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APRIL 2013



YEAR-END PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK REPORT  
ON THE  
***Educator Growth and Development Cycle  
SY2011-12 Initial Implementation Phase***

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# SUMMARY

This year-end feedback report of the Initial Implementation Phase (IIP) summarizes the survey responses from participating teachers and observers on their summative perspectives on the Educator Growth and Development Cycle, and focuses on experiences with the second formal observation cycle. Throughout the 2011-2012 school year, IIP participants provided critical feedback to the Los Angeles Unified School District. That feedback, which already has allowed us to make continuous improvements to the Educator Growth and Development Cycle, has been previously shared with the public via three reports. Through the feedback summarized within this summative report, we learn that teachers and administrators value the Educator Growth and Development Cycle for its potential in improving teaching practice. Although most participating educators felt that the EGDC activities were worthwhile, they also raised important issues and offered suggestions for ways the District could be successful in future expanded implementation of the Educator Growth and Development Cycle. These recommendations are summarized in the box below.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Maintain clarity around the time commitment, steps in the EGDC process, timeline, and any mid-course adjustments
- Maintain transparency around District policies and decisions regarding the EGDC
- Provide additional teacher training on the Teaching & Learning Framework rubrics, as well as online modules
- Provide training and support to access PD and develop Individual Growth Plans, for both teachers and observers
- Leverage SY2011-12 IIP participants to inform and train their peers about the EGDC
- Make the technology platform more user-friendly
- Strengthen administrator's instructional leadership abilities and teacher trust in observer quality
- Increase observer support by placing additional observers based at the school site
- Identify solutions to address school site capacity and demands on time before attempting to implement the EGDC on a larger scale
- Develop targeted professional development options aligned to the Teaching & Learning Framework, including collaborative, teacher-led activities



# INTRODUCTION

The Los Angeles Unified School District recognizes that we face no more important task than to ensure that every classroom is led by an effective teacher, and that every school is led by an outstanding leader, who is surrounded by a team of excellent support personnel, all who work to improve the academic achievement of our students. Similarly, educators deserve a system that identifies, celebrates, and learns from excellence, providing reliable, consistent feedback for growth and development while offering clear career pathways. National research supports this and so does our common experience.

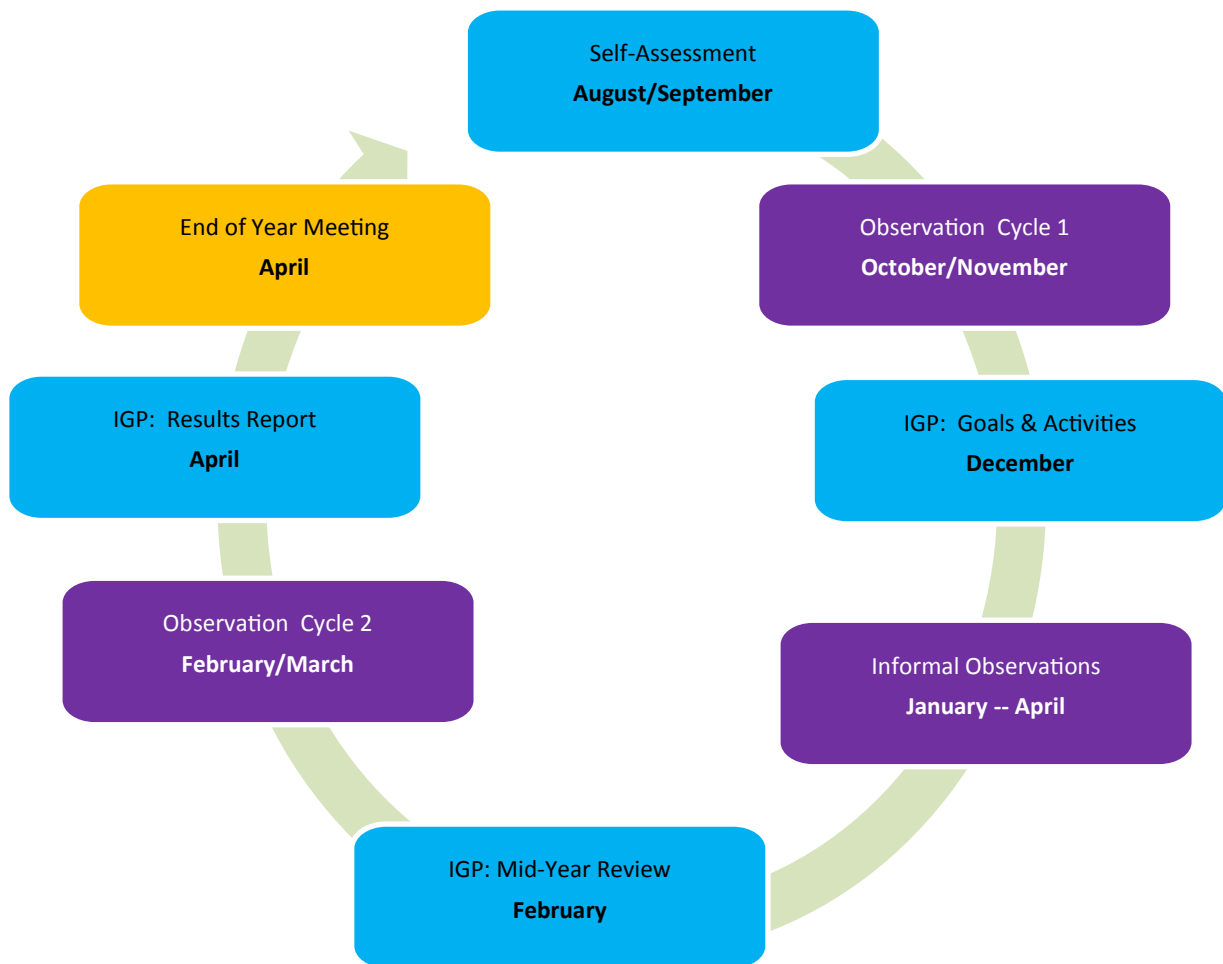
Over the last two years, the District has begun to implement the recommendations of the Teacher Effectiveness Task Force (TETF), which was created as a result of the April 28, 2009 Board Motion, Quality Leadership and Teaching to Ensure a World Class Education For All. The core strategy for achieving this is the interconnection between multiple-measure performance reviews that provide clear and useful information to employees about their performance, and an individualized approach for supporting and developing all employees. The 2011-2012 Initial Implementation Phase (IIP) of the Educator Growth and Development Cycle (EGDC) and the School Leader Growth and Development Cycle (SLGDC) tested out the multiple measure performance review and support systems we seek to bring to a district-wide scale for our teachers and school leaders.

In this phase, we worked with a set of representative schools throughout LAUSD, where participants provided critical feedback on the tools and process necessary to further develop and refine the components. Teachers, school leaders, and central and local District office personnel who volunteered to participate in the no-stakes IIP became the first in the District to test out the draft tools and processes of the Educator and School Leader Growth and Development Cycles. The findings in this report are part of our commitment to collect, synthesize, and respond to feedback from participants. Data received from this survey continue to inform refinements to the LAUSD Educator Growth and Development Cycles and the tools associated with these processes.

## The Educator Growth and Development Cycle

The Educator Growth and Development Cycle has been designed to gather evidence of teaching practice and impact on student learning outcomes through multiple measures, and to support all educators in improving their practice. Its foundation lies in the Teaching and Learning Framework, based on Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching, aligned to the California Standards for the Teaching Profession and the Common Core State Standards, and adapted to reflect the LAUSD context. The multiple measures piloted during the SY2011-12 IIP included Observation of Practice, Stakeholder Feedback Surveys, and Contributions to Student Outcomes. The Observation of Practice measure includes a series of reflection activities, formal and informal observations, observer/teacher conferencing and coaching, and professional goal setting activities, all aimed at helping teachers identify areas of strength and opportunities to improve their practice. Exhibit 1 outlines this process on the following page.

## EXHIBIT 1: Educator Growth and Development Cycle—Observation of Practice measure



As the Initial Implementation Phase was the District's first time developing and testing out the activities within the EGDC process in a connected way, we are cognizant that not all participants completed each step in the process within the suggested timeline. Participant feedback provides an opportunity to understand implementation challenges and recommendations to make program adjustments.

## Methods

This year-end feedback survey on the SY2011-2012 Initial Implementation Phase was developed by the District in partnership with our program evaluation partners at the University of Southern California's Rosier School of Education and WestEd, to understand the implementation of the second formal observation cycle as well as IIP participants' overall experience. The online survey was administered in June 2012 and re-opened in September 2012, to allow for additional responses. Our program evaluation partners aimed to provide data to both the external program evaluation as well as for the District's internal feedback purposes. Participants received slightly different surveys, depending on their role as teachers, site administrators, or Second Observers in the IIP.

## EXHIBIT 2: IIP Feedback Survey Response Rate

	Teachers	Observers	Total
Current IIP Participants	364	328	692
Survey Respondents	240	139	379
Response Rate	66%	42%	55%

The overall response rate for teachers and observers (site-based administrators and second observers) was 55%. Of the 240 teacher respondents, 49% teach at the elementary school level and the remaining teach in middle (25%) and high school (26%). The largest group of teacher respondents teach elementary/multiple subjects (48%), and most teachers reported teaching core subjects (English/Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies). On average, teacher respondents have a mean of 9 years teaching experience at their SY2011-12 school site and 15 years of teaching experience overall.

