Teacher «» Student
Data Link Project

Developing a best practice framework for a teacher of record definition

Identifying business processes for collecting and validating linked teacher and student data

CELT
Center for Educational
Leadership and Technology

Teacher-Student Data Link Project

The Teacher-Student Data Link (TSDL) Project is an ongoing two year venture that brings five states and three districts within each state together to determine common approaches to a critical component of their educational data systems — the link between student outcomes and teacher influence. The project is being conducted by the Center for Educational Leadership and Technology (CELT) with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and guidance and dissemination support from the Data Quality Campaign (DQC).

Across the nation, states are looking to effectively use accountability data to increase student learning. Leveraging the collective experiences, knowledge, and resources of the participating states, the TSDL project is developing a common, best practice framework for a teacher of record definition, as well as business processes for collecting and validating linked teacher and student data at the state, district, school and classroom levels. Based on reports from site visits to the states and districts, each state group has developed pilot implementations of key recommendations to further their TSDL efforts.

Research has shown that an effective teacher is the single most important factor in student learning, yet it can be difficult to determine which teacher is responsible for teaching which student in a particular subject/course. What is needed is valid, reliable data that tracks a student's progress throughout the educational system, beginning with pre-kindergarten and extending beyond high school graduation.

For more information

Log on to www.tsdl.org

Register on the site for updates

Or contact nwilson@celtcorp.com
Dr. Nancy Wilson
TSDL Project Manager

Participating States and School Districts

The Teacher-Student Data Link Project is working with the following states and their participating districts to develop TSDL systems that ensure a valid and meaningful link between teachers and their students' education and performance. Three school districts from each of five participating states were selected based on size, use of data, and technology infrastructure.

- **Arkansas**
  Bryant, Fouke, Greenbrier

- **Florida**
  Hendry, Hillsborough, Osceola

- **Georgia**
  Bartow, Gwinnett, Morgan

- **Louisiana**
  Bossier, Jefferson Davis, Vermilion

- **Ohio**
  Canton, Columbus City, Delaware City

Roster Verification

It is also important that teachers and administrators be able to verify and submit corrections to the roster of students assigned to the Teacher of Record for a particular course/subject. This roster validation strengthens data quality and works to enable teachers to be knowledgeable about and connected to Teacher-Student Data Link policies and processes.

Roster verification is the common pilot effort of all five TSDL project states. There are various approaches to accomplish roster verification, and each TSDL state is examining how best to accomplish this and support the timely access to longitudinal student data for use by teachers to improve instruction.

Ten Key Components

An accurate and timely teacher-student data link requires a number of education system activities and responsibilities to be thoroughly discussed and aligned. TSDL research has identified those areas, grouping them into the following set of ten key components. These were verified by educators as fieldwork progressed:

1. Use and purpose of teacher-student data link
2. Data governance structure
3. Unique student identifier
4. Unique educator identifier
5. Courses and schedules
6. Daily attendance/membership
7. Assessments and outcomes data
8. Data linkages, flow, and integration
9. Interagency data systems
10. Teacher-student data link policies and definitions

