

Peer Assistance and Review:  
A Cross-Site Study of Labor-Management Collaboration  
Required for Program Success

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## Introduction

Many states now require school districts to adopt strategies to support and evaluate teachers. Given the research that connects high-quality teaching with greater student learning (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Elmore, 2000), this emphasis on providing teachers with appropriate support so that they can improve – or alternatively, removing them from the classroom if they cannot succeed – is widely seen to be essential to the success of public schools.

Recent research documents that the current teacher evaluation system implemented by most U.S. school districts is broken (Toch & Rothman, 2008). There is mounting evidence that administrators often do not fulfill their responsibilities to properly evaluate their teachers. Many principals do not have the skills, time, or desire to follow required procedures for evaluation and follow-up that would lead to dismissals (Loup et al., 1996; Tucker, 1997; Bridges, 1992). In addition, teachers unions are often blamed for getting in the way of the dismissals of ineffective teachers. Critics say unions tie the hands of administrators by ferociously implementing due process laws, which are often said to protect underperforming teachers (Moe, 2001). Union critics often promote the misleading view that unions grant tenure – though unions advocate strongly for tenure, tenure is provided through state law.

Recognizing the ineffectiveness of the current teacher evaluation system, a small number of local teachers unions across the country are collaborating with their districts to restructure the evaluation process. The program they have developed, Peer Assistance and Review (PAR), places much of the responsibility for teacher support and evaluation in the hands of teachers who have been trained in coaching and evaluation. These teachers – often called consulting teachers (CTs) – provide support to their peers for several months and evaluate them, subsequently recommending whether they should have their contracts renewed. CTs work with beginning

teachers (in a Novice Program) and experienced teachers who are identified as needing extra assistance (in an Intervention Program). Most districts that have PAR sponsor both programs, though a few have either one or the other. PAR calls for significant and sustained labor-management collaboration because it alters deeply-entrenched adversarial norms of interaction by union leaders and district officials. This collaboration required to make PAR work, which is complicated, multi-leveled, and high-stakes, is neither widely understood nor well-documented.

This study focuses on seven districts where PAR has been implemented. Through interviews with union leaders, superintendents, other district administrators, and consulting teachers, we investigated how these districts have jointly designed, implemented, governed and sustained PAR programs for teachers. We sought to understand what it takes to make such a complex labor-management collaboration work.

In this paper, we first examine why districts are motivated to make such radical changes in the traditional labor-management relationship as they even think about designing a PAR program. We then consider how PAR changes labor-management relations at the district level as well as at the school level. Next, we explain what happens to PAR programs – and the relationship between union members and administrators involved in PAR – over time. Finally, we conclude with a discussion of the implications of these findings for districts, unions and policy makers thinking about PAR.

### *Context and Rationale*

PAR programs across the country vary, though most share certain components. Proponents of PAR often emphasize that the program is intended to improve teachers' practice, not merely to remove unsatisfactory teachers from the classroom. The heart of the program—supporting and assessing teachers—is done by the CTs and is structured to ensure that teachers

in PAR meet agreed-upon standards of effective teaching. Most PAR programs are governed by a decision-making labor-management team called the PAR Panel, composed of equal or nearly-equal numbers of appointees by management and the teachers union. This PAR Panel oversees the work of the CTs. According to many program founders, PAR is easier to implement when the teachers to be supported and evaluated are all new and untenured. Thus, often the Novice PAR Program is implemented first, before the program expands to include veteran teachers.

Districts that implement PAR often cite two main accomplishments: increasing retention rates, through the mentoring component, and dismissal rates, through the assessment component (Goldstein, 2007). For example, Columbus reports an 80% new teacher retention rate after five years of PAR, as opposed to the national rate of 50%; Rochester's rates of new teacher retention over the same period under PAR were reported to be 95% (Anderson & Pellicer, 2001; Kaboolian & Sutherland, 2005).

Dismissal rates reported by districts are also notable. In Toledo, 10 percent of new teachers evaluated under PAR are not rehired, as opposed to 1-2 percent before PAR's implementation (Anderson & Pellicer, 2001; Kaboolian & Sutherland, 2005). In Columbus, the termination rate for new teachers in the 19 years prior to PAR was just 1-2 percent, but rose to 5-6 percent after PAR was established (Kaboolian & Sutherland, 2005). Despite these accomplishments, PAR is operational in only a small number (estimates are 20-60) of the 14,000 districts across the country. One potential reason for PAR's failure to be easily replicated is that it requires deep, sustained labor-management collaboration.

*Labor-management collaboration in PAR.* PAR requires sustained teamwork between the union and administration both before and after adoption. Collaboration between teachers unions and districts is complex because of the traditionally adversarial stance adopted by many union

leaders and district leaders in their relations with each other (Slichter, Healey, & Livernash, 1960; Kahlenberg, 2006). Since the mid-1980s, however, a number of unions have gradually altered their priorities and goals in what is characterized by some as a move toward “professional” or “new” unionism (Kerchner, Koppich, & Weeres, 1997; Koppich, 1993; Bascia, 1994; Teachers Union Reform Network, 2007). Collaborating around PAR is complicated, however, because it alters an entrenched norm in the teaching profession – and, in some states, also a law – that tenured teachers will not be evaluated by their peers. PAR violates a strongly-held norm of teaching that assumes all teachers are “equals” (Lortie, 1975). It is also seen by some to violate the union principle of solidarity (Murray, 2000). Additionally, PAR often reassigns evaluation responsibilities from administrators to CTs, despite the fact that some contend that principals are better trained in evaluation (Lieberman, 1998). Because of the significant hurdles that must be surmounted in order to implement PAR, studying PAR programs can provide a very informative perspective on the fundamentals of union-management collaboration.

### *Literature Review*

Compared with other topics in education, there is not much research on teachers unions or collective bargaining (Hannaway & Rotherham, 2006; Moe, 2001). Even less has been written about labor-management collaboration, especially about what this collaboration looks like in practice. By examining the implementation of PAR across a set of districts in several states, this study can inform the broader conversation about how teachers unions and school districts can work productively together in school reform initiatives.

The literature that informs this study falls into three categories: (1) literature examining traditional industrial labor relations, which is primarily about bargaining in the private sector (2)

literature on the practices of “new” unionism, in both the private sector and education, and (3) literature on inter-organizational collaboration.

*The industrial model of unionism.* The relations between teachers unions and school districts historically have been adversarial (Kahlenberg, 2006; Koppich, 2006). The collective bargaining laws governing public employees, including teachers, are based on the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, an industrial model developed for private sector bargaining (Kahlenberg, 2006). The resulting industrial-style unionism in both private industry and in K-12 education emphasizes the distinct and competing interests of labor and management, their adversarial relationships, and the union’s obligation to protect its members (Kerchner & Koppich, 1993; Koppich, 2005). Traditionally, bargaining for teachers (and for private-sector employees) was thought to be zero-sum; what one side gained in bargaining, the other was assumed to lose.

