

ABOUT CTAC

The Community Training and Assistance Center is a national not-for-profit organization with a demonstrated record of success in the fields of education and community development. CTAC builds district, state, and community capacity by providing technical assistance, conducting research and evaluation, and informing public policy. It focuses on developing leadership, planning and managerial expertise within school systems, community-based organizations, collaborative partnerships, state and municipal governments, and health and human service agencies. Since 1979, CTAC has provided assistance to hundreds of community-based organizations, coalitions and public institutions in the United States and several other countries.

CTAC's staff is comprised of nationally recognized executives, educators, policy makers, researchers and organizers who have extensive experience working with city, county and state agencies, educational institutions, federal legislative bodies, not-for-profit organizations, philanthropic institutions and the private sector.

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Credits

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Executive Summary

The goal of this professional development review is to describe the nature, impacts, and costs associated with the Learning Leaders professional development model in Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS). It is a companion document to CTAC's Learning Leaders comprehensive evaluation, and intended to help inform the district's professional development strategies going forward.

The review addresses the following questions:

1. How did the professional development approach operate?
2. What was the impact of the professional development approach in improving the quality of instruction in participating Learning Leaders schools?
3. What were the costs of this professional development approach?

Data for the review consisted of written documentary records and artifacts from the district as well as from CTAC educator surveys and interviews. In addition, a special multivariate analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the rigor of student growth targets set versus subsequent student achievement.

Background

A five-year initiative supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), Learning Leaders was designed to improve student achievement in eight high-need schools in HCPS by combining a new educator performance compensation system with robust efforts to build school level instructional capacity. The capacity building focus had two central elements:

- Establishing and analyzing the attainment of student learning targets or growth goals for each student that exceeded the student's previous levels of performance, and
- Enhancing the HCPS model of teacher evaluation with a new teacher observation rubric.

In order to implement these elements effectively, HCPS established a customized professional development approach for all administrative and instructional staff in the eight Learning Leaders schools consisting of:

- **A Professional Development (PD) Academy.** The PD Academy was the vehicle for providing formal trainings and professional development workshops for all educators in the Learning Leaders schools.
- **On-the-Job Coaching.** Teachers and administrators alike received informal professional development in the form of on-the-job coaching.
 - *Learning Leaders coaches.* Teachers received coaching by way of a cadre of specially selected and trained full-time teacher-coaches, chosen from the Learning Leaders schools they served. The original plan for these coaches was to assist, coordinate, and mentor teachers on practices consistent with new instructional domains, components, and rubrics the district had just adapted from the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching. However, the launch of student learning targets turned out to be more complex and challenging than anticipated, leading to a mid-course change in the coaches' emphasis.

Their focus thus increasingly became supporting teachers in setting and attaining the student learning targets. In particular, the coaches became the resident experts on target setting. They helped site educators understand the target setting protocols—e.g., steps required for establishing targets; allowable assessments by content area and grade level; the relationship between attainment and levels of incentive pay. They worked with teachers, individually and in grade-level teams, to enhance their capacity to analyze student data and to identify or perfect strategies or skills to support student growth.

- *Administrator Evaluation and Support (AES) team.* For administrators, coaching was provided by an expert team of three retired Henrico administrators. The team's sole focus was to train principals in the eight participating schools to differentiate between basic, proficient, and distinguished classroom practice, and thereby help teachers improve.

Impacts

The impacts of the Learning Leaders PD approach, and particularly the role of the building level instructional coaches, were in four areas:

- Sustaining reform support and consistency among the teaching staff,
- Setting student learning targets,
- Building teachers' capacity to use data to meet student instructional needs, and
- Fostering a collaborative and supportive school culture.

The major findings regarding impacts of the Learning Leaders PD approach are:

- **The school-based instructional coaches were critical in sustaining multi-year implementation of Learning Leaders processes.** The coaches supported teachers' understanding of, and support for, the new target setting reform processes taking place in the Learning Leaders schools. The coaches also were considered invaluable in helping teachers understand what target setting entailed and, most importantly, helping them persevere through the frustrations of launching a new process that itself was still being refined.
- **The coaches served as the "glue" that kept teachers on track with consistent Learning Leaders implementation despite staff disruptions or leadership change.**
- **High percentages of Learning Leaders administrators and teachers attributed the benefits of the target setting process largely to the support provided by the Learning Leaders coaches.** In particular, Learning Leaders educators overwhelmingly agreed that student learning targets had two critical effects: they individualized instruction and motivated teachers and students.
- **Students with more rigorous student targets exhibited higher levels of growth. This key finding from empirical analysis of the relationship between the rigor of student level target setting and subsequent student achievement persisted even after controlling for initial student achievement.** While this analysis cannot confirm that the more ambitious targets "caused" higher levels of teacher and/or student motivation leading to greater subsequent growth, the findings do suggest that such an effect may have been present.
- **High percentages of teachers and administrators also found the coaches' support to be highly valuable in helping teachers analyze and use student data.** The coaches fostered deeper analysis of data and, over time, some teachers reported that they began to examine data on a daily basis to help determine and track each student's growth patterns.
- **Learning Leaders coaches appeared to contribute substantially to an improved school climate.** Learning Leaders schools focused increasingly on collaboration and mutual support in the interests of student learning. The coaches allowed many teachers to feel safe to open up, individually or in groups, to talk about less than stellar student data, to admit what they didn't know, and to acknowledge areas of classroom practice where they may have been struggling. By allaying teachers' fears that candor might work against them, the coaches were successful in fostering a culture of collaboration as well as an environment of collective responsibility.
- **Administrators improved as instructional leaders.** By all accounts, the intensive, individualized shadowing and support that administrators received from the AES team was key to the effectiveness of the teacher observation and feedback process and made administrators better instructional leaders.

The total supplementary costs (i.e., those in addition to the costs of staff who were already employed by the Henrico County Public Schools) for the years 2010-11 to 2014-15 was just under \$200,000. Approximately \$77,000 of that amount was for fees to those providing workshops at the Professional Development Academy for the five years of Learning Leaders, while approximately \$123,000 was spent on stipends to 11 instructional coaches serving the eight Learning Leaders schools from 2011-12 through 2014-15.

In conclusion, the data from this review documents that the Learning Leaders PD approach in general, and its school-based instructional coaching model in particular, were successful in meeting the district's instructional improvement objectives for these schools. The data suggest that the PD approach effectively built teachers' capacity to set, analyze, and interpret ambitious individual student learning targets that contributed to enhanced achievement, while also promoting a collaborative and "safe" school culture where teachers readily shared their instructional approaches and challenges with their colleagues in the interests of enhancing overall student learning gains.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The pivotal finding from the Community Training and Assistance Center's (CTAC) comprehensive evaluation of the Learning Leaders initiative¹ in Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) is that the initiative was noteworthy for improving student achievement in the high-need schools it served. While it is not possible to determine with statistical precision which specific aspects of the program were most responsible for this success, data from this evaluation strongly suggest that HCPS' approach to providing professional development (PD) to Learning Leaders educators was likely a critical contributing element.

This approach consisted of a Professional Development Academy for all administrators and teachers in the eight high-need schools participating in the Learning Leaders initiative, plus on-the-job coaching: for teachers, a cadre of school-based instructional staff given additional instructional leadership responsibilities in their buildings; for administrators, a trio of retired expert administrators who provided shadowing and feedback as administrators conducted teacher observations and post-conferences.

The goal of the Learning Leaders initiative was to build school level capacity for instructional effectiveness. This would be accomplished by:

- **Establishing and analyzing the attainment of student learning targets or growth goals for each student that exceeded the student's previous levels of performance.** Teachers set these learning targets based on their analysis of data from multiple assessments of past performance for each student.

- **Enhancing the HCPS model of teacher evaluation with a new teacher observation rubric.** The rubric was based on the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching that provided teachers with evidence-based instructional feedback and guided the design of customized professional development.

Learning Leaders PD offerings were intended to support the faithful implementation of both PD reform elements.

The goal of this professional development review is to describe the nature, impacts, and costs associated with the Learning Leaders PD model. It is a companion document to CTAC's Learning Leaders comprehensive evaluation, and intended to help inform the district's professional development strategies going forward.

