

District Metrics for Quality Remote/Hybrid Learning: Teacher Working Conditions and Well-Being

Overview

The COVID-19 pandemic has created an unprecedented challenge for state, district, and school leaders across the country. Whether states and districts mandate or choose an in-person or remote model or a hybrid model, which includes some aspect of virtual learning, ensuring that vulnerable students and teachers have a remote learning option has required that all districts offer a remote learning plan. It is important to ensure that students participating in a remote/hybrid learning setting receive the same rigorous academic instruction and social and emotional support as students attending school in person. Moving school systems to a remote learning environment is not just a technical problem. It is a pedagogical and instructional challenge. Teaching online requires specialized skill sets including understanding of how to conduct classes in a virtual environment, how to best share content, how to monitor student progress, and more. Teachers in this situation are most likely starting from the basics, learning the tools as well as how to manage and teach in an online classroom. Because of the newness of these efforts, however, most state, district, and school leaders do not know how to assess their remote learning and hybrid models. The Region 1 and Region 9 Comprehensive Centers (CCs) convened a community of practice (CoP) of school, district, and state leaders from Massachusetts, Illinois, Iowa, and Vermont to tackle this issue by reviewing existing measures of quality identified in research; identifying new measures of quality needed based on current best practice; and developing a framework for state, district, and school leaders to assess the quality of remote and hybrid learning.

The CoP examined two remote and hybrid learning constructs that the Region 1 and Region 9 CCs had identified as the highest priority for their stakeholders and the least defined in current frameworks. These constructs included measures for assessing student engagement as well as teacher working conditions and well-being. The **frameworks** developed outline the

indicators of quality in each topic area to support the analysis of data. The framework and Data Collection and Analysis Protocol for **Student Engagement** can be found [here](#):

After analyzing the measures and developing the framework for each of the constructs, the CoP identified a need for a data collection and analysis protocol to help schools, districts, and states use the frameworks effectively. The CoP participants were adamant that this not be a scripted process given the complexities of the context of each school, district, and state, but rather a tool that could provide some high-level guidance for how to approach this analysis. The **Data Collection and Analysis Protocol** describes five steps for collecting and analyzing data for remote and hybrid settings:

Step 1: Identify a problem of practice to explore.

Step 2: Determine what data sources are available.

Step 3: Prioritize which data and Components will be analyzed.

Step 4: Analyze data collected.

Step 5: Create an Action Plan.

The protocol includes guiding questions and tools to determine the availability of data, how to prioritize which data to explore, and how to analyze the data to make an action plan.

After the tool and framework were fully designed, members of the CoP piloted the process to provide one last round of tangible feedback, which resulted in the subsequent tool and framework. The CoP identified the following three examples as ways the tool can be used in a school, a district, or a state. This document includes the framework and data collection and analysis protocol for **Teacher Working Conditions and Well-Being**.

Example 1

Your school/district is experiencing some challenges with teacher working conditions and well-being. As a leadership team, you implement Steps 1 and 3 of the protocol and then make a plan for collecting the data you need to analyze.

Example 2

Your school/district has collected data on teacher working conditions and well-being. As a leadership team, you implement Steps 4 and 5 of the protocol.

Example 3

Your team at the state department of education is trying to implement a common approach to remote/hybrid learning. You are hearing that teacher working conditions and well-being is a challenge for districts. You could review the tool and identify common data sources that districts could collect to give you a more accurate picture of what is happening across the districts.

Challenge:

As schools pivot to remote and hybrid learning environments, school and district leaders struggle to assess teachers' working conditions and well-being in ways that provide timely and relevant data to inform policy and practice.

Solution:

This document includes two tools to help school leaders assess teacher working conditions and well-being:

1. The **Data Collection and Analysis Protocol** describes the steps for collecting and analyzing teacher working conditions and well-being data for remote and hybrid settings. It includes guiding questions and tools to determine the availability of data, how to prioritize which data to explore, and how to analyze the data to make an action plan.
2. The **Teacher Working Conditions Well-Being Framework** outlines the indicators of quality teacher working conditions and well-being to support the analysis of data.

