

Leveraging Educator Evaluation Systems to Improve Outcomes for Students With Disabilities

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Assessing Special Education Students (ASES)

State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS)

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Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS

at American Institutes for Research ■

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Center on Great Teachers and Leaders Mission

The mission of the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) is to foster the capacity of vibrant networks of practitioners, researchers, innovators, and experts to build and sustain a seamless system of support for great teachers and leaders for every school in every state in the nation.

Agenda

- Overview of recent shifts in educator evaluation
- Critical issues: Measures of educator practice
- Critical issues: Measures of student growth
- ESSA: What's next?
- Discussion

Any idea what this number is?

321

Shift to “Educator Evaluation 3.0”

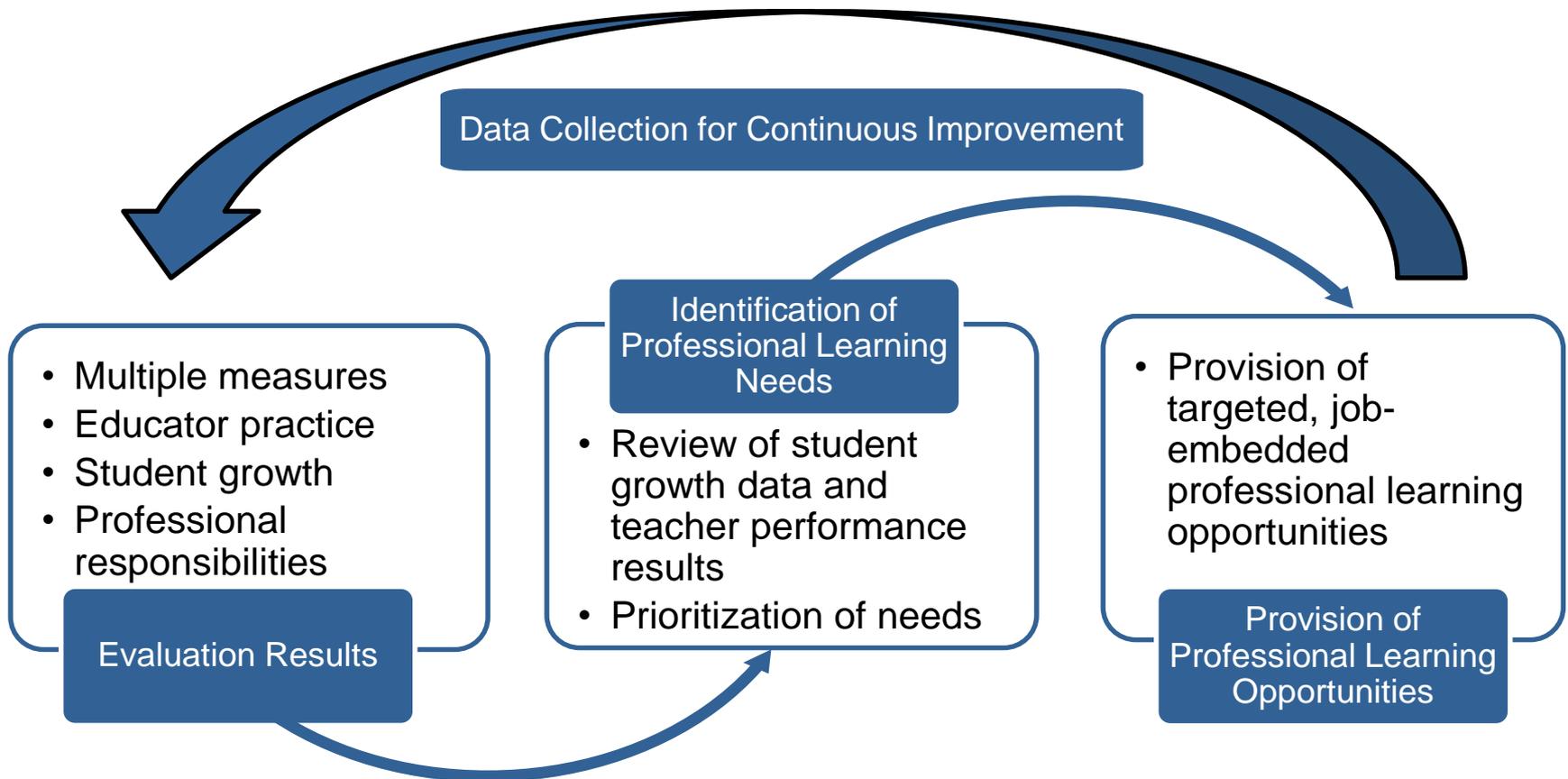
No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001

- Expanded federal role in defining teacher quality
- Data collection to drive high-stakes decisions
- Emphasis on accountability

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015

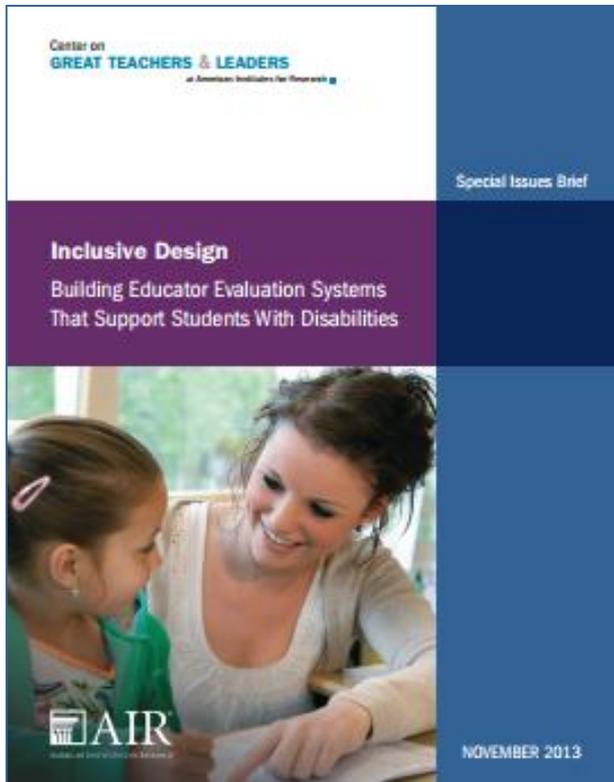
- Expanded state and local decision-making
- Data collection to drive improvements in instruction
- Emphasis on professional learning and growth