The review addresses the following questions:

1. How did the PD approach operate?
2. What was the impact of the PD approach in improving the quality of instruction in participating Learning Leaders schools?
3. What were the costs of this PD approach?

To inform these questions, CTAC staff conducted the following data collections:

Documentation and artifacts. Working with the Learning Leaders Director, CTAC assembled and examined the following documentation:

- A compendium of the professional development sessions provided to educators via the PD Academy over the five years of the initiative. (See Appendix A.)
- Criteria for coaching eligibility.
- The protocols guiding teacher observations. (See Appendix B.)
- The set of rubrics forming the basis for evaluating teacher practice and identifying where teachers would benefit from customized professional development. (See Appendix C.)
- The set of rubrics guiding administrator observations and forming the basis for evaluating administrator practice and identifying where administrators would benefit from customized professional development and support. (See Appendix D.)
- The list of standardized assessments used for student learning targets by grade and content area. (See Appendix E.)
- The protocol teachers used to establish student learning targets for each student. (See Appendix F.)

Surveys. CTAC issued an annual staff survey to an average of 1,400 certified educators in the eight Learning Leaders schools. In Years 4 and 5, additional questions were added to this survey to capture experiences specific to the Learning Leaders coaching program.

Interviews. In addition to the Learning Leaders educator surveys, CTAC conducted annual interviews with stakeholders across role groups in HCPS.² Beginning in the second year of the initiative, for purposes of the PD review, we tailored the interview protocols for instructionally related role groups to include questions specific to the PD Academy and Learning Leaders coaching program.

Analysis of student learning targets. CTAC conducted an analysis of the target setting process and the attainment of targets over time.³ The analysis included student learning targets set in grades 4 through 8. It examined the association between student achievement and two different student “treatments”:

- *Having a learning target set or not.* This examination included students in Learning Leaders schools as well as those in comparison schools and also looked at data from before the student learning process began in 2011-12.
- *Having a higher versus a lower target set for student performance.* Here the analysis was limited to students who received targets, i.e., the Learning Leaders schools.

Financial review. In spring 2015, CTAC met in person and by phone with the Learning Leaders Director to identify cost categories associated with the PD approach, costs in each category, and sources of funding supporting the PD provided.

The sections that follow begin with a complete description of Learning Leaders’ professional development approach. Next, it reports on the major study findings regarding impacts and costs of Learning Leaders PD based on the survey, interview, and financial data collected. The final section presents key conclusions and major implications to help guide HCPS with its future PD agenda.

CHAPTER III

About Learning Leaders

Learning Leaders was a five-year initiative supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF). It was designed to improve student achievement in eight high-need schools in Henrico County, Virginia by focusing squarely on building instructional capacity. Spanning school years 2010-11 to 2014-15, the initiative supported, evaluated, and rewarded educators for implementing professional teaching standards and for student achievement growth.

Developed with extensive input from teachers and principals, the Learning Leaders initiative addressed longstanding concerns about the socioeconomic achievement gap in the 51,000-student HCPS as well as the high rate of teacher turnover in the division's high-need schools. Under the TIF program, a key criterion for Learning Leaders' eligibility was that 50% or more of a school's students qualify for the federal Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) program. Of those that met these criteria within the division's 72 schools, eight were chosen to participate in Learning Leaders. These eight—five elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school—had the lowest student achievement among those eligible as well as high numbers of inexperienced teachers.

The Learning Leaders initiative established a new performance-based educator compensation system for the Learning Leaders schools. Teachers

of core subjects could receive up to an additional \$8,000 annually above their regular compensation based on evaluations of their classroom practice and on attaining learning targets set for each student. School administrators were eligible for awards of up to \$10,000 annually, based on conducting high-quality teacher observations, on teachers meeting student learning targets, and on meeting identified school-wide student achievement thresholds.⁴

Accompanying the new performance-based compensation system was a robust effort to develop increased school level instructional capacity for educators in the participating schools. This would be accomplished via establishing and monitoring the attainment of individual student learning targets, and revamping the teacher observation process in the participating schools.

- **Student learning targets.** Student learning targets are explicit academic growth goals for each student that exceed the student's previous performance. For each student, teachers set targets for a year of academic growth based on their analysis of data from multiple assessments of past performance.
- **Observation process.** Learning Leaders enhanced the existing HCPS evaluation model by mapping its teaching standards to the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching.⁵ The intent was to focus on the subset of standards with the highest impact on student learning. Using a rubric that articulated levels of teacher effectiveness within each teaching domain, the observation process was intended to provide teachers with evidence-based instructional feedback and guide subsequent customized professional development.

III CHAPTER

Learning Leaders’ Approach to Professional Development

Ongoing analysis of student learning data, in combination with teacher observation data, were used to design and continually refine tailored professional development provided by the Learning Leaders Professional Development (PD) Academy and also through on-the-job coaching.

Professional Development (PD) Academy

The PD Academy was the structure within which formal trainings and professional development workshops took place for all educators in the eight HCPS Learning Leaders schools. At the outset, the PD Academy provided overview training for all teachers and administrators—about the initiative’s goals, purposes, and components. For each component, participants learned the initiative’s implementation details as well as what would be expected of teachers and administrators. They learned the concepts, strategies, and skills related to the Learning Leaders instructional framework, a modified version of the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Over the course of the initiative, as school staffs began to focus on specific domains of the Danielson Framework, the PD Academy provided tailored support to help teachers from different schools master instructional strategies or particular kinds of knowledge or skills. (See Appendix A, Learning Leaders Professional Development Academy Summary of Offerings.) For example, in Years 2 and 3, selected high school teachers received professional development to hone their classroom management skills and strengthen their content knowledge. In Years 4 and 5, the staffs of two elementary schools received a year-long course of monthly professional development to learn concepts, strategies, and skills specific to teaching at-risk children from poverty. In Years 3, 4, and 5 all elementary, middle, and high school teachers received workshops in strategies that promote active student engagement, a rubric area that became an emphasis across all eight schools.

On-the-Job Coaching

School level administrators and teachers alike received informal professional development in the form of on-the-job coaching.

Coaching for Administrators. For school administrators, whose responsibility was teacher instructional support, coaching was provided by the Administrator Evaluation and Support (AES) team, an expert team of three retired Henrico administrators. The team’s sole focus was to train principals in the eight participating schools to differentiate between basic, proficient, and distinguished classroom practice, and thereby help teachers improve.

Along with the Learning Leaders Director, the AES team provided principals and assistant principals with extensive training that emphasized observational rigor and inter-rater reliability. It included instruction in how to use the Charlotte Danielson-based rubrics to observe, rate, and score teacher practice and how to use the initiative’s digital rubric tools. Members of the AES team shadowed administrators as they conducted teacher observations and post-observation conferences, providing feedback, advice, consultation, and coaching.

When turnover occurred, the team trained and coached the newly hired administrators. This was critical, since four of the eight schools experienced at least one change in principal over the course of the initiative.

In CTAC interviews, administrators had strong praise for the AES team’s work, calling it a stellar aspect of Learning Leaders. Having these veterans offering advice and “looking over my shoulder,” as one administrator described it, was for many the best professional development of their careers.

Coaching for Teachers. Coaching for teachers was provided by a cadre of 11 teacher-coaches—one for each of Learning Leaders’ five elementary schools, and two each for the middle and high schools. (Learning Leaders included two middle schools and one high school.) The Learning Leaders coaching program had two goals: to improve classroom instruction and to improve the school-wide learning environment.

The coaches were identified by principals and trained and supported by the Learning Leaders Director. All coaches were full-time teachers in the Learning Leaders schools they served. Each had demonstrated effective, standards-driven classroom practice and garnered high levels of student

achievement. Eligibility criteria also included being a master teacher with at least four years' teaching experience. Coaches provided 10 hours of assistance per month in their schools and earned a stipend based on an hourly rate.

Because Learning Leaders' first year was only partial implementation, both the coaching program and the student learning targets process began in Year 2. The original plan for the coaches was to assist, coordinate, and mentor teachers, particularly in terms of improving their performance on the Danielson instructional domains, components, and rubrics. However, the launch of student learning targets turned out to be more complex and challenging than anticipated, leading to a mid-course change in the coaches' emphasis toward the target setting process as their main responsibility.