Data Collection and Analysis Protocol

This protocol outlines five steps for collecting and analyzing data to help districts and schools assess their teacher working conditions and well-being within remote and hybrid learning settings.

Step 1: Identify a problem of practice to explore. Discuss and determine why your team is interested in collecting and/or analyzing data related to teacher working conditions and well-being in a remote or hybrid learning environment. This problem of practice can be specific or general. Once you have established a problem of practice, review the Teacher Working Conditions and Well-Being Framework Data Checklist to determine which topic areas are urgent or relevant to address based on the identified problem of practice.

Problem of Practice:

If you are having difficulty coming up with a problem of practice, you may conduct Steps 2 and 3 of the protocol for every topic first and revisit this step. This approach will allow your data to help determine your problem of practice.

Tip for Connecting Practices to Possible Data Sources:

To see examples of what each Component looks like in practice to identify appropriate data sources, please refer to the indicators in the Teacher Working Conditions and Well-Being Framework on page 11.

Step 2: Determine what Data Sources are available. Use the following Teacher Working Conditions and Well-Being Framework Data Checklist to reflect on each Component¹ and its associated Possible Data Sources² for measuring teacher working conditions and well-being. If your school currently collects the data or could easily obtain the data, mark “Y” on the second to last column or “N” if the data would be difficult to obtain. If your school collects and tracks data that reflects the Component, but it is not listed under the Possible Data Sources, you may write in that Data Source within the “Other” cell. Please use the Notes column to add any relevant information about your specific data sources.

Step 3: Prioritize which Data Sources and Components will be analyzed in order to understand and strengthen your district’s or school’s teacher working conditions and well-being. Consider the following questions while reflecting on the checklist:

1. Are you collecting data that demonstrate the various Topics and Components of teacher working conditions and well-being? Does your data provide a full picture of teacher working conditions and well-being? Are there any gaps in the data (e.g., missing data that cover a specific Topic or Component)?
2. Is the quality of the data sufficient to make determinations regarding teacher working conditions (e.g., assign appropriate supports, implement needed policy or systems change)?
 - a. Are the data accurate and valid?
 - b. Are the data organized and easy to interpret and use?
3. Determine the priority of measuring each Component based on the quality and availability of Data Sources as well as your district’s or school’s need to know the information. Note in the second column of the checklist whether each component is a low, medium, or high priority. If you ranked a component medium or high priority but have no or limited data sources associated with that component of teacher working conditions, you should create an action plan to collect those data before moving on to Step 4.

¹ **Component:** What is it that we want to measure? What do we want to know?

² **Data Sources:** What sources can we use to help us understand the component or what it is we want to measure?

Teacher Working Conditions and Well-Being Framework Data Checklist

Topic 1: Time

Component	Priority (Low, Medium, High)	Possible Data Sources	Available or Can Obtain (Y/N)	Notes
1a. Teachers' class sizes facilitate high-quality instruction for full remote and hybrid settings.		Students per teacher by demographic, individualized education program (IEP), free or reduced-priced lunch eligibility, and English learner (EL) status		
		Number of preps/courses per teacher in hybrid settings		
		Number of teaching assistants to support virtual breakout rooms or synchronous instruction in hybrid settings		
		Other (Please specify.):		
1b. Teachers have sufficient time to provide all students with effective instruction and feedback.		Master schedule that specifies time requirements for providing instruction, feedback to students, and meeting students (i.e., office hours)		
		Number of days or hours in contract		
		Analytics of instructional time from the learning management system (LMS) or platform for virtual learning		
		Other (Please specify.):		
1c. Teachers have time during the school day to plan and collaborate.		Master schedule that specifies time for planning and collaboration (i.e., professional learning community [PLC])		
		Number of designated professional development days/hours		
		Analytics from LMS or platform from virtual learning on co-teaching or teaming occurring during instructional time		
		Other (Please specify.):		