Labor relations in education have been slow to break out of the industrial model (Johnson, 2004). Because industrial bargaining assumes that work rules for all teachers and all schools should be uniform and that teachers are “interchangeable laborers” (Johnson & Kardos, 2000), collective bargaining can promote standardization and “inflexibility” in teacher policy and contracts (Johnson, 2004). This industrial model results in constraints and work rules for teachers as a group and leaves little consideration for individual teachers’ needs (Kerchner & Mitchell, 1988). This can become a problem in the current educational context where teachers often need to exercise professional judgment in deciding how to teach a diverse student body (Johnson, 2004).

*Newer approaches to bargaining and relations.* A second body of literature focuses on how this industrial model of labor-management relations has changed over time. In the 1980s, labor scholars and practitioners developed non-traditional ways for unions and school districts to

bargain. One of the best known alternatives to industrial-style bargaining is interest-based bargaining, or IBB (Fisher, Ury & Patton, 1991), which allows parties to approach their work through a non-adversarial process. In a departure from prior bargaining styles, IBB requires both parties to identify shared interests and to jointly solve problems (Fisher, Ury, & Patton, 1991; Kerchner et al., 1997), and – in contrast to traditional bargaining – IBB is not zero-sum. Interest-based bargaining has helped some unions and districts change the way they work together (Hess & Kelly, 2006).

There is little systemic analysis about what is needed – beyond general advice about having a progressive leader and using a non-adversarial bargaining process – to sustain a program such as PAR. These new relationships require much more than new contract language and they lead to much more than just a retooled bargaining process.

*Inter-organizational collaboration.* As simply stated in Hord (1986), inter-organizational collaboration is the “development of the model of joint planning, joint implementation, and joint evaluation between ... organizations.” A third body of literature about this topic reveals that even in non-unionized organizations, the dynamics of inter-organizational collaboration are complex (Hord, 1986; Hoyt, 1978; Appley & Winder, 1977), as organizations face potential benefits when they collaborate (Black & Kase, 1963; Starkweather, 1962; Aldrich, 1972) as well as potential costs (Fox & Faver, 1984). Because inter-organizational collaboration takes both time and resources and poses significant risks, an organization must have an incentive to participate (Schermerhorn, 1975).

These benefits and costs described in the literature on collaboration are echoed in the literature on new unionism in education. As Kerchner and Koppich (1993) state, the union “is able to make its points, assert itself, and gain a professional advantage for its members in ways

other than ritual saber-rattling or actual concerted action” when they are collaborating with management (p. 195). Alternatively, the district gains commitment from teachers when they enter into such collaborations. Successful collaboration must be for mutual gain (Koppich, 2005), even if each party has different goals. Designing and implementing PAR requires a collaboration that offers benefits while imposing costs, because trade-offs for both union and management are involved. This analysis focuses on how seven districts have made this collaboration work.

### *Research Questions*

Given the traditionally adversarial nature of collective bargaining, we were interested in how representatives of the teachers union and management were able to work in partnership to institute a program requiring a great deal of interdependence and collaboration. The research questions that guided this study are:

1. How do seven districts structure their labor-management relationship under PAR?
2. What does each party (union leaders, district officials) say are the perceived benefits and perceived drawbacks of their PAR program?
3. How are the programs sustained over time? Does the process of collaboration change over time?

### *Research Methods*

This analysis draws upon data from a larger, qualitative study of seven districts’ PAR programs. In that study, conducted by researchers at the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, we sought to learn how these districts had implemented PAR and what challenges they faced. We sought to understand how their PAR programs worked, what tradeoffs were involved in different decisions about program design, and how stakeholders viewed the effectiveness of PAR in their district. We focused specifically on the role of the consulting teacher, the labor-

management relationship at the district level, the effect of PAR on building principals, and the costs and benefits of PAR.

We first selected a sample of seven districts that had implemented teacher Peer Assistance and Review (Toledo and Cincinnati, OH; Rochester and Syracuse, NY; Minneapolis, MN; San Juan, CA; and Montgomery County, MD). We sought possible participants through literature reviews, internet searches, and informal networking. In our research, we found some districts with PAR programs where CTs did not conduct evaluations of fellow teachers, but chose to include only programs that included both assistance and review. We sought to choose a diverse sample of districts, with a range of geographic locations, district financial resources, labor-management relationship histories, and sizes. We purposefully included some districts, like Toledo and Cincinnati, that had long-standing PAR programs, and other districts, like Syracuse, with relatively new programs. See Appendix A for more information about the sites.

Between November 2007 and April 2008, two researchers conducted site visits of 2 to 3 days in each district. Over the course of each visit, we interviewed approximately 25 individuals, including key union and district officials, members of the PAR Panel, current and former consulting teachers, and principals. In all districts, we interviewed both the Superintendent and the teachers union president. We made a concerted effort to interview both advocates and opponents of PAR. Overall, we interviewed 155 individuals across the seven districts. In Appendix B, we include the study's general interview protocols, although we tailored the protocols to each district and each role.

Shortly after each site visit, we created a thematic summary that captured salient aspects of the district's PAR program. We had the interviews transcribed verbatim and coded them using both theoretical codes drawn from past research and open codes identified from the thematic

summaries and the interviews. We also developed matrices to identify patterns in the data and to catalogue the similarities and differences between the programs. We supplemented information from interviews with relevant documents, including both the teachers and principals union contracts. District and union officials also reviewed our matrices and summaries for accuracy.

### The Labor-Management Relationship and PAR

From the first time PAR is discussed in a district, the union (teachers and their union leaders) and management (both those in the central office and principals) agree to enter a new kind of collaboration. As PAR implementation progresses, the two parties agree to work together in a way that is fundamentally different from their interactions before PAR. Because PAR engages teachers in evaluating other teachers – a responsibility that previously was exclusively held by principals and other school-based administrators – both teachers and administrators must agree to redistribute their responsibilities and work together to improve the quality of the work of teachers in their schools. This shift requires them to enter a new kind of working relationship, one for which there is no blueprint.

The structure responsible for PAR's on-going management – the PAR Panel – calls for the parties to work in on-going, cooperative ways that might be new to them. This transformation to a collaborative working relationship typically occurs first between upper management and union leaders, but eventually must also develop between principals and teachers, who work together both on the PAR Panel and in schools. Thus, changes in the labor-management relationship under PAR occur both at the district level and the school level.

Not surprisingly, these changes in structure, roles and expectations of collaboration provoke resistance from many who have long operated under the norms and practices of a traditional labor-management relationship. Because the adversarial way in which unions and

districts conventionally have interacted is deeply-rooted in school culture, union members and administrators alike in this study emphasized fundamental differences between the relationships that PAR requires and the relationships of a traditional labor-management relationship. Making this switch from the old thinking to the new is not easy. Tom Alves, the executive director of the San Juan Teachers Association (SJTA) said that when PAR is instituted, "... you're really talking about a re-culturing .... It's an evolutionary process." In reflecting on PAR's beginnings in San Juan, Alves said that the process of changing norms and working relationships takes substantial effort over time. Although parties must agree to collaborate at PAR's inception, the partnership grows as the program develops.