How Learning Leader coaches supported the target setting process

For each teacher, the target setting process involved two key activities:

- **Analyzing past achievement data for each student.** Teachers used three-to-four years of past assessment data from the HCPS electronic data system to analyze each student's learning history. Assessments analyzed varied by grade level and content area. (See Appendix E, Table of Assessments.) During the target setting process, teachers worked with their administrator/principal and were supported by the Learning Leaders coaches.
- **Determining an appropriate annual growth target for each student.** Teachers used their analysis of past student performance to set a year-end target for each student's growth and entered those targets into the electronic system each year between November 20 and December 20. Teachers based their projections on judgments drawn from their analytical findings and from personal knowledge of each student. The process recognized that certain circumstances outside of a teacher's control might affect a student's ability to meet targets—for example, excessive absences or loss of a parent or guardian. In such cases, the teacher could update that student's target(s).

Stemming from this process, basic coaching activities centered on helping teachers understand and use effective strategies for data analysis. Coaches provided this support individually or in groups, e.g., facilitating the collaborative work of grade-level teams.

Beyond this fundamental analytic support, the coaches also served as the on-site resource on every aspect of the target setting process. Working closely with the Learning Leaders Director, they supported teachers as well as administrators with everything from identifying and addressing policy/procedural questions (e.g., when a student moves from one class to another mid-semester, which teacher claims that student), to the appropriate use of forms and formats, to ensuring that deadlines were met. They were also the experts who answered questions related to the target setting protocols—e.g., about steps required for establishing targets; allowable assessments by content area and grade level; and about how scores from differing assessments qualified for particular levels of incentive pay.

The coaches' feedback to the Learning Leaders Director regarding teachers adapting to the new target setting process played a role in the evolution and refinement of the learning targets process. For example, the original forms and processes teachers used to document their targets proved confusing,

leading to errors and omissions. The Office of Research and Planning redesigned the forms, making them more user-friendly. With ongoing support from that office, and with annual training from the Learning Leaders Director in the process and use of the forms, the coaches took the lead in supporting teachers and principals through the specifics of implementation.

As the target setting process underwent year-by-year adjustments, the coaches continued to serve as the Learning Leaders' critical site communicators, helping teachers and principals understand and incorporate the changes. Given high staff turnover in the eight Learning Leaders schools, coaches played a major role annually in inducting new teachers into the Learning Leaders initiative.⁶ They also provided technical assistance to staff in using improved tools for more systematic data analysis and more thorough and accurate documentation of the targets developed. Finally, several of the coaches also provided teacher support for classroom practice related to the Danielson domains, as originally intended, making themselves available for teachers who opted to seek their help.

In all these efforts, the obvious challenge to Learning Leaders coaches was time, since the coaches continued to be full-time teachers. Whether the focus was student learning targets or classroom practice support, the coaches conducted their coaching work during planned time blocks—e.g., staff meetings, scheduled teacher preparation time, or specific hours when colleagues knew they would be available—as well as before school, after school, at lunch, in the hallway, and by phone in the evening. A couple of coaches reported instances of release time from their own teaching, either because of circumstance—e.g., in one case, having an outstanding student teacher—or because their principal provided a substitute.

Originally, Learning Leaders had purchased a library of instructional videos aligned with the Danielson Framework that would supplement the coaches' direct support. Unfortunately, the coaches found the videos to be ineffective because they were not relevant to their student populations and the particular challenges faced in Learning Leaders classrooms.

IV CHAPTER

Impacts

The impacts of the Learning Leaders PD approach, and particularly the role of the building level instructional coaches, were in four areas:

- Sustaining reform support and consistency among teaching staff,
- Setting student learning targets,
- Building teachers' capacity to use data to meet student instructional needs, and
- Fostering a collaborative and supportive school culture.

Sustaining reform support and consistency among teaching staff

Most fundamentally, the interview data reveal that the school-based instructional coaches' role was critical in sustaining teacher understanding of, and support for, the new target setting reform processes taking place in the Learning Leaders schools. The coaches were considered invaluable in helping teachers understand what target setting entailed and, most importantly, helping them persevere through the frustrations of launching a new process that itself was still being refined. One source of frustration, for example, occurred when the state revamped its math tests—coincidentally during the already stressful inaugural year of student learning targets—adding a major aspect of uncertainty to teachers' math target setting. “There was a lot of hand holding and calming them down,” said one coach.

The interview data also confirmed that the coaches served as the “glue” that kept teachers on track with consistent Learning Leaders implementation despite staff disruptions or leadership change.

Coaches provide a type of “in” to the program. If [teachers] don’t understand the rubric, we can help them get the answers, help them get resources. I think it helps teachers feel more confident.

—Learning Leaders elementary coach

I have a little checklist to make sure everyone does what they’re supposed to do. This year, there’s more of a role for the administrators in the targets. So I check in with them as well, helping to make sure they understood the process.

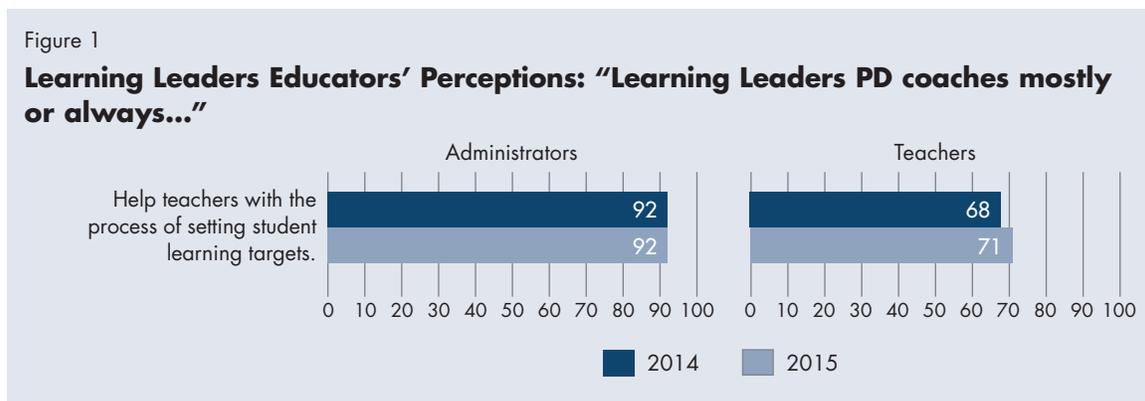
—Learning Leaders elementary coach

Without the coaches we would have gotten back to being consistently inconsistent.

—Central instructional leader

Setting student learning targets

Figure 1 shows that Learning Leaders educators overwhelmingly agreed that the coaching they received helped them set student learning targets. In the 2014 survey, 92% of principals and 68% of teachers responded that it is “always” or “mostly” the case that Learning Leaders coaches “help teachers with the process of setting student learning targets.” In 2015, 92% of principals and 71% of teachers responded in the same way.



Interview data from Learning Leaders teachers and principals suggest that the target setting process had two critical instructional effects: they individualized instruction and motivated teachers and students.

Individualized instruction. Teachers and administrators praised the shift in teachers’ focus from whole class achievement in the aggregate to that of individual students. By forcing teachers to focus on each student’s learning needs, the targets were seen as fostering the individualization of classroom strategies. In collaborative sessions, teachers reported having “better conversations” and engaging in “more reflection” on how to tailor instruction for each child:

First and foremost, the target setting process helps everyone involved to be more cognizant of individual student needs. We say it all the time in education, that we have to have differentiation for each student, and this forced that to happen.

—Central instructional leader

[The learning targets have] changed the conversation teachers have about instruction, about different instructional strategies that are effective with different kinds of kids. That's what you want.

—Central instructional leader

It has moved the focus from my class to every single student. I think that's the golden egg of [Learning Leaders].

—Learning Leaders elementary teacher

[The learning targets force] teachers to acknowledge how much they contribute to their students' growth. It stops all of the excuses and it places the responsibility on their shoulders... The accountability for teachers and principals with regards to student growth is much higher.