Topic 2: Learning Environment and Resource Management

Component	Priority (Low, Medium, High)	Possible Data Sources	Available or Can Obtain (Y/N)	Notes
2a. Materials and resources are available to facilitate quality instruction for remote learning and hybrid settings.		Teacher survey on technology needs and access to internet		
		Number of devices/screens per teacher and child		
		Number of available ports/wireless connection		
		Number of personnel skilled in technology (federal)		
		Parent/caregiver survey on technology needs		
		Other (Please specify.):		
2b. Physical environments support teaching and learning.		Number of portables per student		
		Analytics from the LMS (i.e., frequency of teacher posts/access)		
		Needs assessment for technology		
		Educator survey on technology needs		
		Other (Please specify.):		

Topic 3: Supporting the Social and Emotional Health of Students and School Staff

Component	Priority (Low, Medium, High)	Possible Data Sources	Available or Can Obtain (Y/N)	Notes
3a. An atmosphere of trust and mutual respect is pervasive in the school.		Teacher survey on feelings of trust, open environment for staff to share views, ideas, and level of comfort in taking risks		
		Review of communication processes and materials (e.g., staff meeting notes, online message boards, email newsletters)		
		Virtual leadership office hours		
		Other (Please specify.):		
3b. Provide opportunities for educators to connect, heal, and build their capacity to support themselves and their students.		Master schedule that specifies time for teacher collaboration (i.e., time dedicated for wellness or social and emotional learning [SEL])		
		Staff meeting notes		
		Staff survey data focused on SEL and staff wellness		
		Notes from leadership check-ins		
		Professional development plans		
		Coaching notes		
		Other (Please specify.):		
3c. Create safe, supportive, and equitable learning environments that promote social and emotional development.		Schedules that specify opportunities to build relationships (i.e., student advisory groups)		
		Universal student screening		
		Staff self-assessments of SEL competencies		
		Review of disciplinary practices		
		Other (Please specify.):		

Topic 4: Professional Learning and Teacher Leadership

Component	Priority (Low, Medium, High)	Possible Data Sources	Available or Can Obtain (Y/N)	Notes
4a. Time and resources are provided for professional development that supports the ability of teachers to implement instructional strategies for remote learning and improve student learning.		District and school professional development calendars		
		Continuing education units and license renewal records		
		Professional development records tracking system		
		Professional growth plans of teachers		
		Other (Please specify.):		
4b. Teachers’ performance is assessed objectively, and effective feedback is provided to improve performance and enhance student learning.		Observation logs		
		Videos		
		Evaluation ratings and notes		
		Letters/MOUs added to contracts regarding supervision and evaluation in remote/hybrid settings		
		Other (Please specify.):		
4c. Teachers have opportunities to provide feedback and demonstrate leadership in the school.		Teacher survey on feelings toward opportunities for school leadership, two-way feedback, and teacher voice		
		Continuity of learning plans		
		Service on committees or teams (e.g., Educational Support Teams)		
		PLC participation and meeting notes		
		Mentor/coach participation and notes		
		Grade-level or department chair		
		Teacher-created resources		
		Other (Please specify.):		

Step 4: Analyze data collected. Identify key findings from data, search for any patterns or trends from the findings, and determine current strengths and challenges in your district/school based on the findings. Consider the following reflection questions as you analyze the data:

1. If looking at survey data, how many respondents completed the survey (e.g., how many teachers completed the survey out of how many possible teachers), and when was it administered?
2. What are some findings from the data sources that highlight strengths and challenges?
3. What trends are there in the findings by Topic, by Component, by teacher demographics, and/or over time?
4. Do the data reflect the desired Indicators of teacher working conditions and well-being (see the Framework on page 11 for indicators)? Are there strengths or gaps?