Observer respondents included site-based principals (35%), assistant principals (7%), local district staff (37%) and central office staff (9%). Most observations were conducted in pairs that consisted of a Primary Observer (usually site-based) and a Second Observer (typically from the central or local district office). Of the 139 observer respondents, 64 served as Primary Observers and 75 as Second Observers. On average, each observer reported working with 6 participating teachers. Among Primary Observers, respondents have a mean of 5 years administrator experience at the SY2011-12 school site and 13 administrative years over their career. The site-based administrators that responded to the survey work at the elementary (52%), middle (19%), and high school levels (25%).



# MAIN FINDINGS

## Training

Before beginning the EGDC, teachers took part in a 2-day summer training and observers went through both a week-long summer training as well as periodic half-day trainings throughout the school year. These trainings were intended to: 1) expose participants to the LAUSD Teaching & Learning Framework; 2) explain the steps and activities in the EGDC process; 3) train participants to use the MyProfessional Growth System technology platform; and 4) calibrate observers. Although the district published a feedback report on the summer training in November 2011, asking questions about the trainings at the end of the year allows IIP participants to share their perspective on the trainings with the benefit of hindsight.

Exhibits 3 and 4 display teacher and observer opinions on the success of IIP trainings. Generally, the majority of respondents reported that trainings helped participants understand how to successfully complete the EGDC to a “moderate” or “great” extent. For example, 76% of teachers and 82% of observers reported that the trainings gave them a full understanding of the district’s Teaching & Learning Framework, and 70% of teachers and 77% of observers reported that the trainings allowed participants to successfully complete the IIP activities to a moderate or great extent. Responses show that future areas for improvement include giving participants a better understanding of the time commitment involved, spending more time with observers explaining the steps of the process, and helping teachers connect their individual growth needs with professional development opportunities.<sup>1</sup>

In open-ended responses, a number of IIP participants suggested deeper training, especially for teachers around the LAUSD Teaching & Learning Framework. One observer suggested, “Expose staff to the [Teaching &] Learning Framework [rubrics] and become familiar with them. It’s important to have an understanding of what the Framework means before using it as a tool to judge.” A teacher added, “I think

<sup>1</sup> During the SY2011-12 Initial Implementation Phase, Framework-aligned professional development was not provided nor was accessing this type of PD included in participant trainings. However, this feedback indicates that teachers might want information on how to access PD opportunities tied directly to their identified needs, particularly for Individual Growth Planning purposes. In SY2012-13, the District has offered a Framework-aligned PD conference to EGDC participants and secured a vendor to build a Professional Learning Management System.

*“Teachers need additional time to work with the rubric, to understand what the descriptors mean, and also to begin identifying specific pieces of evidence to validate developing, effective and highly effective. ‘What does it look like?’ seems to be the question asked quite frequently by teachers during the evaluation process.”*

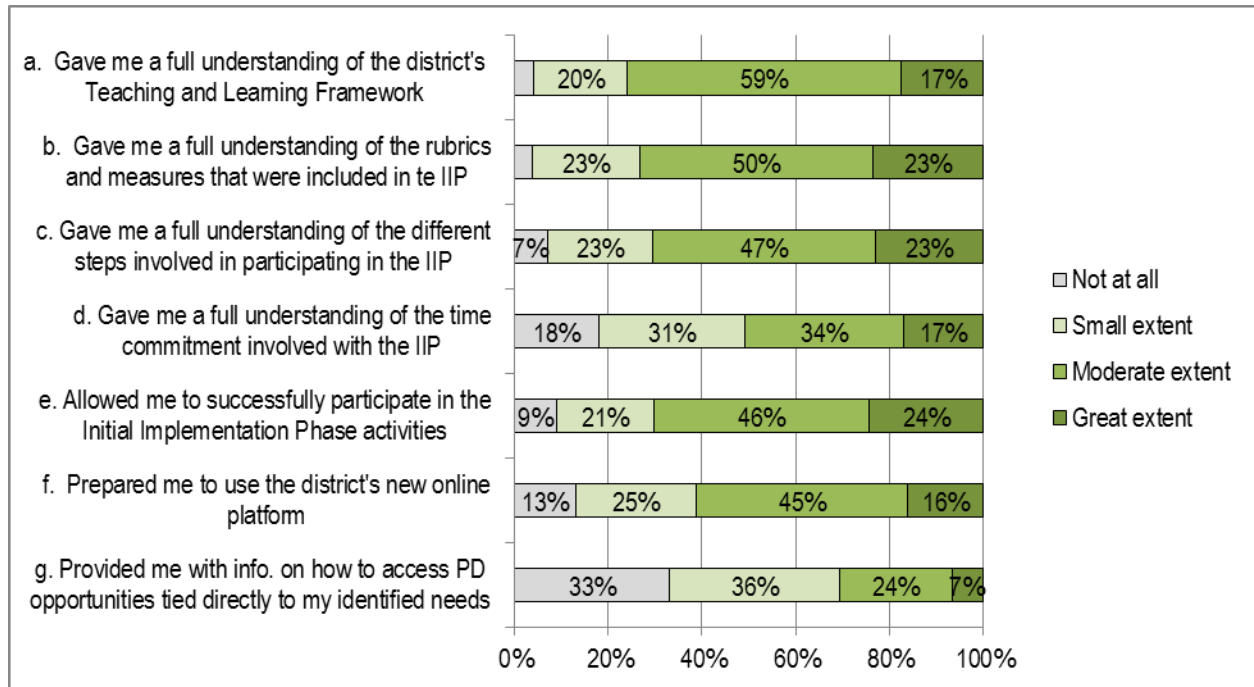
–Observer

*“More professional development about the [Teaching & Learning] Framework. What does each element really describe and what are examples of evidence that align with an element? There need to be a large variety of examples that help teachers and administrators know what is and isn’t included in a particular element”*

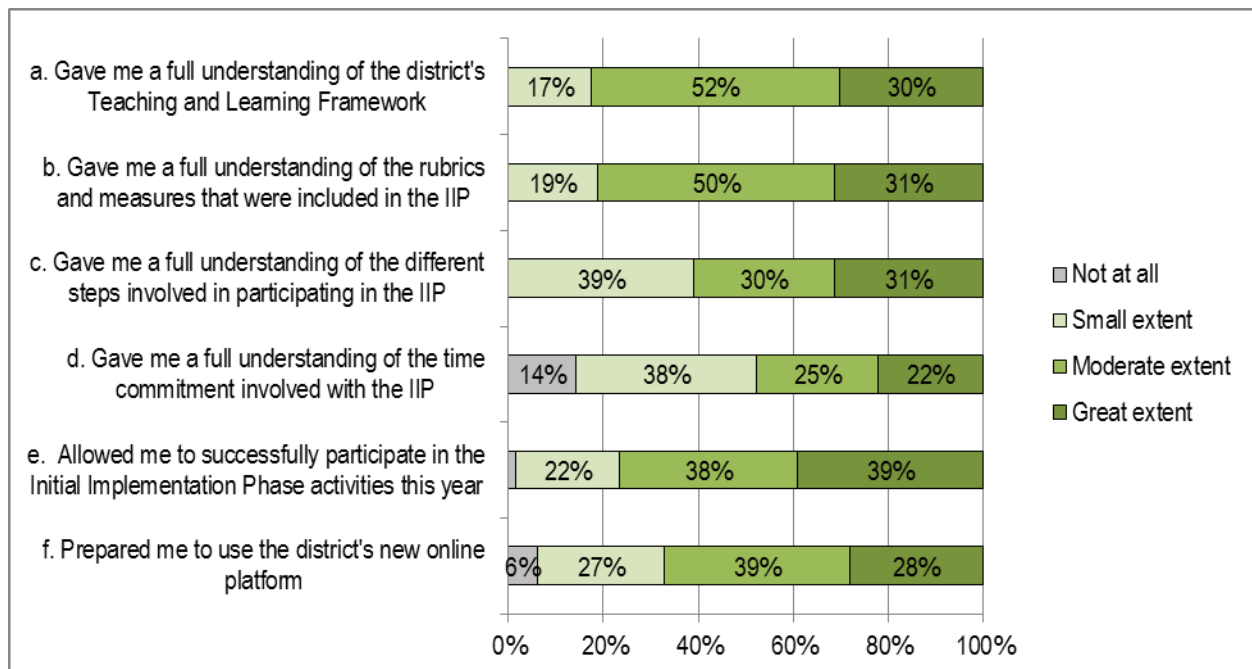
–Observer

teachers need to be trained on and understand the standards and rubrics. I felt, and still feel, [that] I don't understand the difference between Effective and highly effective." A couple respondents also recommended providing specific support and training around using the technology platform, and online video modules that educators can access at their convenience.