—Central instructional leader

Motivation. Besides focusing on individual rather than whole class attainment, growth targets were also a shift away from the singular imperative to hit absolute proficiency goals. Teachers reported that the idea of being recognized for how much they helped a student grow, especially for students who were far behind, was highly motivating:

Before, the goal was, "We need an 87% pass rate on [the state test]." Now I, as the teacher, set this goal for you [the student]. This is what I can do for you this year. That drives me.

—Learning Leaders elementary teacher

The morale of teachers is better. With our demographics, students come in with a lack of prior knowledge. In previous years, there was stress that a student [who is far behind] won't be ready for the third grade level by June. But now you can show how far they've gone up, even if they're at the second grade level by June.

—Learning Leaders elementary coach

Having the target makes you do it every day.

—Learning Leaders elementary teacher

Many teachers also reported that target setting motivated students as well as teachers, with the performance targets becoming the basis for conversations between teachers, students, and sometimes parents about what the student could do to reach his or her goals:

[Students] know exactly what scores they need to get and what they need to do to move to the next level.

—Learning Leaders elementary teacher

It's falling back on the kids a little... We put a sticky on their desk of their target. Today they're exceeding the target by 15 points, and they're so excited that they grew so much. It's motivating for the kids.

—Learning Leaders elementary teacher

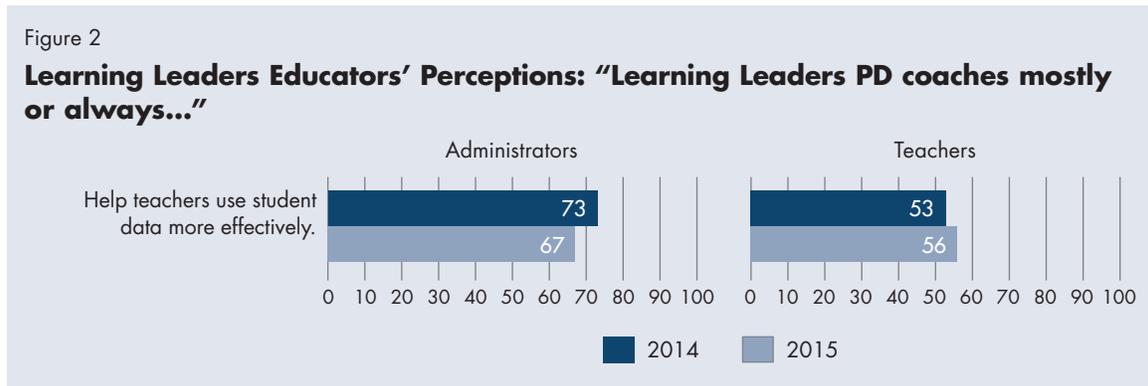
There's conversation with the student: where are you? Are you comfortable with that? If you're a C and you want an A, let's talk about what you need to do to get there. What grades do you need in class, what level of homework effort? Holding the data out to the students has been powerful.

—Learning Leaders elementary principal

Role of ambitious targeting setting in enhancing motivation and student growth. To help gauge empirically the impact of student learning targets on both teacher and student motivation, CTAC conducted an analysis of the targets set and attained from 2011-12 through 2014-15 in 4th through 8th grade in English language arts and mathematics in Learning Leaders schools.⁷ The analysis showed that, *even after controlling for prior test scores, there was still a relationship between targets set and student achievement outcomes.* That is, if two students had similar previous-year SOL scores but one had a higher growth target, that student tended to have a higher SOL score at the end of the year. While one cannot discount the possibility that setting higher performance targets merely *reflected* more accurate teacher and student judgments of student potential rather than helped *cause* higher achievement, the findings are also consistent with the possibility of target setting having, at least in part, a motivational effect leading to higher achievement—i.e., the more rigorous the learning targets, the more intensively teachers and students appeared to focus their energy to attain it.⁸

Building teachers' capacity to use data to meet student instructional needs

Many teachers and principals also credited Learning Leaders coaches in helping them analyze and use the assessment data on student performance to inform and improve their subsequent instruction. Specifically, in 2014 and 2015, significant percentages of teachers and principals reported that it is always or mostly the case that Learning Leaders coaches “help teachers use student data more effectively”: 73% of principals and 53% of teachers in 2014; 67% of principals and 56% of teachers in 2015.



The teacher and administrator interviews indicated that the coaches enabled such activities as using grade-level or departmental meetings to share findings about individual students' performance as well as instructional strategies to help each student attain his or her learning targets. Over time, some teachers reported that they began to examine data on a daily basis to help determine and track each student's growth patterns. As one principal noted, teachers gained a better sense of "where all of the students are."

Especially among a grade-level team, [having coaches] helps teachers have more discussion of data. It helps them plan better, makes [lesson plans] more effective and meaningful.

—Learning Leaders elementary coach

Teachers are using data differently, more often and with intensity...Data is [driving] group plans, sharing of information, and test development based on entire departmental needs.

—Central instructional leader

It's a very different conversation about data. It's a lot more purposeful. We don't assume anything.

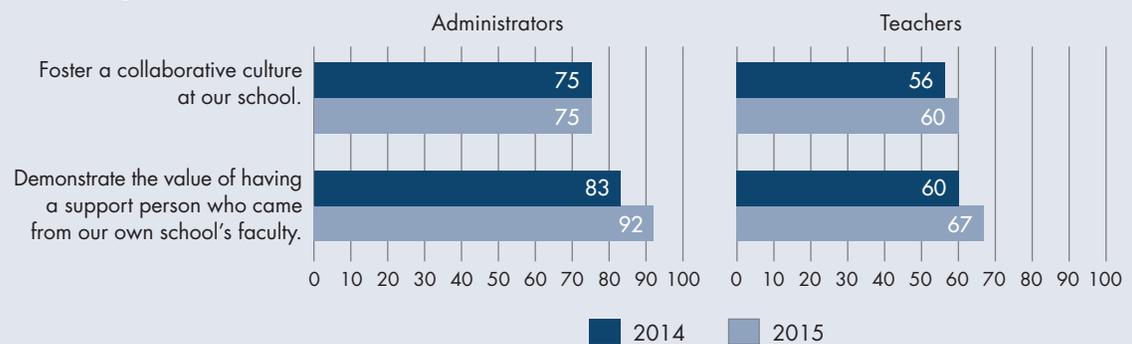
—Learning Leaders elementary principal

Fostering a collaborative and supportive school culture

There were also strong indications from both the survey and interview data that the coaches contributed substantially to an improved school climate focusing on collaboration and mutual support in the interests of student learning needs. In 2014 and 2015, most teachers and, especially, most principals reported that it is always or mostly the case that the Learning Leaders coaches "foster a collaborative culture at our school": 75% of principals and 56% of teachers in 2014; 75% of principals and 60% of teachers in 2015. The "always" and "mostly" responses were even more positive for the coaches "[demonstrating] the value of having a support person who came from our own school's faculty": 83% of principals and 60% of teachers in 2014; 92% of principals and 67% of teachers in 2015.

Figure 3

Learning Leaders Educators' Perceptions: "Learning Leaders PD coaches mostly or always..."



According to many interviewees, because the coaches were not only master teachers but non-evaluative peers from their own school's faculty, teachers felt safe opening up, individually or in groups, to talk about less than stellar student data, to admit what they didn't know, and to acknowledge areas of classroom practice where they may be struggling. In other words, by allaying teachers' fears that candor would work against them, the coaches fostered deeper analysis of data while also promoting a culture of collaboration and an environment of collective responsibility.

[The coaches'] key role is being that peer. When a teacher is struggling, he or she may not feel comfortable talking to us [administrators]. The coach takes that evaluative part out of it.

—Learning Leaders secondary principal

There's a culture now to ask for help rather than having someone say you aren't doing something right.

—Learning Leaders elementary teacher

We do collaborate about trying to understand the rubrics, what are they looking for? Our coach was our team member, so she was in the conversation about what are best strategies for this, what would help me.

—Learning Leaders elementary teacher

I've really seen the impact on collaboration. At first, people said, "I don't want you looking at my test scores." But now people are more willing to come and ask for help.