Step 5: Create an Action Plan. Decide what your school or district could implement to improve teacher working conditions and well-being. When creating your action plan, consider which strategies could be most impactful and have the greatest reach. Also consider feasibility, timeliness, and sustainability of the strategy given the context of the situation (e.g., COVID-19 pandemic) and people's workloads. You could also review any existing plans to ensure alignment, rather than duplication, of efforts.

Tips for Analyzing Data

Consider the following when analyzing data:

- Disaggregate data by teacher demographics such as experience level, race and ethnicity, subject area taught, grade level, or type of educator.
- Compare current data to previously collected data (e.g., before remote and hybrid learning). Compare these data in aggregate, in disaggregate by educator group, and by Topic.
- Refer back to the indicators within the Teacher Working Conditions and Well-Being Framework on page 11 as you consider possible strengths and challenges.

Teacher Working Conditions and Well-Being Framework

Purpose: Assist district- and school-level staff to measure and continuously monitor teacher working conditions and well-being during periods of extended remote learning, which includes full remote and hybrid return-to-school models. Measuring and monitoring teacher working conditions and well-being will assist districts and schools to understand the experiences and needs of teachers during remote/hybrid learning to support student and family engagement as well as themselves.

Topic 1: Time

Schools protect teachers’ time to plan, collaborate, and provide effective instruction.^{3 4}

Component	Indicator(s) of Teaching Conditions and Teacher Well-Being
1a. Teachers’ class sizes facilitate high-quality instruction for full remote and hybrid settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have time to plan in order to meet the diverse learning needs of students because they have appropriate class sizes, course loads, and assignments that match their training. Teachers’ class sizes are adjusted to accommodate supporting all students in remote or hybrid learning environments.
1b. Teachers have sufficient time to provide all students with effective instruction and feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have minimum, sufficient uninterrupted instructional time. School leadership determines daily/weekly instructional schedules for teachers that are appropriate for remote and/or hybrid settings and that support teachers in protecting instructional time. School leadership seeks teachers’ input on the schedule for remote and hybrid modes of instruction and on ways to limit the full range of interruptions in instruction experienced by teachers and students.
1c. Teachers have time during the school day to plan and collaborate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum sufficient time is provided during the school day for short- and long-term planning. Minimum sufficient time is available for teachers to work collaboratively to develop common plans and share effective lessons.

³ Benton, K., Butterfield, K., Manian, N., Molina, M., & Richel, M. (2020). *Returning to school: A toolkit for principals*. National Comprehensive Center at Westat. <https://compcenternetwork.org/sites/default/files/Returning%20to%20School%20Toolkit%20for%20Principals.pdf>

⁴ National Association of Secondary School Principals. (2020). *Restart and recovery: The role of the school leader* (Brief 1: Systems Conditions). https://www.nassp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Restart_and_Recovery_Brief_1_SystemsConditions.pdf

Component	Indicator(s) of Teaching Conditions and Teacher Well-Being
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are limited interruptions to the noninstructional time provided to teachers. Teachers have the state minimum time to plan and collaborate (i.e., a duty-free lunch and a planning period). • There are structures and supports for staff to collaborate, plan, and coordinate across a mix of remote and/or hybrid settings.

Topic 2: Learning Environment and Resource Management

Resources are provided for teachers to establish a positive learning environment and deliver quality instruction.^{5 6}

Component	Indicator(s) of Teaching Conditions and Teacher Well-Being
<p>2a. Materials and resources are available to facilitate quality instruction for remote learning and hybrid settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional materials are sufficient to meet the needs of teachers and students for remote learning and hybrid settings. • Resources are available to meet the administrative and instructional needs of teachers. • Technology is reliable and available to meet the 21st century instructional needs of teachers. • Support is in place to help teachers, students, and parents/guardians address challenges to access and use of technology.
<p>2b. Physical environments support teaching and learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning environments support teaching and learning and are appropriate to the content taught, the age level of students, and the mode of instructional delivery (remote and/or hybrid). • Teachers have access or the resources and materials to create their own workspace for remote and/or hybrid settings.

