Supporting Student Academic Success and Educator Retention

TLCC Research

The Center for Practice Engaged Education Research (C-PEER) at CU Denver partners with CDE to study how TLCC results relate to important school outcomes, including ***student academic performance*** and ***teacher retention***. C-PEER translates research into practical guidance school and district leaders can use to strengthen their schools and as part of improvement planning.

The TLCC survey measures several key aspects of the teaching and learning conditions experienced by school staff, referred to as "constructs." Because concepts such as *professional climate* or *staff leadership* cannot be measured directly, each construct is measured through a group of related survey questions. The TLCC constructs have been evaluated using established statistical methods and have consistently demonstrated that they measure meaningful aspects of school conditions that are associated with important outcomes.

What We Learned

C-PEER research identified the teaching and learning conditions most strongly associated with student academic performance and educator retention. These findings can help leaders prioritize where to focus when reviewing TLCC results.

If Your Goal Is Improving Student Academic Performance, Start Here

Three TLCC constructs that describe different aspects of instructional practice within the school explain close to one-third of the variation in student academic performance across schools. This includes:

- **Meeting Diverse Student Needs** – Educators describe instructional supports as inclusive and responsive to students' academic needs, languages, social emotional wellbeing, and cultural backgrounds.
- **Supportive Conditions** (for instruction) – Educators report having the practical conditions necessary to teach effectively including professional autonomy, access to resources, manageable class sizes, sufficient space and time to adjust instruction day-to-day.
- **Shared Responsibility for Learning** – The school community collectively owns student learning through staff collaboration, clear learning expectations, active student participation, and two-way partnerships with families to support learning beyond the classroom.

Questions to consider: Which area is strongest? Which represents the greatest opportunity for growth? How do these findings align with student academic performance data?

If Your Goal Is Retaining Educators, Start Here

The TLCC constructs that explained 34% of educators' intent to stay and 86% of perceptions that their school is a good place to work included:

- **Support for Educator Wellbeing** – The degree to which staff feel valued, connected, and supported at their school, including having a sense of belonging, job satisfaction, respectful relationships, and access to mental health support.
- **Professional Climate and Staff Leadership (combined)** – The degree to which staff see leadership as creating a safe, trusting, and collaborative environment where they have voice, influence, and shared responsibility for school direction and improvement.
- **Student Behavior –** Whether staff see student behavioral expectations as clear and consistently enforced, believe students have access to trusted adults and appropriate behavioral supports, and experience the school as a place where students know how to act and can focus on learning safely.

For schools and districts concerned about retaining first year teachers, also consider:

- **Supportive Conditions** (for instruction) – Educators report having the practical conditions necessary to teach effectively including professional autonomy, access to resources, manageable class sizes, sufficient space and time to adjust instruction day-to-day.

Questions to consider: Which area is strongest? Which represents the greatest opportunity for growth? What do your teachers describe as important to their decisions about continuing to work in the school/district now?

Suggested Review Process

1. Consider how many and which types of school or district staff responded to the TLCC Survey.
2. Review results for the six constructs that predict student academic performance and teacher retention.
3. Identify one strength, one opportunity for growth, and one result that deserves deeper discussion.
4. Consider if your school or district worked to improve one teaching and learning condition in the next year, which would have the greatest impact? What would you prioritize?

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