—Learning Leaders elementary coach

Besides supporting pedagogical and professional growth, there was evidence that the coaches' work provided social-emotional support that is especially critical for new teachers. Novices facing the outsize challenges of a high-need school had, in their coach, an approachable, knowledgeable colleague whose role was not to judge or rate but to offer concrete help and encouragement.

The coach provides a safe place to fail. Somehow we need to keep that. We need to maintain that for one another. You have to have that. Our schools are in high stress. The job is emotionally, academically, and physically challenging. That's what will keep people in our schools.

—Learning Leaders elementary coach

Instead of pointing out what you're doing wrong or what the administrator feels you did wrong, the coach helps you process through things and feel better about yourself. When you feel like you're the only one having this problem, you can talk to the coach and feel like you're not alone.

—Learning Leaders elementary coach

CHAPTER V

Financial Review

The professional development costs of Learning Leaders include supplementary costs of PD provided by the Learning Leaders PD Academy and the costs of stipends and summer payments to the 11 Learning Leaders coaches.

Cost of professional development provided by the Learning Leaders Professional Development Academy

Because the Learning Leaders Director and regular HCPS professional development employees provided most of the Professional Development Academy training, supplementary costs of this PD element were relatively low. They consisted of fees for the three-person Administrator Evaluation and Support team who provided training and support to administrators as well as for a small number of external experts who conducted teacher training. (See Appendix A for a full description of professional development sessions provided to educators over the five years of Learning Leaders.)

Cost related to Learning Leaders coaches

All 11 Learning Leaders coaches received training in instructional coaching and participated in annual sessions to review processes and procedures, determine coaching goals for the coming year, and receive updates on new information about the initiative. Because these activities were provided by the Learning Leaders Director, they involved no additional non-employee fees.

Payment terms for the 11 Learning Leaders coaches were as follows:

- Ten hours per month @ \$27 per hour stipend
- A maximum of 90 summer work hours, in addition to regular stipend hours. Summer hours over the course of the initiative were minimal.

Table 1

Cumulative Non-Employee Costs for the Learning Leaders Professional Development Academy, 2010-11 through 2014-15

Recipients/Type of Professional Development	Cost
<p>Learning Leaders administrators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and PD for 27 administrators at the beginning of the initiative and, subsequently, for each newly hired administrator to support understanding and effective implementation of the initiative. Sessions included training on the aspirations and intended outcomes of Learning Leaders as well as on strategies and tools for “becoming a Learning Leaders school.” • All administrators also received annual observation training. • Principals of the eight Learning Leaders schools came together annually for a PD conference. • High school administrators received additional coaching support to work with struggling teachers. 	\$29,859.00*
<p>Learning Leaders teachers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for all 308 initial teachers at the beginning of the initiative and, subsequently, for all newly hired teachers to support understanding and effective implementation of the initiative. Sessions included training on observation rubrics, protocols, timelines, and the student learning target process and its logistics. • In addition, throughout the course of Learning Leaders, the PD Academy provided topic-specific PD tailored to identified teacher needs related to the domains of the instructional rubric. In some cases this addressed needs across the staffs of all eight schools; in other cases it was tailored to the needs of individual school staffs (including administrators). • Several high school teachers received individual PD in specific rubric domains. 	\$47,094.25**
TOTAL	\$76,953.25

*Fees for three-person Administrator Evaluation and Support team.

**Fees to external experts who provided workshops for teachers.

Table 2

Total Learning Leaders Coach Payments, Including Stipends and Summer Hours, 2011-12 through 2014-15

Year	Average Cost Per Coach	Cost
2011-12	\$2,295	\$25,245
2012-13	\$2,970	\$32,670
2013-14	\$2,879	\$31,669
2014-15	\$3,036	\$33,396
TOTAL		\$122,980

VI CHAPTER

Conclusion

The Learning Leaders professional development approach was pivotal to the initiative's success in achieving a key goal: building the instructional capacity of educators in the eight Learning Leaders schools. An agenda of customized training through Professional Development Academy workshops combined with individualized coaching support for both teachers and administrators helped educators implement new observation and learning-target processes that would change the very ways of doing business at their schools.

The teacher coaching element in particular had multiple positive affects. Coaches became the go-to resource in their schools, enabling successful transition to and sustaining of student learning targets. They shepherded teachers through a difficult launch period, serving as the resident experts on protocols and navigators of data analysis and building teacher buy-in to the process. The coaches' impact was reflected in teachers' increasing reports of positive tradeoffs for their heightened workload: student learning targets were prompting more individualized instruction as well as increased teacher and student motivation. Empirical analysis also showed that students with more rigorous targets exhibited higher levels of growth.

The coaches' role in promoting a school climate of openness and collaboration in the interest of student learning was significant and critical to the initiative. With the non-evaluative coaches, teachers felt safe discussing less than stellar student data and brainstorming with colleagues on improvement strategies. Moreover, in the face of staff turnover, the coaches served as the glue that helped sustain Learning Leaders implementation throughout its five-year timeline.

Appendix A: Learning Leaders Professional Development Academy Summary of Offerings 2010-11 to 2014-15

Learning Leaders (LL) Participants	When	Content/Presenters
LL administrators, K-12 (27)	Annual in fall	<p>Content #1: Becoming a learning school Presenters: Director of Staff Development; Learning Leaders Director</p> <p>Content #2: Observation training Presenters: Administrator Evaluation and Support Team (3 retired HCPS administrators)</p> <p>Provided strategies and tools to strengthen school and district culture; establish a focus on common goals; clarify roles of stakeholders in the school and district; troubleshoot issues perceived as barriers to professional learning. Intent: to help administrators identify core elements of a learning school that engages in collaborative professional learning; develop strategies for transforming the school into a learning school or refining work already underway; assess progress toward becoming a learning school; clarify stakeholder roles; troubleshoot issues perceived as barriers.</p>
LL principals, K-12 (8)	Annual in fall	Conference with Director of Staff Development and Learning Leaders Director to collaborate on and continually deepen principals' expertise at leading a learning school.
LL high school administrators (5)	2012-13 2013-14 As requested	Support from Administrator Evaluation and Support Team member (a retired HCPS administrator) to help these administrators work with the teachers they had identified as struggling.
LL high school, selected teachers	2012-13 2013-14 As requested	Support for instruction, classroom management, and content from teacher-coaches.
2 LL elementary schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • K-5 school #1: 21 teachers; 3 administrators • K-5 school #2: 30 teachers; 3 administrators 	2012-13 2013-14 As requested	<p>Fall: External consultant taught the entire faculty the Tools for Teaching program— instructional strategies for teaching at-risk students from poverty. Sessions each week for 12 weeks, followed by classroom observation and coaching.</p> <p>Spring: Follow up weekly sessions to fine-tune implementation of the program, plus support for faculty team leaders and continuation of classroom observation and coaching.</p>
New LL teachers, K-12	Annual in fall	Learning Leaders Director provided introduction to Learning Leaders, observation rubrics, protocols, and timelines; student learning target charts (beginning 2011-12).
All LL teachers, K-12	Annual 2012-13 2013-14 2014-15	External consultant provided PD on "The Active Classroom." Teachers learned brain-based teaching strategies for establishing rapport and building relationships between students and teachers; engaging students' active participation in the learning process; creating interactive learning environments that include all learning modalities; and improving presentation and process facilitation skills.
LL coaches, K-12 (11)	Summer 2011	HCPS Staff Development office provided instructional coach training.
LL coaches, K-12 (11)	Annual 2011-12 2012-13 2013-14 2014-15	Learning Leaders Director provided review of previous year processes and procedures as well as the focus for the new year and information updates.