⁵ Center on Great Teachers and Leaders. (2014). *Understanding teaching conditions*. <https://gtlcenter.org/technical-assistance/professional-learning-modules/understandingteaching-conditions>

⁶ Therriault, S. B. (2020). *Back-to-school metrics: How to assess conditions for teaching and learning and to measure student progress during the COVID-19 pandemic*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, Regional Educational Laboratory Midwest. https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/blogs/back-to-school-metrics-covid.aspx?utm_source=newsletter-relmw

Topic 3: Supporting the Social and Emotional Health of Students and School Staff

Policies and practices are in place to support the social and emotional health of students and school staff.^{7 8 9}

Component	Indicator(s) of Teaching Conditions and Teacher Well-Being
3a. An atmosphere of trust and mutual respect is pervasive in the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systems are in place for teachers and school leadership to create opportunities for transparent two-way communication. • Information, resources, and supports help educators improve their practice. • School leadership is consistent in support provided for teachers.
3b. Provide opportunities for educators to connect, heal, and build their capacity to support themselves and their students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and district leaders consistently create and allow space for connecting, listening, and healing among educators. • School and district leaders ensure access to mental health and trauma support. • School and district leaders provide embedded professional learning on equity-informed SEL and trauma-informed practices applicable to themselves and for students.
3c. Create safe, supportive, and equitable learning environments that promote social and emotional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leaders build structures that support adult-student and peer relationships. • School leaders provide opportunities for SEL practices and reflection. • Teachers establish clear expectations for online behavior for safety and respect and provide avenues for students to report if they or others feel unsafe.

⁷ American Institutes for Research. (2020). *COVID-19 and whole child efforts: Reopening update*. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/COVID-Whole-Child-Efforts-Reopening-update-September-2020.pdf>

⁸ Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning. (2020). *Reunite, renew, and thrive: Social and emotional learning (SEL) roadmap for reopening school*. <https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/SEL-ROADMAP.pdf>

⁹ Therriault, 2020

Topic 4: Professional Learning and Teacher Leadership

Quality learning opportunities and leadership roles are available for teachers to enhance teaching and learning and participate in school decisions.^{10 11 12}

Component	Indicator(s) of Teaching Conditions and Teacher Well-Being
<p>4a. Time and resources are provided for professional development that supports the ability of teachers to implement instructional strategies for remote learning and improve student learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers have time and resources to learn and implement remote learning practices (i.e., how to use breakout rooms effectively, how to engage students virtually, how to implement SEL strategies with students, how to use equitable virtual practices). • Schoolwide professional development is aligned with professional learning standards and includes some elements of being data driven, collaborative, evaluated, reflective, and ongoing. • Professional development is based on best practices for remote learning in response to teacher input and identified needs. • Professional development includes elements of differentiation selected to meet some needs of teachers and engage them in their own learning. • Ongoing, job-embedded professional development illustrates the impact on student learning and SEL in remote and hybrid settings.
<p>4b. Teachers’ performance is assessed objectively, and effective feedback is provided that improves performance and enhances student learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher performance is assessed consistently and objectively using the evaluation process. • Teachers and administrators understand the teaching standards and teacher evaluation process. • Feedback helps teachers improve their performance and enhance student learning.

¹⁰ Center on Great Teachers and Leaders, 2014

¹¹ National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2020

¹² Therriault, 2020

Component	Indicator(s) of Teaching Conditions and Teacher Well-Being
4c. Teachers have opportunities to provide feedback and demonstrate leadership in the school.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal and informal opportunities are available for teachers to participate in school leadership. • Teachers are engaged in leadership roles to problem solve and develop resources and supports addressing current challenges concerning remote learning, SEL, equity, and learning losses.