**EXHIBIT 3: Teacher Opinions on IIP Trainings**



**EXHIBIT 4: Observer opinions on IIP trainings**



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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Clarity around the time commitment, steps in the EGDC process, and timeline
- Guidance on how to connect teachers' individual growth needs with targeted professional development opportunities
- In-depth teacher training on the Teaching & Learning Framework rubrics
- Separate training/support available on the technology platform
- Training content on the Teaching & Learning Framework and EGDC process available online

## Implementation

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### ***EGDC Activities***

The Teacher Growth and Development Cycle uses multiple sources of valid and reliable data to identify a teacher's individual strengths and growth areas in order to support educators in their professional growth. Over 75% of teachers reported that the IIP activities that were *most helpful* included the teacher Self-Assessment, formal observation with a second observer, and post-observation conference (not shown). The activities teachers found least helpful (50% or less found them helpful) included reviewing individual Academic Growth over Time (AGT) results, as not every teacher has individual results, and accessing professional development for their individual needs, since this type of professional development had not yet been built out.

The following table shows the IIP activities with which participants had difficulty completing (Exhibit 5). Teachers experienced the *greatest difficulty* completing the activities in which they took a more active role, such as the teacher Self-Assessment, completing the Lesson Design Template, and accessing professional development tied to individual needs. Previous feedback surveys and associated reports (LAUSD, November 2011 and February 2012) explore these activities in greater detail. Teachers indicated that technology issues and lack of time made the Self-Assessment and Lesson Design Template difficult to complete, while the challenge with Individual Growth Planning and aligned PD was mainly due to lack of information (not shown).

The activities that observers found *most helpful* (over 75%) included reviewing the teacher's lesson design and conducting pre-observation conferences, formal classroom observation with a second observer, and post-observation conferences (not shown). According to observers, less helpful activities (50% or less) also included reviewing individual AGT results, Individual Growth Planning, and accessing associated PD opportunities, in addition to informal classroom observations. Observers reported that conducting informal observations, coordinating observations with second observers, entering information into the technology platform, reviewing/assisting in the development of teachers' Individual Growth Plans (IGP),

and reviewing AGT results were the *most difficult activities* to complete (Exhibit 5). Lack of time was an issue for each of these challenging activities, particularly for informal observations and coordinating with second observers. Technology issues made it difficult for observers to enter information into the technology platform, and observers felt that they lacked sufficient information to support teachers' IGP and review AGT results (not shown).

When asked about other activities that could be included to help improve teacher practice, the most common suggestion from survey respondents was to incorporate peer observation into the EGDC process. A teacher shared, "I think the process should be done in the PLCs (professional learning communities) that we have established. The PLC can support the individual teachers and I think the PLC lead should be the second observer for the other PLC members. That way the observations persist in the work of the PLC." Another added, "The 'us against them' attitude of many administrators towards the faculty makes me feel outnumbered two-to-one in an antagonistic catch-22. Making teachers (classroom teachers) part of the equation would certainly make me feel more comfortable and possibly convince me that the evaluation/support process will actually contain some support." An observer also commented, "When a teacher's colleague observes them, that is when I think we will see more improvement."

*"I feel strongly that the pre- and post- [observation] conferences were the most valuable to me. I'm fortunate to have a phenomenal administrator and she was able to ask reflective questions that tapped into my personal growth. It will take the ability to have an open mind and willing to take constructive criticism without feeling defensive. I truly enjoyed this opportunity although it was time consuming."*

–Teacher

*"Have more peer (teacher-to-teacher) evaluation focused on supporting each other, viewing best practices, and incorporating looking at data together to be able to find solutions as a team."*

–Teacher

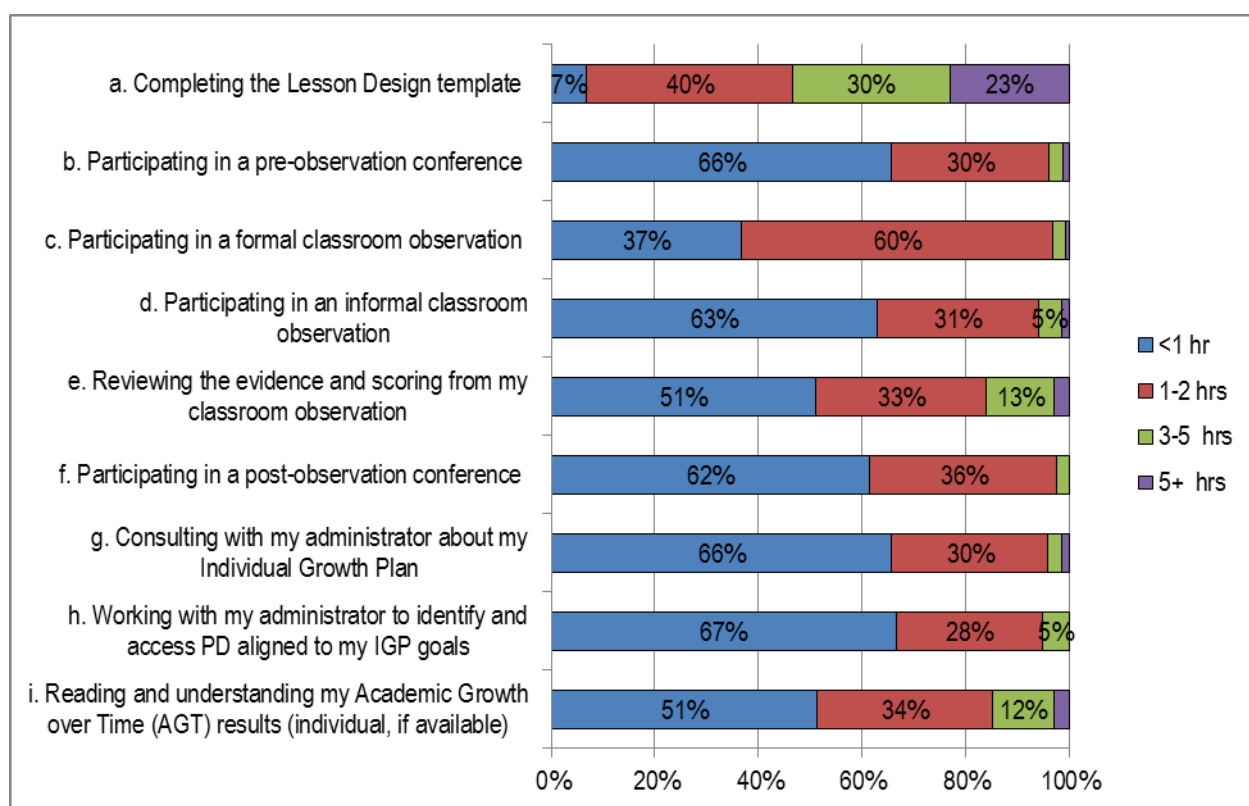
#### EXHIBIT 5: Teacher & observer opinions on difficulty completing IIP activities

I had difficulty with the following activities...	Teachers	Observers
Completing/reviewing the Teacher Self-Assessment	53%	49%
Completing/reviewing the Lesson Design Template	58%	36%
Participating in/conducting the Pre-observation Conference	26%	34%
Participating in/conducting the Formal Observation of practice	22%	24%
Participating in/conducting informal observations of practice	23%	51%
Participating in/conducting the Post-Observation Conference	27%	29%
Scoring teachers at different levels of effectiveness	n/a	45%
Coordinating observations with second observers	n/a	62%
Entering information into the online platform	n/a	69%
Completing or reviewing/assisting development of the Individual Growth Plan	48%	59%
Assessing professional development tied to individual needs	61%	n/a
Reviewing Academic Growth over Time results (individual, if applicable)	43%	56%

## Time

A common challenge reported by participants throughout all the feedback surveys has been finding the time to complete IIP activities. Exhibits 6 and 7 display the length of time (self-reported) it took teachers and observers to complete IIP activities in the latter half of the year (Individual Growth Plan, reviewing AGT results, and the *second* formal classroom observation). For the majority of teachers, respondents took less than one hour to complete each IIP activity. Sixty percent of teachers reported that their formal classroom observation lasted between 1-2 hours, and 53% reported that the lesson design took 3 or more hours to complete. In the future, the District might concentrate on ensuring that teachers feel comfortable developing a Framework-aligned lesson design and/or improving the online Lesson Design Template so that this activity does not take as long.

