

How To: Teacher Voice in Reform

Why should you get involved?

- Studies, such as the [Gates Foundation Measures of Effective Teaching](#), highlight the importance of teacher engagement in education reform efforts.
- Organizations like Hope Street Group recognize the powerful lever that great teachers represent in increasing student success through their active involvement in education policy.
- Many states are implementing and refining new education policies such as new state standards, teacher evaluations, and professional development. Remember that your voice must be heard as systems are developed, implemented, and re-evaluated. Your experiences and feedback are crucial to sustainable, meaningful improvement.

How can you get involved?

- Approach your building, district or state level administrators and voice your desire to be involved.
- Meet and speak with Teacher Association representatives to hear about the efforts in which they are involved.
- When you reach out, be prepared with questions and talking points.

What should you talk about?

- *Pre-meeting:*
 - Schedule a formal meeting time with the administrator (building, district, state).
 - Prepare your questions, talking points, and your desired next steps.
- *Some Suggested Questions for Your Meeting:*
 - What is the current state of _____ (i.e. teacher evaluation system) in our district/state?
 - Have you been involved in the reform efforts? If so, how?
 - Are you aware of district or state efforts to engage teachers in the reform process? If so, what is/was the plan to engage teachers. If not, how do you think we can engage teachers in this important conversation?
 - What can I do to help inform and engage more teachers in continued discussions?
 - How can I become directly involved in the reform process and directly impact the acceptance/implementation/evaluation of new policies?
 - Who do you recommend I speak to in order to become active in the conversation?
 - What are some next steps I can take immediately to have my voice heard at the district and state level?
- *Post-meeting:*
 - Formally thank the administrator via email for their time and sharing valuable information.
 - Follow-up with any leads and suggestions for next steps, for example who you can reach out to (at any level) to have further conversations and increase your engagement.
 - If applicable, schedule a follow-up meeting with the administrator to see if any further opportunities have opened up and share your experiences since the initial meeting.