Appendix B: Learning Leaders Teacher Observation/Evaluation Protocol

1. Teachers complete self-assessment of their skills with the Danielson Framework specific to the components on the five rubrics.
2. Teachers select component and elements for their focus for the year from the five rubric areas. Each completes the PGE^P* planning form and files it in the electronic file.
3. The observer/evaluator reviews the form and accepts or modifies the focus area(s). A meeting with the teacher is required to modify the form. If it is accepted the electronic signature will be added to the form.
4. Upon the evaluator's approval of the focus each teacher will build his/her professional growth plan in the system.
5. The observer will complete at least two full observation cycles for the teacher using the observation rubric for the focus area. (At least one formal evaluation must be submitted for teachers who teach only a partial school year.)
6. At least two additional observations must be completed during the school year using other observation rubrics. (At least one informal evaluation must be submitted for teachers who teach a partial school year.) Walkthrough observations should be completed using the rubrics as well. (At least four must be submitted for teachers who teach a full school year; at least two must be submitted for teachers who teach a partial school year.)
7. All rubric documents will be placed in the teacher's electronic file.
8. At the end of the school year the file should include documentation of a minimum of four full observations, two with evidence of a complete observation cycle, as well as documentation of a minimum of four walkthroughs. (For teachers who teach a partial school year, the minimum is two observations and two walkthroughs.)
 - a. The Data Support Team will consider exceptions to the observation protocols, and the total number of observations will be adjusted on a case-by-case basis. Examples: Administrator and/or teacher is on leave during the school year; administrator and/or teacher is hired during the school year.
9. The teacher incentive score for the year will be based on the following formula: The highest score of the focus rubric observation, plus the average score for the classroom observations using the "non-focus" rubrics, plus the average score for the walk-through rubrics, divided by three. At a teacher's request, and in agreement with the evaluator, a low scoring observation may be taken out of the file and replaced by another observation of the same rubric. However, the specified number of observations must be in the file. All observation documents, except the lower of the focus rubric observations will be considered in the calculation. Any scores from rubric 6 will be included in the walk-through averages. Total score will be determined by:
 $1/3 = \text{highest score of the focus rubric observation}$
 $1/3 = \text{average of "non-focus" observations}$
 $1/3 = \text{average of walk-through observations and/or Rubric 6}$
10. All rubrics will be posted electronically.

Appendix B continued

Post-Observation Conference Protocol**	Supervisor's questions/prompts/suggestions	Teacher's questions/prompts/insights
	<p>You may want to include the sequence of the conference in your general email regarding date and time of the post observation conference.</p>	
<p>Opening Reflection</p>	<p>Describe your classroom on the day of the observation, i.e., date, time of day, grade level, number of students, make-up of students (ex. Ed, Title 1, Gifted, etc.), setting events (fire drill, snow day, delay, etc.), the content and/or objective of the lesson.</p> <p><i>"Remind me/share with me the specific focus of this lesson as it relates to the PQR and/or rubric."</i></p> <p><i>"Now briefly describe your lesson and the activities you purposefully planned as they relate to this focus and the data that I collected for you."</i></p>	
<p>Presentation and Reflection on the Data</p>	<p>Include the focus of the lesson in this discussion.</p> <p>Provide/discuss data that suggest that things went well.</p> <p><i>"In what way did the data meet or not meet your expectations?"</i></p> <p><i>"Where do the data suggest room for improvement?"</i></p> <p>Explain the data in more depth, probe for deeper analysis:</p> <p><i>"How do you know?"</i></p> <p><i>"Prove to me that . . ."</i></p> <p>If she/he can't, offer support:</p> <p><i>"How do you think it would look if ____?"</i></p> <p><i>"Talk to me a bit more about ____ and how you plan to grow in that area."</i></p> <p><i>"What other data could help us determine the effectiveness of this lesson and student learning?"</i></p> <p>THEN, bring in additional data that may or may not be related to the PQR/focus and repeat the above process for positive growth/change.</p>	
<p>Scoring the Rubric</p>	<p>Choose and prove.</p> <p><i>"Let's look at each of the elements from the rubric."</i></p> <p><i>"How would you score yourself on this?"</i></p> <p><i>"What data are you using to support this?"</i></p> <p><i>"Based on your identified focus of ____ where do you see the lesson as it relates to the rubric?"</i></p>	

Appendix B continued

Post-Observation Conference Protocol**	Supervisor's questions/prompts/suggestions	Teacher's questions/prompts/insights
<p>Delineation of Next Steps</p> <p>Provide next steps for teacher, if they are unable to do so.</p> <p>If teachers have discussed this in an earlier part of the conversation, have them reiterate with additional questions.</p>	<p><i>"As you consider our data discussion and the rubric focus (restate), what are areas that need additional attention/improvement?"</i></p> <p><i>"What do you plan to do to address those improvements?"</i></p> <p><i>"What are the next steps?"</i></p> <p>(You want the teacher to own this and come up with the ideas for improvement.)</p> <p><i>"During the next observation I will look for: 1. ____, 2. ____, and 3. ____."</i></p> <p>If you see that there is a larger issue, change the focus to address the greater need (class management, questioning, etc.). Make changes on planning form. Teacher should date and initial that change.</p> <p>Remind the teacher where she/he is in the observation cycle (next will be WT, NF, or another F observation). Do we want to plan that now?</p>	
<p>Reflection on Future Support</p>	<p><i>"How do you feel about this observation cycle and this specific conference?"</i></p> <p>Why—probe further if necessary.</p> <p><i>"Based on the specific focus/rubric, what type of assistance or resources may I provide to you?"</i></p> <p><i>"Are there other data tools that you would like for me to use in our future observations or other data that you would like me to look for?"</i></p> <p><i>"What additional feedback would be beneficial to you?"</i></p> <p>If a directive conversation, acknowledge the issue(s) and ask if the teacher needs additional support in that area.</p> <p>Thank the teacher for her/him participation in the process and willingness to be so reflective.</p>	

*CTAC note: The Professional Growth and Evaluation Process (PGE) is the teacher evaluation process in Henrico County Public Schools. It is guided by a set of teaching standards known as the Professional Qualities and Instructional Responsibilities (PQRs). All teachers in the division receive annual formative and summative evaluations based on their performance in implementing the PQRs. Evaluation is evidence-based and includes collection of data and artifacts (lesson plans, assessments, student assignments, etc.) related to classroom practice and student achievement outcomes.

**HCPS note: The tool was compiled from various post-observation tools used by administrators over the past few years, use along with the rubrics used for TIF.

Appendix C: Sample Rubrics for Evaluating Teacher Practice

Rubric 4 - Domain 3: Instruction Component 3b.1: Discussion Techniques

PQR	Element	Level of Performance			
		Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
B.3	Response to Students	Teacher ignores or brushes aside students' questions or interests.	Teacher attempts to accommodate students' questions or interests, although the pacing of the lesson is disrupted at the exclusion of all other students.	Teacher successfully accommodates students' questions or interests.	Teacher seizes a major opportunity to enhance learning, building on student interests or a spontaneous event.
G.1	From Component 3e				
H.2	p. 91				
R.2					
D.4	Discussion Techniques				
D.5	p. 82				
D.7					
H.3	Student Participation	A few students dominate the discussion.	Teacher attempts to engage all students in the discussion, but with only limited success.	Teacher successfully engages most (50% or more) students in the discussion.	When developmentally appropriate, students themselves ensure that all voices are heard in the discussion (80% or more engaged).
	p. 82				

Rubric 5 - Domain 3: Instruction

Component 3c: Engaging Students in Learning

PQR	Element	Level of Performance				
		Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished	
D.5	Activities and Assignments	Activities and assignments are inappropriate for students' age or background. Students are not cognitively engaged.	Activities and assignments are appropriate to some students and engage them cognitively, but others are not engaged.	Most activities and assignments are appropriate to students and almost all students are cognitively engaged in exploring the content.	All students are cognitively engaged in the activities and assignments in their exploration of content. Students initiate or adapt activities and projects to enhance their understanding (Not K-2).	
D.8-11						
F.3						p. 85
F.4						
G.1						
H.3						
	Grouping of Students	Instructional groups are inappropriate to the students or to the instructional outcomes.	Instructional groups are partially appropriate to the students or only moderately successful in advancing instructional outcomes.	Instructional groups are productive and fully appropriate to the purpose.	Instructional groups are productive and fully appropriate to students or instructional purposes of the lesson. Students take initiative to influence formation or adjustment of groups (Not K-2).	
D.7						
G.1	p. 85					
D.7	Instructional Materials and Resources	Instructional materials and resources are unsuitable to the instructional purposes or do not engage students mentally.	Instructional materials and resources are only partially suitable to the instructional purposes or students are only partially engaged.	Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional purposes and engage students cognitively.	Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional purposes and engage students cognitively. Students initiate choice, adaptation, or creation of materials to enhance their learning.	
F.1						p. 85
F.2						
G.3						
I.1						