The president of the Syracuse Teachers Association (STA), Kate McKenna, also described the process of making PAR work as a "developmental" one and her role as a leader in it: "It was an evolutionary process that we tried to guide people through." Those who initiated and promoted PAR in their districts forged a new path in an old landscape, helping them move from an adversarial labor-management relationship that was familiar and often comfortable to a relationship that involves working together closely to improve teacher performance.

#### *Common Goals Shared by Union and Management*

Traditionally, union and district goals have been at odds. The union's purposes have been to ensure that workers earn fair wages, experience safe working conditions, and are protected from any arbitrary bias or whims of their powerful supervisors. These purposes sometimes conflict with the efforts of the school district, to teach students and raise student achievement. Unions and their school districts have often operated on separate tracks, which sometimes intersect and create serious problems.

PAR cannot work well in such an environment. In order to begin working on PAR, parties must come together and agree to common goals. Often those involved “improving teacher quality” and “focusing on the children.” For PAR to become a reality, union and district leaders must ultimately agree to make the best decisions for the children in the classrooms by specifically focusing together on improving teachers’ skills. As Rochester Superintendent Jean-Claude Brizard said,

I think if we all focus on what matters most, we can find common ground. The process, the road may be slightly different. We may argue about the way we get there. But if we all agree it’s about the children and improvement, we’ll make a case for why this is the way to do things.

Superintendent Steve Enoch of San Juan described PAR’s focus as “the heart of our work – teacher quality.” Many participants identified a similar purpose—improving teacher quality. Unions and districts generally reported that it was not initially difficult to agree on that broad goal for PAR. However, for both teachers and principals, taking the next steps was sometimes difficult.

#### *When PAR is Proposed*

Although every account of PAR implementation is unique, we found commonalities across the districts we studied. Most programs were developed by a joint labor-management committee in a district that had some history of collaboration. These were not programs built from scratch at the bargaining table. As a Minneapolis administrator said, “[PAR] was created with teachers and administration. It wasn’t just [that] the district gave it to [the union]” (MPS Administrator 3). Others described the joint committee work as “a marriage” (San Juan CT 17) or “a partnership” (CPS Administrator 2).

All programs met with some resistance from teachers, and several faced organized challenges from principals unions while programs were being designed and implemented. Most

programs had to be implemented before all details were worked out and then – as trust grew with program success – the program was refined and/or expanded.

*PAR implementation meets resistance from teachers.* It was not enough to have a dedicated union champion of PAR and some experience collaborating. In San Juan, the enthusiastic and politically-savvy SJTA Executive Director Tom Alves and SJTA President Steve Duditch were passionate PAR proponents. Even though they worked with several collaborative superintendents, they met with a great deal of resistance to PAR from their executive board, union members, principals and other members of management. Duditch described how his own board responded: “It was a difficult thing for some of my executive board in the beginning to believe that, as teachers, we had a responsibility to help evaluate teachers and provide them with assistance ....” Although the union’s executive board eventually came around and gave them “a hundred percent support,” Duditch said he simultaneously encountered resistance from district management and his membership. Management did not want to “give up power,” and his membership was wary of involving teachers in evaluating their peers.

It was not until 1999, when the California legislature offered funding for districts to start PAR programs, that the union was able to move forward with PAR. Even after money was secured and administrators agreed on the merits of PAR, Alves and Duditch still had to convince their members to ratify the proposed contract that included PAR. Duditch said:

Once we negotiated it, we still needed to get it ratified. This [needed to be] ratified by our teachers, and [PAR] was very controversial at the time, especially when the state organizations weren’t supporting it and they were saying, “teachers shouldn’t evaluate teachers. We should look the other way. It’s not our job.” So, we had to go to our membership here and show them that we weren’t here to try to punish people. We’re here to try to help and really create a pathway for success or a pathway for exiting this profession.

Union leaders in San Juan had expected to encounter resistance from management, who they expected would fear the loss of power and authority that PAR would bring. However, like several leaders in our study, they were surprised at the force of resistance they encountered from their own members, who expected them to focus on traditional union issues: wages, hours and working conditions. San Juan's Alves said that he believes that union leaders must address these basic needs before they can expect members to accept an expanded agenda:

... you can only move in these progressive ways when you've taken care of the old-fashioned bread-and-butter issues. So you've got to be delivering raises. You've got to be delivering good old-fashioned due process. You've got to be delivering and making sure that they're not paying \$500 a month health care out of their pockets. You've really got to be delivering on bread-and-butter issues. Then you can move in a progressive way.

This need – to carefully navigate through the bargaining process, being sure to attend to traditional issues while also framing the new endeavor in a way that members understand and accept – is something that all union presidents in the study recognized.

*PAR meets organized resistance from principals.* Just as teachers often resisted their leadership's proposal for a PAR program, some principals resisted the introduction of PAR in their district. Although administrators in general told of their fears about adopting PAR, the principals unions in Rochester and Syracuse took action by filing formal grievances and lawsuits. These challenges generally reflected principals' concerns that their rights to evaluate their teachers were being abridged, even when some principals, themselves, conceded that the old evaluation arrangement was not working.

### *Codifying PAR*

Traditional contract negotiations occur during scheduled bargaining sessions in which the union's bargaining team sits together across from the management's bargaining team to agree to a new contract. Lawyers often are present and formal procedures prevail as each side presents its

proposals and responds to the other's recommendations and demands. Typically, each side presents a number of proposals that are often unrealistic, strategically planning to end up with only the most important pieces.

Ironically, it is through this collective bargaining process that PAR can be officially established. As Dal Lawrence, who first devised PAR, reflected about Toledo, "... without collective bargaining, there would have been no chance whatsoever of making such an abrupt departure from traditional views about the school workplace" (Lawrence, 2008, p. 26). Those who proposed PAR said they ultimately used the forum of collective bargaining to change the rules of teacher evaluation, and to change the way in which parties would operate together. Rather than prohibit a shift in labor-management relations, this usually-contentious process enabled it by providing a legal mechanism for formally adopting PAR.

*What is in the contract regarding PAR.* Some leaders in these districts said that having PAR included in the contract is the best way to ensure its survival and to guarantee adherence to both the spirit and the detail of the agreement. When PAR is included in the contract, it is legally binding and cannot be changed outside of negotiations. As the former PAR director in San Juan said,

Having it in the contract, I think, was a stroke of genius ... it really institutionalized it. It set all the operating conditions, and it's darn hard to change it once it's in contract. (SJ Panel Member 9)

### *Sustaining PAR*

Although there were many varied pathways by which PAR was adopted by these districts, there was more consistency in how the programs operated. Across districts, all program implementers organized a PAR Panel to oversee and manage the program. PAR is not self-running once the language is negotiated and codified in the contract, and districts must have in

place a system by which program leaders can decide about issues as they arise. As Rochester Teachers Association President Adam Urbanski reflected,

It can't just be personal or else it will go away when the person does. It's structures. We have a Career in Teaching Panel. It's the best management team in the district and everyone knows that on both sides. ... we can have our wars, but this isn't a battlefield. We all want quality.

This PAR Panel oversees all aspects of program management, and it embodies labor-management change at the district level.