TSDL Uses

A robust TSDL can have both short- and long-term uses: a number of them are shown in the figure below. For example, educators can use the link to identify best practices and support accountability growth models based on longitudinal data that connects student outcomes to multiple educators, programs, and schools over time.
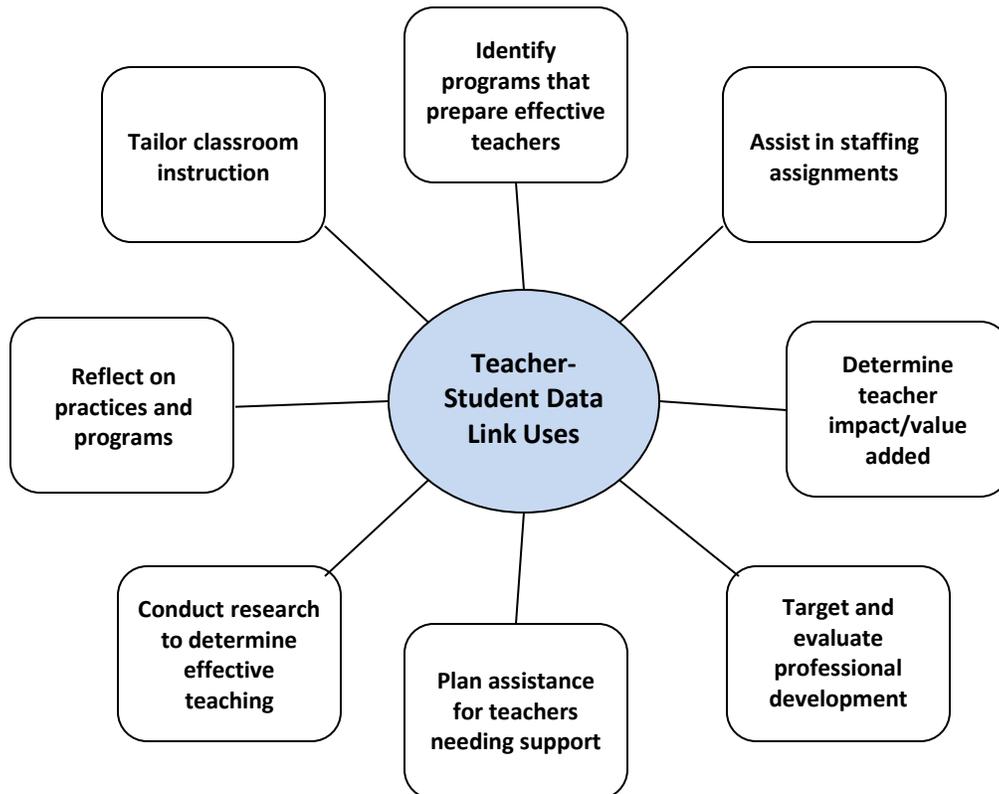
Teacher of Record

The Teacher of Record (TOR) definition framework is the starting point for a dialogue among state education agencies, districts, and schools about the purposes, characteristics, and data elements required for effective, reliable teacher-student data links. The framework provides the structure for a common understanding of the TOR concepts along with the flexibility to customize a TOR definition to reflect a state's education policies and priorities.

The framework begins with this definition: a teacher of record is an "educator" who is responsible for a "specified proportion" of a student's "learning activities" that are within a "subject or course" and are aligned to "performance measures". From this starting point, group discussion leads to the selection of appropriate words for those in the quotation marks depending on their use and characteristics of Teacher of Record. They identify the data elements required to support their specific TOR definition and whether these can be gathered in a cost-effective manner. If the data cannot be gathered to support the definition, the term must be redefined.

Defining Teacher of Record can be a challenge in today's schools with multiple education delivery options such as virtual classes, higher education dual enrollment and community-based internships. Also, there are many roles and programs involved in a student's learning experience. It is not possible to craft a definition that fits every exception; however it is important to delineate the distinction between instruction and the other services provided to students. Teacher of Record should focus on the instructional responsibility, and it is recommended that education systems adopt the complimentary term of "Contributing Professional" which can be defined as "an individual who has been assigned the responsibility to provide additional services that support a student's learning." Examples of Contributing Professional could include a virtual class facilitator, reading specialist, special education consultant or guidance counselor who is working with particular students in a course/subject.

States that have been using the TOR framework have included in their discussions the ability to have multiple Teachers of Record for a course/subject in team or co-teaching. This should not be limited within the data system to two TOR. An example of the definition commonly being used is: A Teacher of Record is an individual (or individuals in co-teaching assignments) who has been assigned lead responsibility for a student's learning in a subject/course with aligned performance measures.

About CELT

For nearly two decades, CELT has helped align leadership, learning, and technology in support of improved student achievement by working collaboratively with educational organizations to support and transform teaching, learning, and administrative processes.

For the past several years, CELT has been a leader in assessing and designing learner-centered, instructionally focused, and affordable decision support/accountability systems that are valid, reliable, and replicable at the student, classroom, school, school district, state, and federal level.

In addition to helping establish data definitions and systems architecture, CELT assists with the alignment of data systems with contemporary research, best practices, proven business processes, and governance policies.

Center for Educational Leadership and Technology
65 West Boston Post Road ● Marlborough, MA 01752
Tel: 508-624-4474 ● Fax: 508-624-6565
www.celtcorp.com