**EXHIBIT 6: Teacher time spent completing IIP activities**

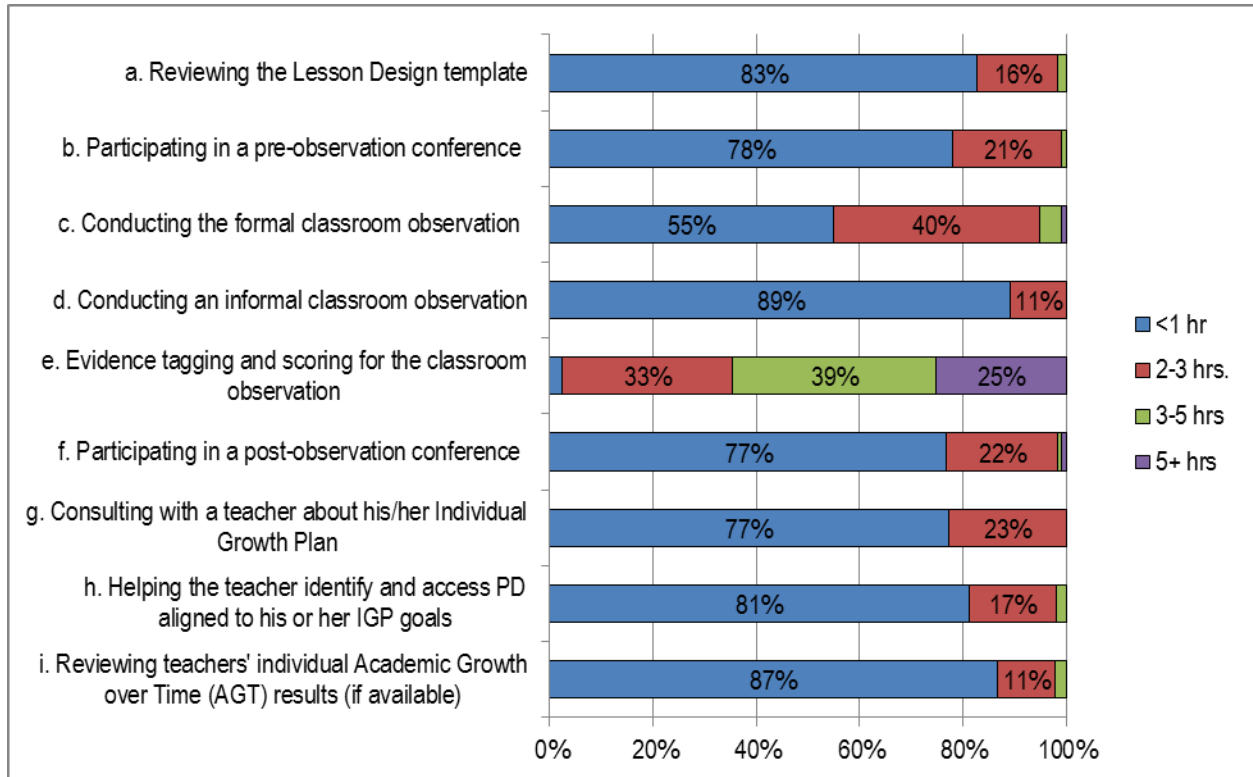


For most observers, respondents needed less than one hour to complete each IIP activity for each teacher (Exhibit 7). However, evidence tagging and scoring was by far the most time-intensive activity for observers, with 72% of respondents taking 2-5 hours to complete this step. While the District continues to make improvements to the technology platform to improve the evidence tagging and scoring functions, it should continue to identify barriers and supports around this activity. Additionally this information may be helpful for the District to understand the cumulative time needed to work with each teacher through the EGDC process and identify time management strategies to support site-based observers.

*"I will say that the process went quicker for the second observation, because I was more familiar with the rubric and the whole process."*

—Observer

**EXHIBIT 7: Observer time spent completing IIP activities (per teacher)**



In open-ended comments, several IIP participants expressed concern with the time it takes an observer to complete the EGDC process with a single teacher, and questioned how this can feasibly be scaled up to include more teachers, given the many competing demands on time that school site administrators currently face. A teacher noted, "This process is extremely time-consuming for the teacher and even more for the administration. I am afraid it is going to turn out like the Stull, which was a good process at first but became useless because it was not done properly. Because of the time issue, in a few years from now, administrators will sign it off like the actual Stull." An observer added, "Time will continue to be a major factor for administrators, especially at sites where there are no assistant principals and coordinators... Principals are spending much of their time dealing with operational issues because there is no one else on their 'team' who can do this function, as in the past. Principals cannot get into the classrooms if they are continually challenged by operational issues."

The main solution that IIP participants offered was additional support with observer role responsibilities. However, some respondents also warned against a Second Observer role that requires coordination with the school site administrator. "I think the addition of a second observer was a lofty, if not untenable goal. The second observers were often unavailable for observations. Perhaps the second observer could be from school-based personnel, another teacher in the program, or someone whose professional duties would not interfere with their ability to perform observations," said a teacher. "The role of the 2nd Observer was well intended, yet the administrators may not have fully benefited from the work. A suggested design for the 2nd Observer is to create a position that will conduct this work at each school site," agreed one observer.

A number of teacher and observer respondents felt that an additional, locally-based observer would address challenges of time, scale, and support. Teachers mentioned, "It would be nice if there were a facilitator on site to go to with questions and to help direct people to PD opportunities," and, "I think there should be local district positions that are specifically and extensively trained in the IIP observation process. They will be more familiar and objective with the standards and scoring process. Administrators and second observers often do not have time for feedback and timely post-observation conferences. It is frustrating to participate and invest a great deal of time into this program without receiving the appropriate feedback. It hinders the individual growth and development." An observer had a similar sentiment, "If an instructional specialist could be in the classroom, i.e., in the trenches with the teachers, observing, reflecting, providing assistance, then you will see the necessary changes. I would love to see our schools move to the model that is being implemented at the District level--hire all of these experts and curriculum specialists and administrators that love instruction and let us into the classrooms working on a consistent basis with teachers."

*"Although the process is time consuming, there is value in having an evaluation based on growth and multiple measures. This process would be ideal if there was another site administrator such as an assistant principal. The responsibilities of principals are consumed by operational-type tasks that cannot be ignored. Help at the school site is key."*