#### Changes at the District-level: The PAR Panel

In traditional, non-PAR districts, “labor relations” are often understood to be enacted between the superintendent and the union president. The traditional union’s goal is to represent its members, the teachers; the school district’s goal is to educate students and represent them and the public’s interests. These goals are seldom understood to overlap, and the programs and policies over which each party has power usually are discrete. Though the district and union may come together at times to discuss common issues, their joint work is often intermittent and infrequent. And because their goals are at odds and resources often scarce, antagonism is common.

However, in PAR, labor relations at the district-level focus on the common goal of ensuring teacher quality. Conversations occur within a unique structure called the PAR Panel, which includes teachers and administrators who oversee the PAR program. The PAR Panel expands the labor-management relationship to include more people than the superintendent and union president. In this setting, these PAR Panel structures and procedures that formalize collaboration replace the formal labor-management relationship. Over time, the traditional modes of interaction give way to the informal norms of collaboration that arise during the PAR Panel’s operation. However, labor-management relations on the Panel may function as an oasis of

collaboration while labor-management tensions prevail in other areas of interaction. As TFT President Fran Lawrence said, “Generally, if you are at the [PAR Panel], there could be a major issue between labor and management at the district and you would not see that surfacing in that forum.” Lawrence said that relationships on Toledo’s Panel have remained strong, even when the relationship between superintendent and union leader has been contentious.

### *Responsibilities of the PAR Panel*

The PAR Panel is responsible for supporting both the CTs and the teachers in the program, and Panel meetings usually focus on reports from CTs about the progress of teachers in their caseload. PAR Panel members ultimately recommend to the superintendent whether teachers should be re-employed or dismissed. They ensure that teachers in PAR get the support they need from the CT and the principal and, if warranted, take action to remove a teacher from the classroom.

By assuming responsibility for tasks that are central to both the work of PAR and to others’ perceptions of the program and its reputation, the joint Panel ensures that decisions will be made that lend credibility to the CTs and the work they do. Although Panel members cannot create collaboration in the absence of commitment, using these structures increases the likelihood that collaboration will develop. Thus, as Panel members jointly select, support and evaluate the CTs and review data about teachers’ performance in PAR, the Panel’s tightly structured and managed work engages them in difficult conversations about teacher quality.

### *How PAR Panel Composition is Crucial to Collaboration*

Across districts, participants emphasized that getting the right combination of individuals on the Panel is a key to its effectiveness. Panel members are chosen first by affiliation – the teachers union appoints its members and the superintendent or principals union appoints its

members. However, once individuals are on the Panel, they are expected to focus on a shared goal, rather than separate interests.

*Selecting Panel members.* Union leaders and superintendents reported that individuals are chosen for Panel positions based on diversity (including specialization in subject and grade level), good judgment, and their reputation for knowing skilled teaching. More importantly, however, union presidents and superintendents said that individuals are chosen to be on the Panel because they also are proven collaborators. San Juan Teachers Association President Duditch said,

We need to have a good working relationship, but we also have to have quality people in there. And not only quality teachers and quality administrators, people that have the ability to collaborate, because it's all about collaboration here. ... I needed somebody who could collaborate, and who could work well with others, and who can build bridges.

These qualities are different from those often sought by union and management in traditional, adversarial settings where the ability to promote and defend one's party's interest is paramount.

A key to the collaborative nature of the joint Panel is the process through which the members are reviewed. In all districts, both sides allow their counterpart in the labor-management relationship to informally vet their appointees. Steve Enoch, superintendent in San Juan, explained, "I get recommendations typically from one of the assistant superintendents. And frankly, I will talk either formally or informally with the union as well." His approach to appointing Panel members is typical of every other superintendent we interviewed, which helps to build a Panel of individuals who are willing and able to work together.

*Equal weight.* Panel procedures specify that each member's voice and vote on a participant's progress counts equally, and every Panel member is privy to all confidential information on teacher's progress no matter his position in the district. As a teacher member of the Panel in Rochester said, "What I like also is that we are very equal on that Panel. There's no

such thing as 'well, you're a teacher, you need to close your mouth'" (RCSD Panel 5). This is in remarkable contrast to how school systems traditionally work, with a hierarchy of positions, carefully-controlled information, and vertical decision-making.

### *Informal Reasons the Panel Works*

While Panel members are working together on the Panel, informal norms and processes organically develop among them, which gradually shape how they do their work together. Their accounts suggested that first a structure is adopted and then, from that structure develops the manner by which people work together. These informal practices were described similarly across districts, and included how the leaders worked together, how the members chose to sit at meetings, and how Panel members discussed their work on the Panel.

*PAR Panel leadership that sets the right tone.* In order for decisions to be made carefully and efficiently, PAR Panels are chaired or co-chaired by one member of the union and one member of management, usually high-ranking officials. Sometimes Panel co-chairs lead together, and sometimes they rotate responsibilities each year. Whatever the arrangement, participants reported that the manner in which co-chairs worked together was crucial to the Panel's success.

Many chairs and co-chairs hold positions where they already are in regular contact so that informal communication about PAR often happens naturally. As the union co-chair in Rochester said of her administrative counterpart,

She happens to be in a position where I speak to her almost daily. She is the chief human resources officer, and shoot, I talked to her twice I think today. She was over here for a meeting and then I called her later on. (RCSD Union 2)

The administration co-chair from Toledo said "business is between us" (TPS Administrator 2), meaning that he and his co-chair could make decisions outside of the bargaining process without

convening the entire Panel. For example, the co-chairs revised Toledo's PAR handbook, which included the rating sheet used in the teacher evaluation process. Had this change been required to go through bargaining, the process would have been slow and cumbersome. This co-chair said there were some limitations on decisions that the co-chairs could make – prohibitions specified in the contract – but that it was expedient for them to make many day-to-day decisions.

#### *How Participants Described their Work on the Panel*

Panel leaders and members must share common goals in order to effectively work together on the Panel. This allows them to talk about the way teachers teach without feeling that they have to specifically represent their constituency. Across districts, Panel members said that PAR had influenced both labor and management members of the Panel to take on collective interests and, in so doing, be open to others' perspectives. Often they said that they "take off their hats" at Panel meetings. This metaphor illustrates much of what is unique about the PAR Panel's work. It demonstrates, first, that Panel members are aware that they do wear a hat as they come to a Panel meeting – that they are "union" or "management" and have been appointed to the Panel precisely because of this affiliation. However, across districts, Panel members explained that they had to move beyond that affiliation and think independently on behalf of improving teacher quality. As a Panel member in Syracuse said,

I really step between the worlds .... When we walked into this whole thing, everybody pretty much took their hat off and we are "the Panel" ... it is not like "the administrative camp" and "the teacher camp." (Syracuse Panel member 11)

Members could not always identify exactly what it was about PAR that led them to set aside their affiliation. The Syracuse Panel member said,

I don't know if I can really explain it except it became like a common purpose together. I think in the beginning, it wasn't an adversarial group, but we were all kind of put together and these are your roles and here were the administrators and here we were. And then we

kind of got into it and then the whole focus of the group came. (Syracuse Panel member 11)

This Panel member said that the Panel's goals, structures and norms engendered a collaboration focused on high-quality teaching. Across districts, Panel members described serious conversations that focused on teaching and learning.