Rubric 5 - Domain 3: Instruction
Component 3c: Engaging Students in Learning

PQR	Element	Level of Performance			
		Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
	Structure and Pacing	The lesson has no clearly defined structure, or the pace of the lesson is too slow or rushed, or both.	The lesson has recognizable structure, although it is not uniformly maintained throughout the lesson. Pacing is inconsistent.	The lesson has a clearly defined structure around which activities are organized. Pacing of the lesson is generally appropriate.	The lesson's structure is highly coherent, allowing for reflection and closure. Pacing is appropriate for most students.
A.1	p. 85				
B.4	Lesson adjustment				
B.5	From 3e				
G.2	p. 91				
	Management of Transitions	Transitions are chaotic with much time lost between.	Only some transitions are efficient, resulting in some loss of time.	Transitions occur smoothly with little loss of time.	Transitions are seamless with students assuming responsibility in ensuring their efficient operation.
B.5	From 2c, p. 72				

Appendix D: Sample Rubrics for Evaluating Administrator Practice

Henrico County Public Schools				
Administrator Evaluation Rubric A: Analysis of Data Collection on Rubrics				
Leader: _____ School: _____ Date: _____				
	Unsatisfactory (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Data Collection for Walk-throughs	The leader does not utilize rubrics to collect data on specific areas of focus for teachers during walkthroughs. Objective, evidence-based data are NOT collected. 4-6 walkthroughs are not completed for each teacher during the course of the school year, and these are not consistently stored in the electronic system.	The leader utilizes rubrics to collect data on specific areas of focus for teachers during walkthroughs. Objective, evidence-based data are NOT consistently collected according to the headers on the rubric. The appropriate level of performance scores is then marked on the rubric, and these may parallel the evidence collected on an inconsistent basis. 4-6 walkthroughs are not completed for each teacher during the course of the school year, and these may not consistently be stored in the electronic system.	The leader utilizes rubrics to collect data on specific areas of focus for teachers during walkthroughs. Objective, evidence-based data are consistently collected according to the headers on the rubric. The appropriate level of performance scores is then marked on the rubric, and these may parallel the evidence collected on an inconsistent basis. 4-6 walkthroughs are completed for each teacher during the course of the school year, but these may not consistently be stored in the electronic system.	The leader utilizes rubrics to collect data on specific areas of focus for teachers during walkthroughs. Objective, evidence-based data are consistently collected according to the headers on the rubric. The appropriate level of performance scores is then marked on the rubric, and these consistently parallel the evidence collected. 4-6 walkthroughs are completed for each teacher during the course of the school year and stored in the electronic system.
Evidence				
Score				

Appendix D continued

Henrico County Public Schools

Administrator Evaluation Rubric A: Analysis of Data Collection on Rubrics

Leader: _____ School: _____ Date: _____

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Data Collection for Formal/ Informal Observations	The leader does not utilize rubrics to collect data on specific areas of focus for teachers during formal and informal observations. Objective, evidence-based data are NOT consistently collected. 2 formal observations and 2 informal observations are not completed for teachers according to the guidelines for probationary (March 1) and continuing contract (May 30) status, and data are not stored in the electronic system.	The leader utilizes rubrics to collect data on specific areas of focus for teachers during formal and informal observations. Objective, evidence-based data are NOT consistently collected according to the headers used on the rubric. The appropriate level of performance scores is then marked on the rubric, and these may parallel the evidence collected on an inconsistent basis. For formal observations, there is not consistent evidence that teacher input is sought. 2 formal observations and 2 informal observations are completed for some teachers according to the guidelines for probationary (March 1) and continuing contract (May 30) status, and data are not always stored in the electronic system.	The leader utilizes rubrics to collect data on specific areas of focus for teachers during formal and informal observations. Objective, evidence-based data are consistently collected according to the headers used on the rubric. The appropriate level of performance scores is then marked on the rubric, and these may parallel the evidence collected on an inconsistent basis. For formal observations, there is evidence that teacher input is sought. 2 formal observations and 2 informal observations are completed for each teacher according to the guidelines for probationary (March 1) and continuing contract (May 30) status, and data are stored in the electronic system.	The leader utilizes rubrics to collect data on specific areas of focus for teachers during formal and informal observations. Objective, evidence-based data are consistently collected according to the headers used on the rubric. The appropriate level of performance scores is then marked on the rubric, and these consistently parallel the evidence collected. For formal observations, there is evidence that teacher input is sought. 2 formal observations and 2 informal observations are completed for each teacher according to the guidelines for probationary (March 1) and continuing contract (May 30) status, and data are stored in the electronic system.
Evidence				
Score				

Final Score:

Assessor:

Assessor Signature:

Appendix D continued

Henrico County Public Schools

Administrator Evaluation Rubric C: Observation of Post-Observation Conference

Leader: _____ School: _____ Date: _____

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Opening Reflection	The leader does not ask the teacher to summarize his/her impressions of the lesson observed.	The leader asks the teacher to summarize his/her impression of the lesson observed, but does not ask them to substantiate the impression with fact or data and/or does not assist the teacher in his/her reflection of the selected area of focus.	The leader asks the teacher to summarize his/her impression of the lesson around the selected area of focus and to substantiate the impression with fact or data, but does not actively probe to take the teacher to a deeper level of analysis.	The leader asks the teacher to summarize his/her impression of the lesson with regard to the selected area of focus and to substantiate the impression with fact or data. The leader actively probes to take the teacher to a deeper level of analysis, or prompts the teacher in such a way that probing is not necessary.

Score

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Presentation and Reflection of Data	The leader does not present the teacher with objective evidence/data as a basis for discussion of success of the lesson.	The leader presents the teacher with minimal objective evidence/data as a basis for discussion of success of the lesson.	The leader presents the teacher with objective evidence/data as a basis for discussion of success of the lesson. The first data presented are specific to the agreed focus of the observation. If appropriate, additional data are presented after the focus data are analyzed. The leader asks the teacher to interpret the data. The leader then provides his/her interpretation of the data, rather than probing more deeply for the teacher's reflection.	The leader presents the teacher with objective evidence/data as a basis for discussion of success of the lesson. The first data presented are specific to the agreed focus of the observation. If appropriate, additional data may be presented after the focus data are analyzed. The leader asks the teacher to interpret the data. The leader then probes more deeply to get the teacher to draw conclusions from the data. The leader only provides meaning to the data if the teacher is unable to do so.

Score

Appendix D continued

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Delineation of Next Steps	The leader does not bring the teacher to clear and adequate next steps for growth.	The leader tells the teacher what the next steps will be without giving him/her the opportunity to provide input.	The leader solicits next steps related to the selected area of focus from the teacher and offers suggestions if the teacher is willing but unable to come up with ideas. The leader provides next steps for the teacher who is unwilling to provide ideas.	The leader solicits next steps around the area of focus from the teacher and offers suggestions if the teacher is willing but unable to come up with ideas. The leader provides next steps for the teacher who is unwilling to provide ideas. The leader asks deep probing questions to test the teacher's skill and willingness to contribute to next steps. The leader is very specific and clearly delineates expectations for the next steps.
Score				

	Unsatisfactory (1)	Basic (2)	Proficient (3)	Distinguished (4)
Reflection on Future Support	The leader does not ask the teacher how he/she may better support the teacher's work.	The leader simply asks how he/she can support the teacher's work.	The leader asks specifically how the teacher felt about this observation cycle and conference and if there is any additional support needed. **If the conference was directive the leader acknowledges the issues and asks if the teacher needs additional support.	The leader asks specifically how the teacher felt about this observation cycle and conference and if there is any additional support needed. The leader also asks if there are other data tools the teacher would like to see used and/or what additional data would be helpful in future observations. **If the conference was directive the leader acknowledges the issues and asks if the teacher needs additional support.
Score				

Final Score:

Assessor:

Assessor Signature:

Appendix E: Table of Assessments Used for Student Learning Targets by Content Area