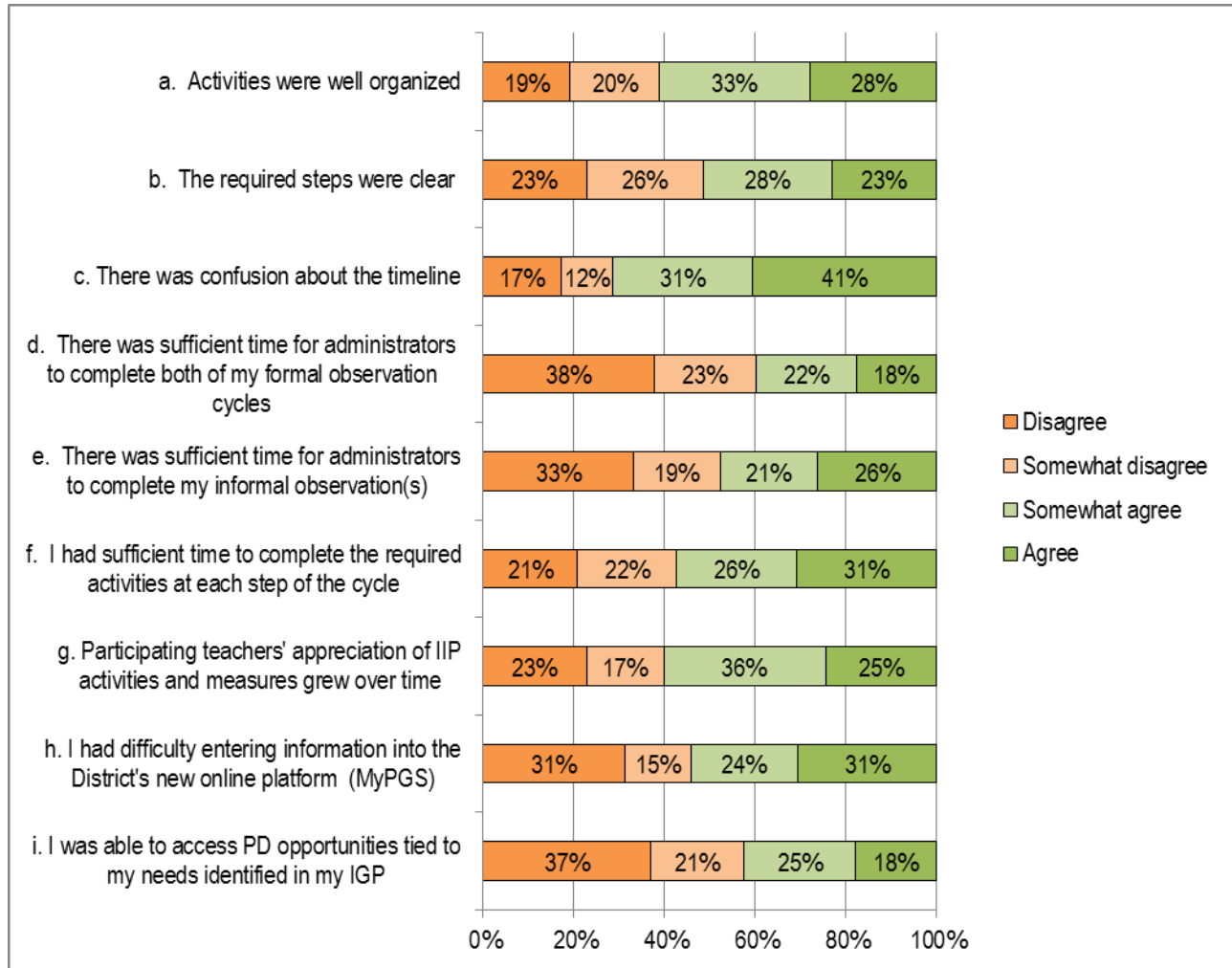
—Observer

### ***Implementation Experiences***

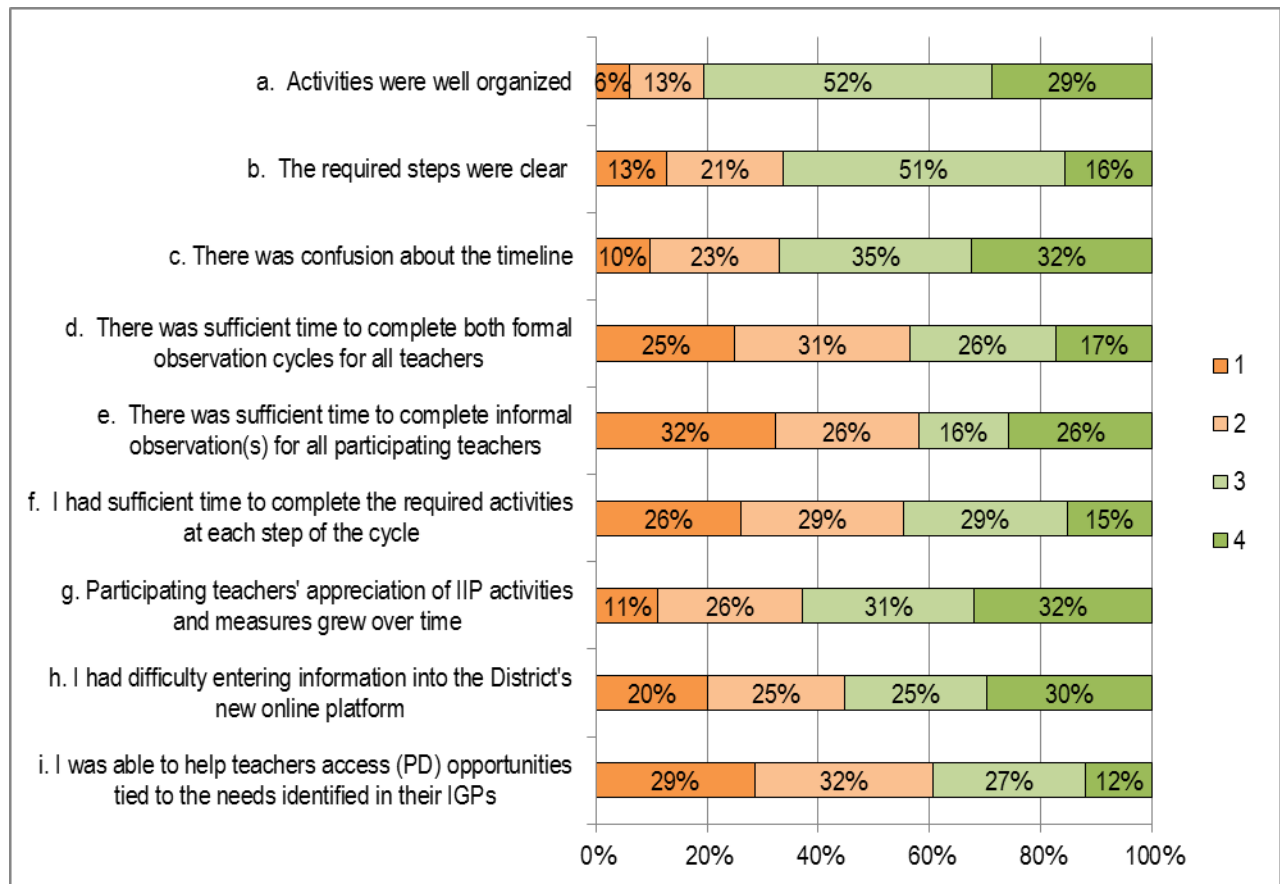
In the first year of the Educator Growth and Development Cycle, the District learned of many potential improvements to the process and made mid-course adjustments, where possible (i.e., new Lesson Design Template, changing observer training format, clarifying timeline and protocols). Exhibits 8 and 9 reveal areas needing improvement around the EGDC process, its implementation, and the way the district supports implementation in the field.

Key areas to focus on for future implementation include clarifying and re-stating the expected timeline (72% of teachers and 75% of observers expressed confusion), making improvements to the technology platform (55% of teachers and observers had difficulty entering information online), helping teachers to access professional development, and identifying time management strategies for participating teachers and observers to complete all activities (Exhibits 8 and 9). Observers generally felt that activities were more clear (67% to 51%) and better organized (81% to 61%) than teachers did, perhaps because observer training continued throughout the year. Both observers and teachers felt that participating teachers' appreciation of IIP activities grew over time (63% and 61%, respectively).

### EXHIBIT 8: Teacher opinions on IIP implementation



**EXHIBIT 9: Observer opinions on IIP implementation<sup>2</sup>**



Survey respondents suggested a variety of strategies to improve implementation of the Educator Growth and Development Cycle in future years. Among these recommendations are videotaping observations, being clear and consistent in communication, leveraging previous IIP participants as ambassadors and experts on the EGDC, and continuing to refine the Teaching & Learning Framework and the MyPGS technology platform.

Several observers noted that videotaping lessons can make scripting easier and can be used as a tool for teacher self-evaluation. “In a perfect world the lesson should be videotaped so that the assessors can look for evidence within the lesson multiple times without being under pressure to record everything in one observation,” said one teacher. “I think that it will be necessary to videotape the lessons. It is needed for a reference and as a resource to confirm that the evidence/tagging is a reflection of the teachers' practice. If all we have are the observer's notes, the teachers can easily deny what they did was recorded accurately. The videotape would also allow the administrator to review the lesson and look for evidence that they might have missed while they observed the lesson,” an observer commented.

<sup>2</sup> Although the same prompts were used in a survey of site-based administrator IIP observers and Second Observers, the wording of the scale was different. Administrator Primary Observers were asked to respond on a scale of 1-4 (Disagree, Somewhat disagree, Somewhat agree, Agree), while Second Observers were, perhaps mistakenly, asked to respond on a scale of 1-4 (Not at all, Small extent, Moderate extent, Great extent). Therefore, we use numbered response categories only in this graph.

Although there are logistical barriers to videotaping lessons (e.g., parental approval for taping students), this might be a solution that warrants further investigation.

Given that 49% of teachers did not feel that the required steps were clear and 72% were confused about the timeline of activities (Exhibit 8), it is important to be clear and frequent in communications about the EGDC process, particularly when instructions change due to mid-course improvements. A teacher recommended that the District “Provide time, support from those with IIP experience, and clear and concise instructions such as not giving the feeling you are inventing it as we go along.” As more educators become exposed to the EGDC, IIP participants highlighted their experience as valuable to help prepare and communicate to the field for larger-scale implementation. Observers suggested, “Communication to all stakeholders is the key, including schools that are not a part of the pilot. If the teachers who participated in the pilot were to share their experiences, I believe it would demystify it for the other teachers and move us in the right direction,” and, “The 2011-12 participants could serve as resources for other teachers who are interested in improving their craft. As they share the process and teaching strategies, we will develop stronger learning communities.” Seventy-eight percent of teacher respondents volunteered to share their experiences or train colleagues participating in future years (Exhibit 12), making them a valuable resource to be drawn upon.

As noted elsewhere in this report, teacher support to understand the Teaching & Learning Framework and steps in the EGDC process are critical to its success, as is support around professional growth once individual needs have been identified. “A sense of support, first of all, it is crucial. We need to make sure that we provide plenty of support that is tangible and concrete and not only philosophical. If we make recommendations, they need to be clear and modeled. Professional development on how to improve practice should be part of the model,” concluded one observer.

*“The tagging is the most time consuming part of the process. I have seen the prototype for the improved system and I believe it will make a difference.”*

–Observer

*“It is a support system to promote quality instruction first and not just an evaluation system. This needs to be communicated clearly, its purpose and desired outcomes.”*

–Observer

*“Have teachers who have gone through the process assist and advise teachers using the new evaluation system in the coming school year .”*

–Teacher

## ***Buy-in and Trust***

Many survey respondents emphasized the importance of creating buy-in and building trust in school communities before educators can begin to engage authentically and benefit from the Educator Growth and Development Cycle. A teacher shared, "Teachers need to be engaged in the process. My belief is that if competent and effective professional development is part of the result of the evaluation process most teachers will buy in and support it." An observer also said, "First and most important of all, an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect must be established. There must be a system of support in place for teachers to help them improve in areas identified as less than effective."

In order for teachers to trust that the EGDC will be effective, some teacher respondents stress the importance of an administrator or observer that has strong instructional leadership abilities. These sentiments reinforce the importance of observer certification training that includes calibration exercises and accountability via the School Leader Growth and Development Cycle or other mechanisms. In addition, respondents caution that a culture change must take place before educators embrace the EGDC. "There is no induction or re-tooling of the belief system. My observation is that the teachers see this as, 'I am good or good enough.' I wanted to see more of a change in the belief that we can all improve through this process," said an observer. While these types of changes will not occur overnight, the District will be more successful if it remains cognizant of these issues and transparent about its own intentions.