Collaboration does not mean easy agreement, however. Panel members reflected on how PAR conversations required them to think in different, sometimes difficult, ways. These conversations about teaching reveal a move away from position-based conversations toward collaborative discussions about teaching.

#### Changes at the School-level between Principals and CTs

When a district implements a PAR program, it introduces changes in the labor-management relationship of participating schools. PAR means a shift in roles for both the principal and the teacher who serves as Consulting Teacher (CT), because the principal now shares evaluation responsibilities with a CT, and the CT assumes tasks that were traditionally those of administrators alone. Communication between CT and principal can be difficult because there is no prototype for how a principal and a teacher in this newly-created hybrid position should interact.

Traditionally, the labor-management relationship at the school level primarily is played out by the principal and a teacher serving as the union's building representative who answers members' questions, monitors contract compliance, or files grievances. This school-level labor-management relationship often mirrors the district-level interactions between the superintendent and the union president. In many schools where tension existed between teachers and the administration, one task the building representative played was "watchdog," questioning the principal's authority and filing grievances at perceived contractual violations. In less adversarial

settings, the building representative played a more collaborative role, but in all cases, the principal retained the right to evaluate teachers and the building representative was positioned to challenge the process if procedures were violated. The building representative was only authorized to intervene in the process, not the content, of the evaluation.

In PAR, however, evaluation responsibilities are redistributed between the principal and the CT, while the building representative plays a less prominent role. Goldstein (2004) calls this a “jurisdictional shift between teachers and principals over the leadership function of teacher evaluation” (p. 176). This particular jurisdictional shift is most apparent at the school level, where the principal and teacher begin to share evaluation responsibilities. It is no wonder that both principals and teachers find the principal’s new role and the CT’s new responsibilities confusing.

#### *The Principal Shares Evaluation Responsibilities with the CT*

PAR requires that the principal and the teacher in the CT role devise a working relationship, because the two share evaluation responsibilities throughout the PAR process. Under prior evaluation systems, the principal was responsible for all aspects of teacher evaluation and most of the teacher support that the school provided to a veteran teacher who needed assistance. Now, in PAR, the CT usually takes an active role in the investigation of a referral, is responsible for providing support for the teachers who are referred, and makes recommendations to the Panel based on multiple observations over time. Ultimately, the CT is responsible for recommending to the Panel whether the teacher should be re-employed or dismissed. Although the CT often directs the support and evaluation of teachers in PAR, the principal must be a partner in that work.

The principal plays a crucial role in referring experienced teachers to PAR's Intervention program. In all districts that we studied, the principal was required to evaluate tenured teachers in order to refer them to PAR Intervention. A principal's job in PAR does not end with the referral, however. In most districts, principals continue to have the responsibility to evaluate their teachers as they participate in PAR (as well as, of course, to evaluate their teachers who are not in PAR). Though the CT is often granted the heaviest responsibility for evaluation, principals must understand their role – and how to work with CTs – in order to uphold their own responsibilities. Ultimately, if a principal disagrees with a CT's assessment, most districts give principals the right to appeal a CT's decision to the Panel, and principals must be able to effectively and appropriately collect data and present facts about the teacher's progress or lack thereof within new program guidelines.

*Many principals resist or fear PAR at first.* When principals first encountered PAR in the districts that we studied, many resisted the idea that they would no longer have sole responsibility for evaluating their teachers. While CTs perform two functions – providing support for teachers and evaluating them – principals reported that their own concerns at first were focused primarily on the loss of authority they would experience in no longer being the teachers' sole evaluator. As Rosa Blackwell, former superintendent in Cincinnati and a principal at the time of PAR implementation, explained, "Initially, like everyone else, we were threatened and intimidated as administrators, because we had done the work of evaluation."

Often CTs reported that they had to prove themselves to wary principals and they said they were sometimes treated as visitors who were not always welcome in the schools. The CTs said they were surprised to meet such resistance from administrators. Many had expected it from teachers, but not from the principals, who they believed would understand that they were

there to help. However, most CTs reported that over time, as principals observed their work, the principals came to accept them.

*Principals became convinced of PAR's worth through working with the CTs.* Once they had experience with the program for a year or more, principals in many districts reported being positively influenced by the fact that districts had in place a rigorous selection process for CTs, which involved members of both the union and the administration. Detailed selection process guidelines, put in place by the PAR Panel, helped facilitate this labor-management shift. A Syracuse principal explained that “the fact that they are being recommended by both administrators and other colleagues” helps principals believe that the CTs are effective in what they do, and that they can be trusted by both teachers and administrators (Syracuse Principal 4). Superintendent Blackwell in Cincinnati was also won over by the quality of the CTs when she was a principal. She said, “The quality of the consulting teachers when this program began was superior. I mean, it was just absolutely excellent. We had teachers who truly knew their work.”

Many principals accepted the CTs' new role in evaluation when they realized that the peer evaluators had more time and often more experience to work with teachers than they did. Similarly, a former principal in Montgomery County explained why he came to view the new evaluation system ushered in with PAR as superior to the prior one:

... the burden in the old process was entirely on the principal. Yes, you could obviously get support from your resource teacher and your assistant principals. ... But in the new system you have a consulting teacher, who is another set of independent eyes who is providing that regular kind of support for the teacher. A lot of the technical issues, or a lot of the support issues that as a principal you don't have the time to really monitor as closely as you would like to, especially if you were a high school principal, you have someone who is there who can make sure that the teacher is getting the support. And that didn't exist before. (MCPS Panel 16)

As CTs worked with teachers, often several times a week, principals sometimes saw great improvement in teaching. In other cases, they saw that the CTs provided well-documented

reports of lack of progress in the teacher's performance, which then could lead to the teacher's dismissal. In either case, they realized that their teachers were getting many hours of professional support, time that they could never have spared for that work. Principals reported that this shift in the responsibilities in a traditional labor-management orientation led to greater support and assessment of teachers in the program.

*CTs and principals struggle to define a new working relationship.* Across districts, many CTs and principals described relationships that were hard to navigate, especially when the program was new. Given that every school atmosphere is different, principals have different working styles, and CTs have different personalities, it is no wonder that we saw the labor-management relationship playing out in schools in such varied ways. At the district level, the PAR Panel relied on formalized structures to help them make the shift from adversarial to collaborative relations. However, at the school level, few such guidelines or structures existed. In general, at the school level, CTs and principals figured out their working relationships on an individual basis. There is no prototype for this kind of collaboration.

#### The Labor-Management Relationship in PAR Over Time

Over time, the labor-management relationship in PAR played out in different ways. PAR is often the first significant endeavor with high-stakes outcomes undertaken by districts in partnership with their teachers union. As a result, conditions and structures need to be created specifically at the time of PAR start-up to help union members and administrators work with each other in new ways. Over time, as those involved in PAR learn to collaborate both at their schools and on the Panel, the way that the program is run appears to evolve. Program participants still rely on structures, but interpersonal interactions change, and informal norms develop. The labor-management relationships we studied in these seven districts shared several characteristics

as they progressed, sometimes being influenced by the larger labor-management culture of the district and sometimes functioning independently of what was going on outside of PAR.