Content Area	Assessment	Grade Level
English/Reading (English I and II)	Henrico Achievement Tests (HATS)	K-2
	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)	K-2, K-2 Special Ed.
	Verbal Behavior-Milestones Assessment and Placement Program	K-2 Special Ed.
	Brigance School Reading Assessment	K-2 Special Ed.
	Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP)	3-5, 6-8, 9-12
	Standards of Learning (SOL)	3-5, 6-8
	Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP)	6-8, 11 Special Ed.
English/Writing	Standards of Learning (SOL) End of Course Test	11
	Standards of Learning (SOL)	8
Mathematics	Henrico Achievement Tests (HATS)	8, 10
	Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP)	K-2 Special Ed.
	Henrico Achievement Tests (HATS)	1-2, K-2 Special Ed.
	Moving with Math (MWM)	K-2 Special Ed.
	Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP)	3-5, 6-8
Algebra I and II, Geometry	Standards of Learning (SOL)	3-5, 6-8
	Northwest Evaluation Association Measures of Academic Progress (NWEA MAP)	9-12
Calculus	Standards of Learning (SOL) End of Course Test	9-12
Statistics	AP Release Tests	AP
Science	AP Release Tests	AP
	Henrico Achievement Tests (HATS)	6-7
	Standards of Learning (SOL)	8
	Standards of Learning (SOL) End of Course Test	10-11
Biology, Chemistry	No grade specific courses. Students have different paths.	12
	Standards of Learning (SOL) End of Course Test	9
	TIF Assessment	9
Earth Science I and II, Oceanography	AP Release Tests	AP
	Standards of Learning (SOL) End of Course Test	9
Physics	TIF Assessment	9
	AP Release Tests	AP
Psychology	TIF Assessment	11-12
Environment	AP Release Tests	AP
Social Studies	TIF Assessment	12
	Standards of Learning (SOL)	6-8
US History	Standards of Learning (SOL) End of Course Test	9-12
World History I and II	Standards of Learning (SOL) End of Course Test	11
	AP Release Tests	12
Government	AP Release Tests	AP
	TIF Assessment	12
European History	AP Release Tests	AP

Appendix F: Learning Leaders Student Learning Target Protocol

Teachers are eligible for up to \$5,000 additional incentive dollars based on the percent of student learning targets met. Targets will be established between November 20th and December 20th. Incentive pay requires attainment of at least one growth target for each student on the teacher's roster. The student growth targets are meant to be growth goals beyond the student's typical performance. *The targets should demonstrate the value added by the teacher beyond the student's current trajectory of performance.* Target assessments have been identified for each level of content area of participating teachers. Targets may be updated by March 20th based on any changes in the student's environment (outside of teacher control) that will impact his/her ability to meet the goal. The following steps will be taken to establish the targets:

1. Teachers will work with their administrators/supervisors to identify their roster of students. Students added after February 20th will not impact a teacher's incentive. However, teachers must set learning targets for these students *within a month of their enrollment.*
2. Teachers will work with the students from September through January to learn their academic strengths and potential to meet goals.
3. Teachers will receive a spreadsheet with the roster of students and all pertinent indicators for setting their targets.
4. Teachers must review student past performance on their target assessment. They may also choose to review additional performance indicators on the spreadsheet.
5. Teachers will set a growth goal for each individual student based on their past performance and taking into consideration the value the teacher expects to add to the student's experience.
6. For MAPS testing, the target must be at least the projected RIT score from the fall testing.
7. For SOL scores, the target will be within the scale score based on past scale scores on similar SOL tests. Attainment of this target will have a 20-point range of leeway. This means that if a scale score of 550 is set as the target, it will be considered attained if the student scores a 530.
8. HATS score targets will be expressed either in terms of percent correct—73%, 87%—or by number of questions correct. Attainment of the target will have a two question range of leeway.
9. Guidance for setting reading and math targets for students in grades K-2 will be provided by the math and reading specialists. All core Educational Specialists will work with teachers on setting student learning targets.
10. Once targets are set, school leaders assigned to each teacher will review the targets. Any that do not add value to the student learning trajectory will be marked for discussion. The teacher must then provide a *written explanation for the target* in question. The school leader can either accept the explanation or require the target be changed.

Appendix F continued

11. Teacher targets submitted through “dropping” in School Space will be presented to the K-12 Instructional Team for review. The team will selectively review targets between schools looking for leveling. Administrators will be notified if their teacher targets are not considered to be adding value.
12. Each teacher and their assigned administrator will work together to track student movement toward meeting the target.
13. Any mid-year adjustments should be submitted to the K-12 Instructional Team for approval.
14. After the identified assessment is complete in the spring of the school year, results will determine whether each student attained at least one learning target. Teachers and their assigned school leaders will receive the percent of the incentive that matches the percent of learning targets attained down to 50%.
15. Collaborative teachers and their partner teacher will create targets for all students and submit the same chart. Each teacher is responsible for all students in the collaborative classes.
16. On a case by case basis, the Data Support Team will consider exceptions relative to attainment of student learning targets. Requests must be submitted with the Student Learning Target excel chart by May 30th. Examples of exceptions are:
 - a. Excessive student absences and/or tardies. The student must be absent at least 36 days, which is 20% of the year, and/or tardy 25 or more times. Documentation of days missed will be submitted with final student learning targets.
 - b. Student has a history of 3 or more disciplinary actions throughout year. Documentation for suspensions, Intervention Program attendance, homebound, etc. will be submitted with final student learning targets.
 - c. Student did not take the assigned assessments due to absence or refusal. Documentation of absence or refusal will be submitted with final student learning targets.
 - d. Student enrolls after February 20th. Enrollment date will be submitted in the explanation column of the student learning chart, and a record from the school of enrollment dates will be submitted with final student learning targets.
 - e. Student transfers to another school/district. Documentation with transfer date will be submitted with final student learning targets for those students who transfer after the May 30th final student learning target submission.
 - f. Changes to student’s environment (outside of teacher control) that impacts his/her ability to meet the goal. Examples include homelessness; loss of a parent, grandparent or guardian; divorce; change of guardian; family disruption (parent or guardian arrested); involvement with the juvenile justice system; illness/hospitalization.

Appendix F continued

- g. Administrators and/or teachers on leave during the school year. These administrators and teachers will have prorated incentives based on the percent of time they are on leave. Deadlines for creating student learning targets will be adjusted on an individual basis upon their return. Leave time will also impact the total number of observations, which will be adjusted on an individual basis.
- h. Administrators and/or teachers hired during the school year. These administrators and teachers will have prorated incentives based on the percent of time they are working in the school. Deadlines for creating student learning targets and observations will be adjusted on an individual basis.

Endnotes

Chapter I

1. See *When Educators Learn, Students Learn*, CTAC's full evaluation report on Learning Leaders, at <http://www.ctacusa.com/publications/educators-learn-students-learn/>.
2. The interview process each year included individual interviews with all five members of the Board of Trustees, the superintendent, the eight Learning Leaders principals, and seven to 10 central instructional leaders. Additionally, we conducted group interviews with a set of principals from 16 HCPS comparison schools, 18-20 Learning Leaders teachers (elementary and secondary), and the 11 Learning Leaders coaches.
3. The student learning targets analysis is provided by CTAC Learning Leaders evaluation partner Dr. Allison Atteberry of the University of Colorado Boulder's School of Education.

Chapter II

4. See *When Educators Learn, Students Learn*, CTAC's full evaluation report on Learning Leaders, at <http://www.ctacusa.com/publications/educators-learn-students-learn/> pages 19 through 20 for a full description of the performance compensation system in Learning Leaders schools.
5. See The Danielson Group, <https://www.danielsongroup.org>.

Chapter III

6. In Year 3, for example, half the principals as well as 35 teachers turned over. All new staff received training and depended on the coaches' support to work through their first experience with the target setting process.

Chapter IV

7. This analysis was conducted by CTAC Learning Leaders evaluation partner Dr. Allison Atteberry of the University of Colorado Boulder's School of Education.
8. This analysis also shows that targets were generally set at appropriately rigorous levels. From 2012 to 2015, 34,485 student learning targets were set for English language arts and mathematics. Students met approximately 57% of these targets. Across schools, the average target set was near to the average score—within seven points on MAP tests and within 15 points on SOL tests.

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