*"Teachers need to become actively involved in their own evaluation, and not just view it as one more thing that they need to do, but as a way of achieving a better understanding of their own personal abilities (e.g., strengths and weaknesses) in the classroom."*

-Teacher

*"Embracing the work included in the Educator Growth and Development Cycle requires a shift in culture for most schools. Receiving feedback from an administrator, based on criteria (Teaching and Learning Framework), has not been standard practice for most schools. Teachers and administrators need to be given the message that this tool and process can be used to promote growth in instructional practice. Administrators need to share their growth around standards as well, so there can be a foundation of trust built between teachers and administrators."*

-Observer

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Clarity around the time commitment, steps in the EGDC process, timeline, and mid-course adjustments
- Leverage SY2011-12 IIP participants to inform and train their peers about the EGDC
- Support and train educators so that activities are less time consuming, or make adjustments to EGDC activities
- Increase observer support by adding additional observers based at the school site
- Analyze observer time spent per teacher and develop time management strategies for observers
- Make the technology platform more user-friendly
- Ensure the Teaching & Learning Framework is applicable to all teachers using the rubrics
- Clear explanation on expectations and training around informal observations of practice
- Consider incorporating peer observation into the EGDC process
- Explore video-taped observations
- Policy around observer quality and accountability
- Maintain transparency around District policies and decisions regarding the EGDC
- Long-term commitment to build trust, buy-in, and shift in culture around educator performance

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## Participant Experience & Impact

IIP participants experienced the Educator Growth and Development Cycle in an early stage, when the District engaged in a no-stakes implementation phase in order to build on participant experiences and feedback to make critical improvements. In addition, another goal of the IIP was to provide a beneficial experience to both teachers and observers with regards to reflecting on and discussing individual teachers' instructional practice, and increasing site capacity to identify and support teaching and learning. Respondents' perspectives can also give us an early indicator of what other educators might experience in future iterations of the Educator Growth and Development Cycle. An external program evaluation by USC and WestEd on the SY2011-12 Initial Implementation Phase is forthcoming and will be made available to the public.

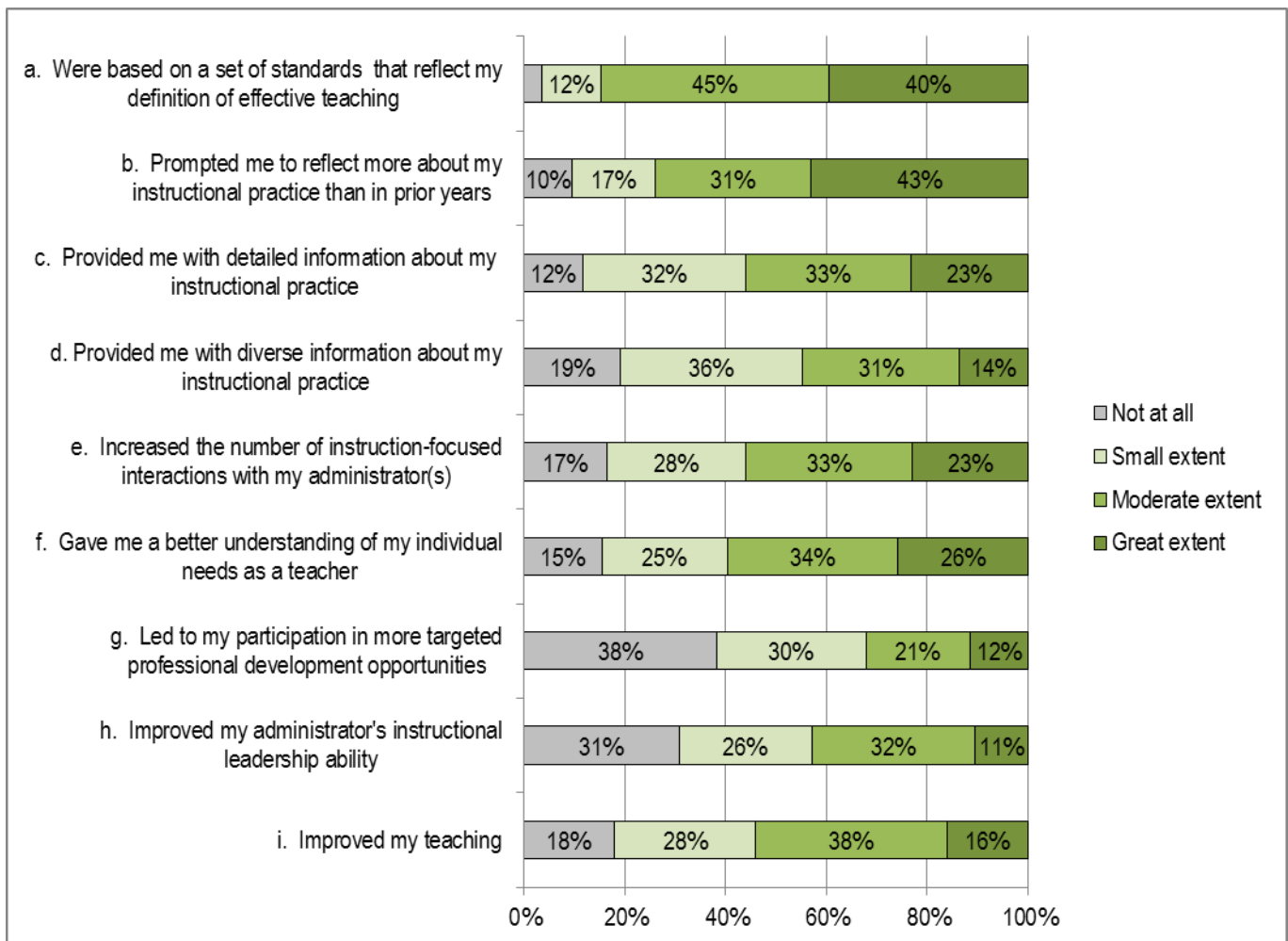
Key among teacher-reported outcomes were an increase in reflection about instructional practice (74% moderate or great extent), receiving more detailed information about individual teaching practice (56%), better understanding of participants' individual needs as a teacher (60%), and general improvement in teaching practice (54%), Exhibit 10. Outcomes that fewer teacher respondents experienced included giving teachers diverse information about their teaching practice (45%) and increased participation in tar-

geted PD opportunities (33%). As noted earlier, Framework-aligned PD opportunities were not provided during the IIP, although it is a key priority of the District for future participants. In addition, student stakeholder feedback surveys were administered in June 2012, thus the results were not available to give teachers an additional source of information about their teaching practice at the time we requested their feedback.

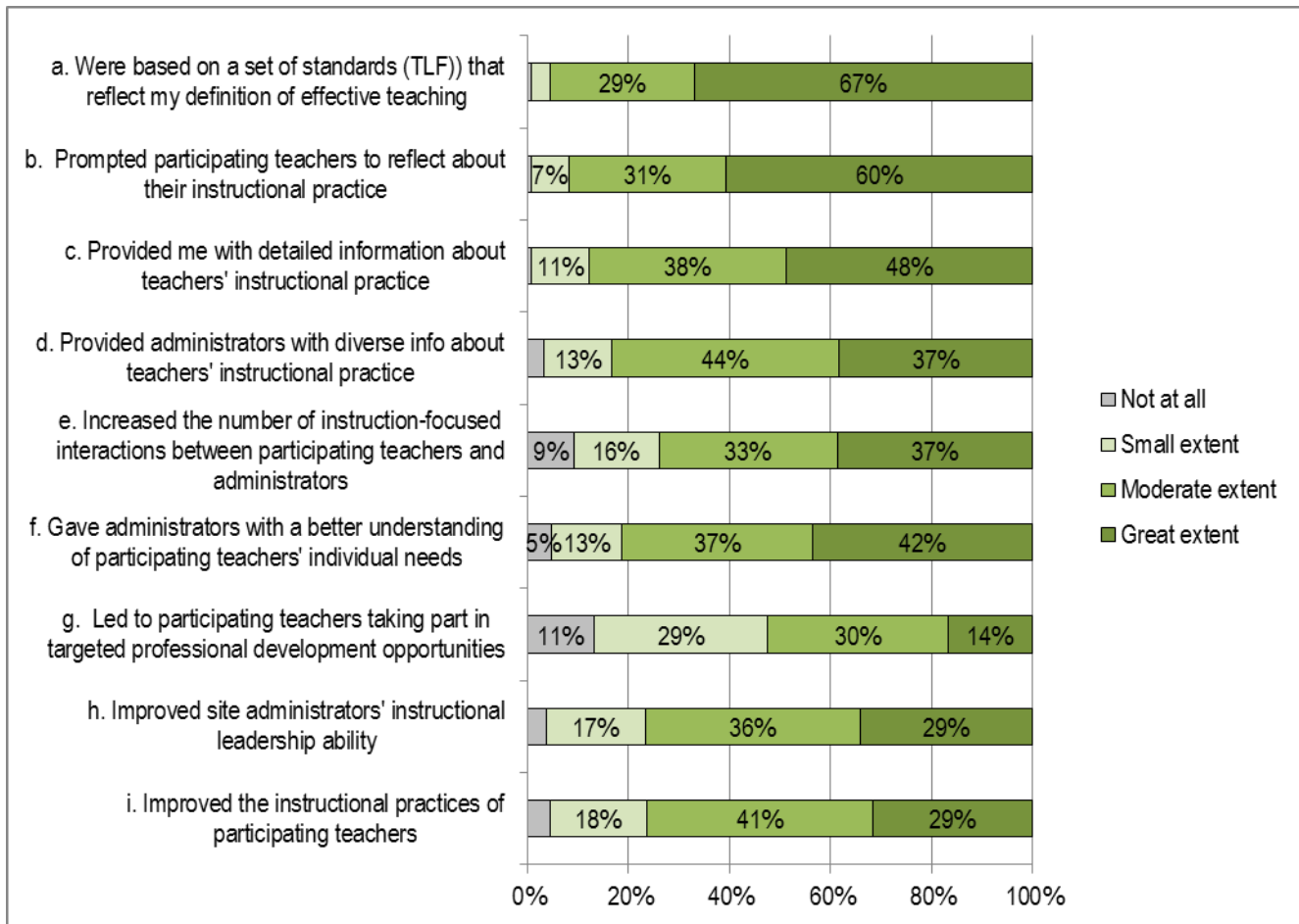
*“Best of all, I felt that the feedback [from my observers] was unbiased and right on target. I was given a gift (someone who really cares about helping me grow professionally and personally) on top of a stipend. Thank you for the opportunity!”*