Because we studied only programs that had endured over time, we have no understanding about why some PAR programs may have ended. However, among those we studied, the characteristics of the labor-management relationship in older programs seemed to differ from those of the newer programs. Union and administrative leaders in a new PAR program had different concerns than those of leaders in an established program.

Over time, union presidents, sometimes with the help of management allies, made PAR an essential piece of how labor and management worked together. Even as superintendents came and went, union leaders worked to ensure that PAR remained central to the district's mission. Many succeeded in building support among successive superintendents.

#### *PAR Programs Became More Integrated into the District*

Some of the PAR programs we studied were initially housed in the union office. This decision was often made based on what space was available at no or little cost and by the fact that union presidents were PAR's first and greatest champions. Those involved with PAR said that they learned that the physical location of the program influenced how members of the union and management perceived PAR. Some successful program leaders said they used the physical location of the program as a tool to improve the labor-management relationship in PAR. A move out of the union office helped for three reasons: it improved the reputation of the program, increased the number of referrals to PAR, and tied PAR more closely to other district objectives and programs.

*Improved perception.* In Syracuse, PAR first was housed in the union office. However, PAR supporters became concerned that CTs were perceived, as a district administrator said, to be

“puppets of the union” (Syracuse Administrator 2). This label came about because of the way that the initial CTs were recruited and selected, but was reinforced by the fact that the program was housed in the union office. As this administrator said,

One thing that we need to do is get them out of the STA building. The perception out there is that because they are in the STA, they are being manipulated by STA, and honestly, they are not. ... But that was the perception by some of the administrators ... they're puppets of the STA, and all that. (Syracuse Administrator 2)

*Stronger links to schools and principals.* Sometimes, even when PAR programs were already housed in administration buildings, they remained somewhat marginal in the organization. Subsequently, some programs were moved in the district's organizational structure to ensure that they were more central and, therefore had greater influence. Sometimes this move was made to encourage more principals to use the program, as in San Juan, where there was concern that too few experienced teachers were referred to the program annually.

In Minneapolis, PAR was also initially housed in the office of Curriculum and Instruction. In 2006, PAR was moved to the office of the deputy superintendent, who was a strong proponent of PAR, having used it when she was a principal. She explained that in her position, she works with principals to encourage them to refer more teachers to PAR. She said that if principals cannot use referral to PAR to increase teacher quality, she will look to replace them:

One of the things I've challenged principals and talked to them about is you have to use the process as it exists. I was a principal who used the contract to my advantage. I didn't look at it and say what I couldn't do; I looked at it and said, “oh, I can figure this out,” and did it. And so there are people who don't want to be - - they want to talk about the process and not do it. And those are the principals who are not holding their teachers accountable and saying ‘woe is me, I can't do it.’ And those are the people I'm trying to move out! (Minneapolis Administrator 3)

### *Integrating PAR with Other District Priorities and Programs*

Ironically, union leaders had often initially assumed that they could ensure that their program would have the greatest influence if it was in their office, where they could monitor it closely. However, as the program moved closer to the center of the district, both geographically and organizationally, often PAR was perceived to be more central to the work of the district. This move also has influenced the labor-management relationship.

Some participants explained that PAR would not succeed if it were implemented as a sole initiative in a district that was not attempting to change the way that teachers worked with each other in order to improve student achievement. As the initiator of PAR in Minneapolis remarked,

But I would really say that, unless you are simultaneously working on culture, you won't get there. You'll just, you'll get everybody to shift to something but they won't really understand why they did it. (Minneapolis Union 8)

In a similar vein, Rochester union president Urbanski cautioned against instituting a new program without changing the system in which it must operate:

If you are going to change functions, you must change the structure. You can't have new functions in an existing structure just like you can't substantially change the role of teachers without substantially affecting the role of principals. I was trying to look at a holistic, systemic, comprehensive way to do this and to keep faith with certain values.

Some participants believed that PAR must be part of a larger district reform, that if it is implemented without simultaneously making other cultural changes, the program will not live up to its potential. Some of the districts we studied implemented PAR in this way. But whether or not PAR was part of a larger movement to change the district's instructional and professional culture, it still needed to be integrated with existing district programs. The spatial and organizational movement of PAR programs influenced the labor-management relationship, including more people in different roles, putting it closer to the center of the district's programs

and activities. Once relationship patterns are learned in PAR, they might well be transferred to other situations.

### Conclusion

In this study, we found that districts and unions that have implemented PAR share several characteristics. Most had a recent history of labor-management collaboration when they decided to negotiate and implement PAR, although this was not always true. All had a union leader who championed and nurtured PAR over several years during the terms of several superintendents. When parties bargain PAR into the contract, they formalize cooperation by constructing structures and procedures, creating new ways in which those involved with PAR – both union members and administrators – interact.

In PAR, labor relations change between members of management and teachers as roles and responsibilities are redefined and shared. PAR creates new patterns of interaction at both the district level, where structures are well-developed through the PAR Panel, and the school level, where structures must be devised and tried. PAR's structures are especially important at the time of initial PAR implementation, because they provide a way in which people can interact as they take on and share new responsibilities. Over time, people figure out the best ways to work together, and these informal norms make interactions more comfortable. As the programs age, the labor management relationship under PAR plays out in different ways. PAR in the districts we studied was stable and sustained. The program was protected even when other programs lost funding and other facets of the labor-management relationship deteriorated.

### *Implications*

We found that PAR can be an oasis of collaboration in a district. Even as the tenor of labor-management relations changes, collaboration on the PAR Panel and among CTs and

principals can thrive. What can districts and unions learn from successful labor-management collaboration that can be applied to other areas of their work?

*Implications for those who are considering PAR.* PAR is not likely to emerge from traditional bargaining. Therefore, districts must have some experience with collaboration or other ways of negotiating, or be willing to experiment, as PAR is developed. Program designers reported that planning and designing PAR requires an enormous amount of time. PAR program planners in most of the districts we studied had a number of people involved in the program from the beginning. In some cases, this planning group also worked on behalf of the program, once it was implemented, advocating for the program and educating others about it. Those who are considering PAR should take time to assemble a group of union members, principals and central office administrators, setting aside a regular time for a number of months in which to plan.

All of the districts we studied implemented PAR in the context of past labor-management relations. Although it is possible to begin PAR when parties have not truly collaborated before, PAR requires fundamental changes in job responsibilities and in the orientation among union members and administrators.

We observed that some union leaders proposed PAR as a program to be bargained between teachers and upper management, thus skipping over the middle managers, principals. However, ignoring principals does not seem to work and may backfire as in Rochester and Syracuse. Even if principals unions do not file grievances when they are excluded, the planning process lacks their input, which may be crucial. Therefore, including principals in the planning process makes good sense.

*Implications for policy makers.* We found that in a few of the districts we studied, state-level legislation and/or funding served as the final enabler for PAR. In these cases, PAR

advocates had worked hard to get PAR established without success. As a policy, PAR not only enables conversations about teacher quality that can lead to improved retention and the removal of underperforming teachers, PAR also encourages district and union leaders to work together in new ways.

