



November 17, 2011



Dear Supporters & Friends:

Most teachers say they teach because they love their students, and because they love helping them to learn. And it shows. Research shows that the single most important school-based factor in improving student academic performance is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. Students who have strong teachers year after year soar academically.

Unfortunately, too many teachers—from those who are the best in the state to those who are growing professionally— receive limited feedback, whether it is praise for a job well done or constructive feedback to help them grow in their craft.

This is because for far too long our teacher evaluation systems have been shaped by an array of state laws, district policies, union contracts, and local practices that, when combined together, prevent teachers from receiving high-quality evaluations. Teacher evaluations are often approached as little more than the tedious act of filling out a form when, in fact, they should be seen as an opportunity for teacher mentoring and development.

The good news is there are better models being developed right here in California. Today, The Education Trust—West and Teach Plus Los Angeles release ***Improving Teacher Evaluation in California***, an important resource to help teachers learn about new, more useful teacher evaluation processes being developed and implemented in forward-thinking districts and charter schools across the state. Take a moment to read about how Los Angeles Unified School District, the College-Ready Promise, and Lucia Mar Unified School District are each improving teacher evaluations as a critical way to improve both teaching and student outcomes.

We believe evaluation systems should enhance teacher development and guide the professional support our educators deserve. If you agree, please share this resource with your teacher networks. Together, we can take action and begin the tough work of improving California's broken teacher evaluation system. It all begins with you.

Sincerely,

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