-Teacher

**EXHIBIT 10: Teacher opinions on IIP outcomes**



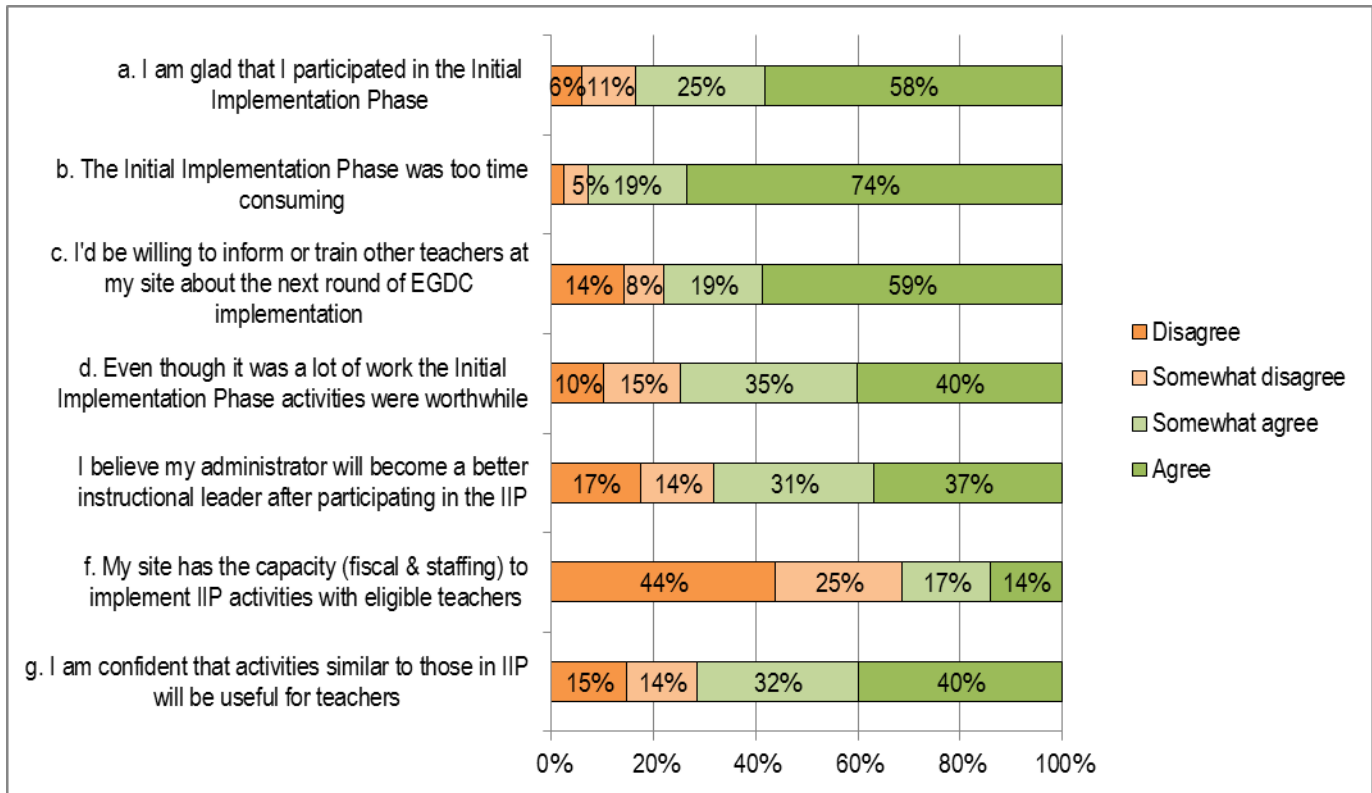
**EXHIBIT 11: Observer opinions on IIP outcomes**



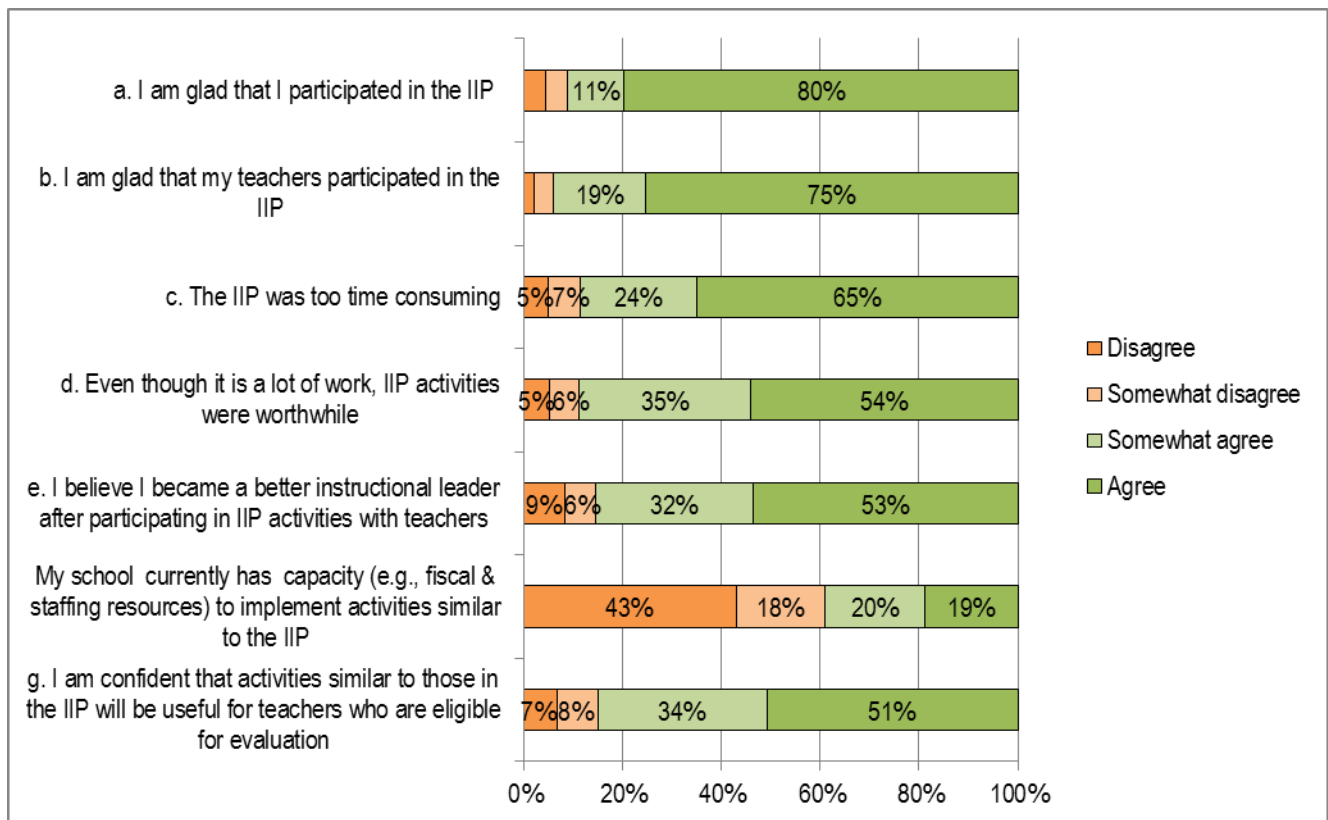
Observers generally expressed a more positive view of IIP outcomes. The outcomes most commonly reported by observers were an increase in instruction-focused interactions between participating teachers and administrators (70% moderate or great extent), giving administrators a better understanding of individual teacher needs (79%), and improvement in the site administrator’s instructional leadership abilities (65%, Exhibit 11). While fewer teachers detected major improvement in their observer’s instructional leadership ability (43%) than observers, it is possible that these skills were mainly gained in classroom observation practices (e.g., collecting objective evidence), more so than through the skills that manifest in observer-teacher interactions that a teacher could detect (e.g., coaching conversations about individual growth needs).