Although both union and district administrators expect initiatives and programs to come and go, there seems to be some belief that PAR is different, that it will be a longer-term program because it is effective. There are several reasons that PAR remains whole while other programs are cut or reduced. PAR is bargained into the contract and written into the budget. The Panel structure empowers those on the Panel – usually a large group of articulate individuals, from both union and management – to become staunch advocates of the program. In addition, because PAR’s goals are at the heart of a district’s goals, it cannot easily be argued against. As Superintendent Enoch of San Juan said,

It’s tough economic times. But you know, I would say at the end of the day, it’s [PAR] probably going to survive when other things might be cut... I think because this is the heart of our work, quality teachers, and support for beginning teachers and working with teachers that aren’t as successful as they should be.

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## Appendix A

District	State	# schools	# teachers	Urbanicity	Year program began	How implemented?	PAR Panel members	PAR Panel leadership
Cincinnati	OH	79	2357	Urban	1985	One-time	Equal number of teachers and administrators	Rotates annually between union and admin members Alternates between the union
Toledo	OH	58	1852	urban	1981	One-time	4 administrators, 5 teachers	president and the HR assistant superintendent PAR Lead Mentor & District Employee Relations
Minneapolis	MN	144	3250	urban	1984	Staged	Equal number of teachers and administrators	Rotates annually between union and administrative members
Rochester	NY	60	3600	urban	1987	Staged	6 administrators, 6 teachers	Rotates annually between union and administrative members
San Juan Unified School District	CA	80	3000	urban	2267	One-time	3 administrators, 4 teachers	Rotates annually between union and administrative members
Montgomery County	MD	200	9,371	suburban	2001	One-time	Superintendent appoints at least 12: half recommended by union, half administrators	Union vice president and district person co-chair
Syracuse	NY	33	1,856	Urban	2005	Staged (currently only Novice Program)	4 administrators, 5 teachers	Rotates between union president and deputy superintendent

## APPENDIX B: Interview Protocols

### **Interview Protocol for Superintendent and Union President**

1. Please tell me briefly how long you've worked in education and in the district.
  - What roles have you had?
  - When did you first become involved with the PAR program?
  - Have you been active in your union?
2. We want to understand how PAR relates to the broader relationship between labor and management here. Does PAR stand out as typical or unusual, given that relationship?
3. We're interested in how PAR came to be in this district:
  - How was PAR negotiated?
  - Who were the proponents and opponents?
  - Did you have difficulty convincing the superintendent?
  - Your members? (which ones)
  - Principals?
  - Are there unique features of the district's PAR program?
4. How do you choose the members of the PAR panel? Is there a labor-management split?
5. What are the effects of PAR on the principal's role? What issues does PAR raise for them?
6. What have been the biggest challenges?
7. Have there been any significant changes in the past two years?
8. What do you think are the costs and benefits of PAR?
9. What do you see as the future of PAR in Cincinnati?
10. If another superintendent/union president asked you for advice about PAR, what would you say?

## **Interview Protocol for Union Officials and District Administrators**

### **Personal Background**

1. Please tell me briefly how long you've worked in education and in Cincinnati.
  - What roles have you had?
  - When did you first become involved with the PAR program?
  - Have you been active in your union?

### **PAR Background/History/Purpose**

2. Can you tell me about how and why PAR was introduced in your district?
  - Who proposed this program? Why?
  - Who were the proponents? Were there opponents? Why did it pass?
  - Were people familiar with similar programs in other districts?
3. What are the goals for these programs? Do you think those goals are being achieved?
4. We are interested in whether the program has changed over time. Have there been any important changes in the way the program is administered or in the program goals since it began?
5. Who are the key union leaders or district administrators involved in PAR?
  - Do they work together or separately?
  - Is there a point person for each side?
  - Does each side work independently to make this work, or is there constant collaboration between the union and the administration?

### **Labor-management Relations and Program Governance**

6. Most people who don't know about these types of programs are surprised by the extent of labor-management collaboration that these programs require. Can you describe the nature of the labor-management relationship in the district? Has it changed over time?

#### **IF ON THE PAR PANEL:**

7. (Ask the first few Panel members that we interview this question, but not everyone.) Can you briefly describe how the Panel meetings work?
  - Do all interns get presented at each meeting?
  - What kinds of questions are asked by panel members?
  - How do decisions get made (voting)?
  - How often are CT recommendations overturned?
  - Who attends meetings (principals attend? their role?)

#### **ASK THIS QUESTION OF KEY PEOPLE, NOT EVERYONE**

8. On average, how many dismissals does the panel recommend each year (Apprentice and Veteran)?

IF NOT ON PAR PANEL

9. What do you think of the Panel and how it works?

**View of CTs**

10. Do you think you are getting the best teachers to be CTs?

11. I'd like to know your views of CTs and the work that they do.

- Do you feel that they give the Interns and Intervention cases adequate support?
- Do you feel confident in CT recommendations?
- Are those views shared by others?

IF ON PAR PANEL

12. What more, if any, support do you think CTs need?

13. We understand the CT term limit is 3 years. Do any CTs serve for longer?

What is the typical career path of a CT – i.e. do they tend to work as CT for a while and then return to full-time teaching?

IF UNION OFFICIAL:

14. What do your members think about teachers evaluating other teachers and sometimes recommending dismissal?

**Program Evaluation**

15. Do you think the PAR program is successful? Do others see it the same way or differently?

16. What do you see as the costs and benefits of the program? On balance, do you think it is worthwhile?

17. We know that the program has been evaluated. What have you learned from that process? Is there any evidence of improved teacher quality?

18. Are there additional challenges or benefits that the district has encountered in implementing and sustaining PAR?

**Going forward**

19. What do you see as the future of PAR in Cincinnati?

## **Interview Protocol for Panel Members**

### **Personal Background**

1. Please tell me briefly how long you've worked in education and in this district.
  - What roles have you had?
  - When did you first become involved with the PAR program?
  - Have you been active in your union?

### **PAR Background/History/Purpose**

2. [If applicable.] Can you tell me about how and why PAR was introduced in your district?
  - Who proposed this program? Why?
  - Who were the proponents? Were there opponents? Why did it pass?
  - Were people familiar with similar programs in other districts?
3. What conditions have enabled PAR to last in the district?
  - What groups have opposed these programs? Supported them?
  - Have there been any substantial challenges to them?
  - How are they funded?
4. We are interested in whether these programs change over time. Have there been any important changes in the way the program is administered or in the program goals since it began?

### **Panel and Responsibilities**

5. How are members chosen? How long are members' terms?

### *CT Selection/Training/Support*

We are particularly interested in understanding the role of the Panel in employment decisions. Before we get into that, we want to ask you about some other areas of the Panel's responsibility.

6. How often does the Panel meet and for what purposes?
7. Selection of CTs
  - What is the process?
  - Who applies? Is this a strong pool? How do you know?
  - What criteria do you use for selection?
  - How do you decide which ones to take?
8. Training of CTs
  - How are the CTs trained?
  - Is there on-going training?
  - Who is responsible for this?

