDITIONS

A view of the 9 Characteristics through the perceptions of school staff, students and parents. In addition to main reports, CEE also produces a sub-comparison report between certificated staff and other building staff as well as a characteristic comparison to Schools of Distinction and the state.

INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM SURVEY (ITS)

This tool provides formative feedback to instructional staff, teams and PLCs and is based on the *Essential Practices of High Quality Teaching and Learning* (MacGregor, R., CEE, 2007). This tool focuses staff on instructional practice in a non-invasive, safe way and begins the conversations about what effective practice includes and what “next steps” for improvement should be. We believe a second phase of school review should involve classroom observation, once the need has been established and the staff understands the “why” behind such a review of instruction. CEE has a collaborative partnership with **Leadership Innovations Team** a corporation specializing in the observation of instruction and use of the “Student Learning Protocol” as well as the development of instructional leaders and coaches in the school and district.

CEE ON-SITE REVIEW PROTOCOL FOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT

During a 2-day on-site process, a review of artifacts which are the evidence of student learning and instructional systems created within the building/district as well as a rubric-based protocol will define the critical attributes and evidence to be gathered during on-site focus groups and interviews. The process and protocol were developed by professionals with extensive careers in public education and highly experienced in school audits/reviews and improvement. The on-site review process design and implementation is led by

and developed through the leadership and expertise of Cheryl Mayo, former OSPI Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and former Assistant Superintendent of the Yakima School District.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

CEE's well-known Comprehensive WASL longitudinal (2002-2009) analysis.

Rather than simply measure the absolute raw performance (% meeting standard), CEE employs a multi-method approach which includes:

- Performance: E.g. Percent meeting standard on WASL.
- Improvement and Growth / Value-Add: 2-year Matched Cohort Growth for students who remained in the school. Student-level view of growth for students served in your school over multiple concurrent years (as compared to similar schools, your district results, or the state.

With each of these, one of the unique areas of CEE value-add is our ability to provide context—to compare these buildings to either the state sample, similar buildings, or to the performance of other buildings in your system.

Scope and Sequence

The scope and sequence will be collaborative and carefully structured to meet the objectives as well as fit within the constraints and needs of your district.

Debrief of Data

CEE will collaborate with you to design CEE-led debriefs of data at the district, school leadership/school staff level to provide clear understanding of the identified needs and to help you and your school step into action planning and “next steps”.

Budget

\$10,000 - \$15,000 unless you have unique, additional data or debrief needs. Contact CEE for details.

Summary & Conclusion:

Over the last 8 years, CEE has had a productive and strong relationship with the educational system in Washington state — Districts, Schools, Community and Parents, School Board, Leadership, and teams within over 700 buildings and 142 districts in the state of Washington through School Improvement Assistance, District Improvement Assistance, Summit Initiative and individual district activities. CEE has a strong understanding of the system, the constraints, the objectives and the desire of district leadership to create a customized process that will bring the greatest value to schools.

PROJECT PERSONNEL:

Gregory Lobdell

Responsible for product development, custom research and data analysis. Supports CEE partners including WA State OSPI, Idaho State Building Capacity Program, as well as consulting and professional development workshops throughout the region. Experience: Nine years in this capacity as Director of Research and seventeen years in the high-technology industry.

Susanne Cocklin-Mills

Responsible for overall management and quality control of project deliverables, product development, interaction and communication with partners. Supports CEE partners including WA State OSPI, Idaho State Building Capacity Program, as well as consulting and professional development workshops throughout the region. Experience: Ten years in this capacity as Executive Director and 27 years in public education, secondary-level.

Jennifer Jones

Responsible for financial management of contract, production supervision and interaction with and support of individual schools, districts and partners. Experience: Eight years in this capacity for the Center for Educational Effectiveness.

Sarah Smolar

Manages data entry of perceptual surveys, report production, quality control and shipping. Experience: Four years experience in EES data entry and report production.

Cheryl Mayo

Responsible for the primary on-site focus group interviews, evidence gathering and analysis of artifacts and evidence. Cheryl has extensive experience at national, state, regional and local levels in education leadership, curriculum, instruction and unique contextual factors such as ELL.

Jack McCullough

Jack is responsible for client services, coaching and solutions for school and district improvement. Jack served as a facilitator for school improvement with OSPI for 5 years and has been an employee of the Center for Educational Effectiveness, Inc. for the past three years as Process and Solution Coach. Jack has over 30 years experience in public education as a teacher, principal and administrator and now, consultant-partner and coach.

Terry Werner

Terry is responsible for client services and defining strategy and solutions for school and district improvement. Terry served as a facilitator for school improvement and a District Improvement Facilitator with OSPI for 6 years and has been an Associate of the Center for Educational Effectiveness, Inc. for the past two years. Terry has over 35 years experience in public education as a teacher, principal and superintendent.