In addition to self-reported outcomes, Exhibits 12 and 13 also allow us to learn from the experience of IIP participants for future implementation of the EGDC. The vast majority of teachers and observers were happy that they participated in the Initial Implementation Phase (83% and 91%, respectively), felt that the activities were worthwhile (75% and 89%), and believe that the EGDC can be useful for other teachers (72% and 85%).

**EXHIBIT 12: Teacher Opinions on overall IIP experience**



**EXHIBIT 13: Observer opinions on overall IIP experience**



The experience of participants in the Initial Implementation Phase shows that educators find value in the District’s Educator Growth and Development Cycle. However, IIP participant feedback also clearly indicates that school sites have concerns about the time needed to complete EGDC activities (92% teachers and 89% teachers) and the capacity of school sites to implement (69% and 61%, Exhibits 12 and 13). Any plan to scale the EGDC should include an intentional plan to support school site capacity. Expectations of both the EGDC process as well as District educators’ job responsibilities require adjustment to allow participants to allot the amount of time that the Educator Growth and Development Cycle needs and deserves.

*“Unfortunately, the ‘word on the street’ is that this is a good system but not feasible because of the time requirements, so it is going to be difficult to overcome that perception.”*

–Observer

*“If instruction and the supervision of instruction are the most important job of the administrator, other less important tasks might need to be given to others or eliminated from the administrators’ responsibilities.”*

–Observer

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Gain understanding of diverging teacher and observer opinions regarding the administrator’s instructional leadership abilities, and how to further improve these abilities
- Identify solutions to address school site capacity before attempting to implement the EGDC on a larger scale

## Now What?

*“[We need] the professional growth part; now that we have gone through the program and we have identified our area of need, now what?”*

–Teacher

There is an emerging body of research indicating that teacher practice can improve just by going through a rigorous classroom observation process coupled with self-reflection and conferencing opportunities.<sup>3</sup> However, LAUSD knows that these activities alone will not complete a robust Educator Growth and Development Cycle. High-quality professional development opportunities aligned to the Teaching & Learning Framework are essential to making the EGDC a more useful tool for professional growth and improvement.

The graphs in this report show that IIP participants experienced some difficulty developing their Individual Growth Plans and identifying appropriate professional growth activities that were directly targeted to teachers’ individual needs. As one teacher commented, “I would like more access to classes and other opportunities for training to meet my ‘professional growth’ needs. I would like the District to provide

<sup>3</sup> Taylor, E. S. & Tyler, J. H. (2011). The Effect of Evaluation on Performance: Evidence from Longitudinal Student Achievement Data of Mid-Career Teachers. National Bureau of Economic Research. Cambridge, MA.

more opportunities for training. On-line classes would be great!" Respondents also suggested more training for observers to support teachers in their professional growth, as well as leveraging teacher leaders. Observers said, "We only tried to calibrate, but never talked about how do we actually help the teachers to score higher on those rubrics," and, "Teacher coaches are a proven asset in changing/improving instruction skills, as are real professional learning communities—groups of dedicated teachers that work together for the purpose of improving their practice."

In addition to workshops and online resources, IIP participants emphasized the important role of peer support and collaboration in improving instructional practice. An observer noted, "The teacher self-evaluation and personal growth plan should not be done in isolation. It would be far more useful if teachers could work together to determine what really constitutes good teaching within their curricular area. They would then have a basis on which to create a personal growth plan." A teacher requested, "More ways to incorporate Professional Learning Communities-type of work among teachers where administrators play a strong instructional support role." Survey respondents also called for increased opportunities to learn from each other through peer observation. "I would have liked to have observed other teachers on an ongoing basis. There was little formal interaction between the teachers who were participating," said one teacher, while an observer felt that the teachers can improve, "By making routine peer-to-peer observations, more like lessons study, where teachers plan a common lesson, observe the lesson, give each other feedback, debrief, and plan a follow-up lesson."

*"The targeted activities for professional development are crucial! If we don't have specific or targeted professional development. If we are missing this piece how can we grow in our practice?"*

–Teacher

*"This new system has many viable points for improving our instruction. The one thing I feel we lack support of is a strong coaching model and lead teachers who assist everyone's growth. I appreciate this work and feel it is far superior to Stull, but only if the support is truly created at every level of our schools' hierarchies... I hope we can create more organic systems where teachers are collaborating to solve problems with the kind of leadership and guidance this new evaluation system demands."*

–Teacher

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

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- Develop targeted professional development opportunities aligned to the Teaching & Learning Framework and align existing PD
- Training and support to access PD and develop Individual Growth Plans, for both teachers and observers
- Models of professional collaboration and PLC's that work together on EGDC activities and professional growth activities
- Opportunities for peer observation



# CONCLUSION

Based on the lessons learned from the Initial Implementation Phase, the District is currently implementing a “scale-up” phase in the 2012-2013 school year. IIP participant feedback called for additional training, practice, and support to master the tools of the Educator Growth and Development Cycle and the Teaching & Learning Framework. All school leaders will "practice" going through an observation cycle with a volunteer teacher on their campus in a no-stakes environment, and all teachers will experience site-led professional development activities concerning the LAUSD Teaching & Learning Framework and select tools from the EGDC.

This initiative continues to be devoted to testing our new system, consulting with our teachers and principals, receiving advice and feedback from them about the system, and providing related training and professional development. Through our commitment to continuous improvement, we have already made modifications to the Educator Growth and Development Cycle because of IIP participant feedback, which are summarized in this report, as well as three prior ones: 1) the November 2011 Summer Training Report; 2) the February 2012 Fall Semester Report; and 3) the August 2012 First Observation Cycle Report. Exhibit 14 below displays a summary of program modifications made in response to educator feedback in the Initial Implementation Phase.

**EXHIBIT 14: Program improvements based on IIP feedback**

Theme/Activity	Participant Feedback	Program Improvement	
		2011-12 & 2012-13 Changes	2013-14 Proposed Changes
Teacher Training	Clarify the EGDC process and expectations for teachers and provide visible support from Talent Management staff	Monthly participant newsletter with updates and reminders; revised SY2012-13 trainings with more clarity about the process; hired Teaching & Learning Coordinators to support the field and conduct trainings	Identify and train site-based EGDC contacts for teacher support
Observer Training	More practice collecting evidence, scoring, and discussing results	Additional PD opportunities provided during SY2011-12 spring semester; revised SY2012-13 training to include more practice	Continue differentiated support through ESC-based Teaching & Learning Coordinators
Teaching & Learning Framework	Full Framework has too many elements to learn and observe for	Narrowed down to 19 focus elements for observation (21 focus elements in SY2012-13); in-depth training on elements in SY12-13 scale-up	Further refine the framework; Developing catalog of Prof. Dev't. opportunities that are Framework-aligned
Self-Assessment	Reflection is beneficial, yet it took too long to complete	Enhanced and streamlined tool for SY12-13; narrowed scope to self-assess on focus elements only, provided teacher-developed examples	Streamlining tool further for ease of completion and use

Theme/Activity	Participant Feedback	Program Improvement	
		2011-12 & 2012-13 Changes	2013-14 Proposed Changes
Lesson Design	Avoid repetition and adapt to different kinds of lesson plans	Revised the Lesson Design Template for the second formal observation cycle in the spring of SY2011-12	Further aligning of EGDC lesson plan with Common Core and EL Initiatives
Academic Growth over Time	Support teachers in “unpacking” their AGT results and provide supports that will improve practice	Revising AGT training and resources	
Pre-observation Conference	Clarify whether this meeting is to strengthen teacher’s lesson plan or an opportunity to gather observation evidence	Revised SY2012-13 training and EGDC protocols	
Formal Observation of Practice	Address technology barriers to collecting, scoring, and viewing evidence	New features in tech platform for this portion of the EGDC, including color-coded Framework elements and drag-and-drop features as requested by IIP participants	Continued improvements in evidence tagging process to include handwriting to text conversion and one-step tagging
Post-Observation Conference	Share effective strategies for observers to conduct these meetings with assigned teachers	Revised SY2012-13 training; offered PD session for SY2012-13 participants	
Individual Growth Plan	Link teachers with PD supporting their IGP growth goals	Development of IGP Resource Guide with element-specific recommendations for Prof. Dev’t. opportunities and organized day-long PD conference days for SY2012-13 EGDC participants	Development of a comprehensive Learning Management System with both internal and external PD options aligned to the Teaching & Learning Framework
Technology Platform	Platform not user-friendly—it takes too many “clicks” to complete each step; tech support needed	Major revisions to the platform have been rolled out since the IIP to improve the layout and interface and more are underway; platform help hotline established; tech support staff were available at summer SY2012-13 EGDC trainings	More user-intuitive interface and navigation that include fewer clicks and steps; Additional tech support personnel
Demands on time	Process is more time-consuming than anticipated; add additional observers based in the field to support site capacity	Redesigning tools and streamlined steps in the observation cycle	Continued redesign of tools and steps. Hiring 25 field observers in SY2013-14 via grant funding