9. Supervise/Support CTs
  - How do you know if CTs are doing their job?
  - How do you evaluate them? What is entailed in the CT evaluation form?
  - What makes CTs effective in their work?
10. Can you talk about how the Pair process works?
11. Does the Panel review and make changes in the program?
12. What role, if any, does the Panel take in helping CTs navigate their relationships with building principals?

*Teacher Evaluation/Employment Decisions*

13. Walk me through a typical Panel teacher evaluation meeting:
  - Who attends?
  - How many cases do you hear at a time?
  - Who presents the case? What kind of information do they present? Who makes recommendations?
  - Are there deliberations? What kind of discussions do you have?
  - What options does the Panel have in deciding a case?
  - Does the Panel vote? What vote is required for action?
  - How often does the Panel overturn the recommendations?
  - How often do Panel recommendations get overturned? By whom?
  - How does this process work for veteran teachers?
14. The Panel is deliberately composed of both union and administrative representatives. This might suggest that the groups have different, possibly conflicting, priorities. Does the panel have split decisions along party lines (4-4 votes)? How do you handle them?
15. What is the next step if the Panel decides not to renew a teacher?
  - Who tells the teacher? Are they counseled out (before or after non-renewal vote)?
  - Have you had to have these conversations? Can you give me an example?
16. How many Intern teachers are dismissed through the program each year? How many veterans? Are these all formal actions or did some people choose to leave before that happened?
17. [If not covered yet] As a Panel member, do you have any special responsibilities?
18. [If not covered yet] How do the roles of Program Facilitator and Co-Facilitator work?

**Views of Other Constituents**

19. How do others in the district (teachers, principals, district administrators, school board members) view PAR? Does the Panel solicit these views?

**Program Success/Evaluation**

20. Do you think the PAR program is successful? Do others see it the same way or differently?
21. What do you see as the costs and benefits of the program? On balance, do you think the program is worthwhile?
22. We know that the program has been evaluated. What have you learned from that process?
23. Do you have any recommendations for improving the program or the work of the Panel?

## **Interview Protocol for Consulting Teachers**

### **Personal Background**

1. Please tell me briefly how long you've worked in education and in this district.
  - What roles have you had?
  - When did you first become involved with the PAR program?
  - Have you been active in your union?

### **Selection/Initial Training**

2. I'm interested in knowing more about how the CT selection process works here. Could you describe the process that you went through as an applicant?
3. Do you have a sense for how the position of CT is viewed by your peers (other teachers)?
4. Do a lot of people apply? [try to get a sense of the strength of the pool]
5. What initial training was provided for you as a CT?
  - Did you learn things there that you find useful as a CT?
  - Are there topics that the training didn't cover, but should?

### **What do CTs do and where did they learn to do it?**

I'm interested in understanding in more detail what your job entails and what you do day to day throughout the year.

6. Could you describe your case load? (number of teachers; matched by grade and subject) Is yours a typical case load?
7. Could you choose a typical novice teacher and describe how you work with him/her throughout the year? [Explore program requirements vs. choice]
8. What might you do differently with someone whose work concerns you? [Explore the balance of coaching and evaluation.]
9. How does this process work in your support and review of veteran teachers?
10. How did you learn how to do these things?
11. As you do your job, how do you decide what good teaching is? How do you use the standards and rubrics? Example?
12. Could you describe the process that you use when you make recommendations about a teacher's reemployment?
13. How do you decide what is "good enough"? Do you factor in a teacher's improvement or promise?

14. Your job is to support and evaluate new and experienced teachers.
  - What role, if any, do principals have in first year evaluation?
  - How does the process work for veteran teachers?
  
15. Can you describe how you work with principals day-to-day throughout the year? [It might be useful to pick a typical principal/intern and walk me through your interactions throughout the year.]  
[Probe how this differs for more “challenging” principals.]
  
16. Do you and the principal ever disagree?
  
17. I’m interested in understanding the kind of support and assistance that is available to you as you do this work with teachers. When you have questions or need help, who do you go to?
  
18. Do you work closely with other CTs?

**PAR Panel**

19. I’m interested in your experience with the Panel. Could you describe what you do at Panel meetings and what that experience is like? (NOTE: Once we understand how the meetings work in any district we only need to ask the second part of this.)

**CT Role/Teaching Career**

20. What do you find most challenging about your work?
  
21. What are the benefits and drawbacks, to you personally, of being a CT?
  
22. Could you tell me what you plan to do when you complete your term as a CT?  
...and ten years from now?

## **Interview Protocol for Principals**

### **Personal Background**

1. Please tell me briefly how long you've worked in education and in this district.
  - What roles have you had?
  - When did you first become involved with the PAR program?
  - Have you been active in your union?

### **PAR Background/History/Purpose**

2. How does the PAR program fit into what you hope to accomplish within your own school?
3. I'm interested in knowing more about the role of PAR in this district.
  - What do you see as the current goals for this program?
  - Do you think they are being achieved?

### **Experience with PAR**

4. I'm interested in learning more about how PAR works in your school. Please describe how the program works. [novice and veteran programs]
5. Have you ever referred teachers for Intervention?
6. How do you as a principal identify an underperforming teacher?
  - What would be some warning signs that a teacher was in need of a performance review?
  - Do you look at test scores?
  - [Can you give me an example of an underperforming teacher who you – or the CT – identified as underperforming? How does that teacher get into Intervention?]
7. Could you describe how you work day to day and over the course of the year with the CTs?
8. What do you think of the CTs and the work that they do?
  - Candidate pool?
  - Selection process?
  - Subject/grade match?

### **IF NOT COVERED ABOVE:**

9. Do you feel confident about the support the CTs give to apprentice teachers and their recommendations about reemployment? [Also for other veteran teachers and intervention cases]
10. Have you ever disagreed with a recommendation? Have you ever disputed a CT's recommendation?
11. What do you think makes the CTs more or less effective in their role?

12. How do teachers in your school view PAR? [novice and veteran programs]
13. Has a teacher you worked with ever been dismissed? Without getting into the details, could you give me a sense of what the concern was about? [novice and veteran]
14. From the time a teacher is identified as needing assistance, what's the quickest time until a resolution of the case? What's the longest? In your experience, what has the typical timeline been?

### **How PAR Affects Role of Principal**

15. I understand that PAR and the work of a CT may affect the work of a principal quite a bit. We understand that the principal's role in evaluation is limited in the first year but that the principal takes over responsibility in the second year. Can you tell me about that?
16. How would you describe who is responsible for evaluation in this district?
17. How does this process work for veteran teachers?
18. How does this affect what you can / cannot do as a principal?
19. How do you think about your accountability and PAR? You are accountable for the results at your school, but CTs are making recommendations about employment. How do you feel about this?
20. In cases where the review plan works and teachers "get better," what does "get better" mean? What does it look like? Please give us an example of how you knew when a teacher improved.

### **Perspectives on PAR Overall**

21. Are your views of the PAR typical of other principals in the district? Have views changed over time?
22. Overall, do you think the program is successful? Do you have recommendations for improving it?
23. We know that principals inevitably face challenges and constraints in these types of programs – what do you (or your peers) see as some of the biggest concerns?
24. What do you see the district doing that helps principals understand how to participate in PAR?