Emphasis on Professional Learning



Critical Issues: Measures of Educator Practice

GTL Center Inclusive Design Brief



Special Issues Brief: Building Educator Evaluation Systems That Support Students With Disabilities

Considerations for Special Educators

- Needs of Students with Disabilities (SWDs)
 - Individualized instructional strategies
 - Evidence-based practices
 - Interventions within multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)
 - Related services (behavior, speech-language, occupational therapy, transition, etc.)
 - Assistive technology
- Specialized Roles and Responsibilities
 - Consultation and collaboration with general educators
 - Coordination of related services personnel
 - IEP development and implementation
 - Documentation of student progress
 - Communication with families and other stakeholders

Aligning Educator Evaluation and Professional Learning

Data Collection for Continuous Improvement

- Multiple measures
- Educator practice
- Student growth
- Professional responsibilities

Evaluation Results

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Identification of Professional Learning Needs

- Evaluation data not aligned to roles and responsibilities
- Unable to prioritize needs

- Lack of targeted, job-embedded professional learning opportunities

Provision of Professional Learning Opportunities

Strategy 1: Strengthen Existing Rubrics by Augmenting With Explicit Examples

- Within the rubric or observational tool measuring educator practice, provide explicit examples of how the standard or indicator would be demonstrated according to student ability and need. This might include:
 - Specific instructional strategies for diverse learners
 - Specific roles and responsibilities of specialized educators
 - Specific curricular needs of diverse learners

Scenario

- A teacher of a self-contained classroom of students with severe developmental disabilities must demonstrate that she “clearly directs students in their activities”

Teacher Priority: Instruction		
Instruction.1: Communicating with Students		
Component	Actions	Sample Indicators
Instruction.1.1	Teacher clearly communicates the purpose of each lesson	Observations and artifacts indicate the classroom teacher clearly communicates learning expectations for all students.
Instruction.1.2	Teacher clearly directs students in their activities	Students can articulate what they are supposed to be doing and why.

Strategy

- Augment the rubric to include explicit examples of what actions and indicators would look like for teachers of special populations

Teacher Priority: Instruction		
Instruction.1: Communicating with Students		
Component	Actions	Sample Indicators
Instruction.1.1	Teacher clearly communicates the purpose of each lesson	Observations and artifacts indicate the classroom teacher clearly communicates learning expectations for all students.
Instruction.1.2	Teacher clearly directs students in their activities	Students can articulate what they are supposed to be doing and why.
	Explicit Example of Action	Explicit Example of Indicator
	Teacher models the activity and pairs verbal instructions with visual cues.	Students can articulate what they are supposed to be doing and why through a combination of verbal and visual cues.



Field Examples

- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: [Educator Effectiveness Guidebook](#) for Inclusive Practice
- District of Columbia Public Schools: [IMPACT](#) for Special Education Teachers

LEVEL 4 (HIGHEST)		LEVEL 3
IIM 6		RESPOND TO STUDENT UNDERSTANDING
Highly Effective		Effective
<i>The following best describes what is observed:</i>		<i>The following best describes what is observed:</i>
Scaffolding	When students demonstrate misunderstandings or partial understandings, the special education teacher always uses effective scaffolding techniques that enable students to construct their own understandings, when appropriate.*	When students demonstrate misunderstandings or partial understandings, the special education teacher almost always uses effective scaffolding techniques that enable students to construct their own understandings, when appropriate.* For example, the special education teacher might help the student find the error, eliminate incorrect answers, or provide a cue to help the student arrive at the correct answer.

Strategy 2: Modify Rubrics to Reflect Specialized Roles and Responsibilities

- Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) play an important role in ensuring student success through support for students and educators.
- Evaluation models should reflect the respective roles and responsibilities of SISP disciplines and represent a fair and appropriate assessment of performance.
 - Guided by the professional association standards
 - Modification of indicator language within existing teacher performance rubrics by representative stakeholders

Who Are SISPs?

- Related Services Personnel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004
 - Pupil Services Personnel under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) 2002
 - National Alliance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (NASISP)
- Art therapy services
 - Dance/movement therapy services
 - Educational audiology services
 - Music therapy services
 - Occupational therapy services
 - Physical therapy services
 - Psychological services
 - Pupil services administrators
 - School counselor services
 - School nurse services
 - School social work services
 - Speech-language pathology services

Differentiation for SISP

- Modification of performance rubrics that:
 - Meet the requirements of the respective state statutes and regulations
 - Reflect SISP functions, practices, and responsibilities
 - Align with current research-based practices and national association standards (as available)

- [Online Resource](http://www.gtcenter.org/content/examples-state-and-district-rubrics-used-evaluate-specialized-instructional-support): Sample Performance/Observation Rubrics for SISP and Specialized Rubrics by Discipline

ONLINE RESOURCE



Sample Performance/Observation Rubrics for SISP and Specialized Rubrics by Discipline

Curious about how other states have developed or modified rubrics? We created an online compilation of state and district performance or observation rubrics for SISP.

<http://www.gtcenter.org/content/examples-state-and-district-rubrics-used-evaluate-specialized-instructional-support>

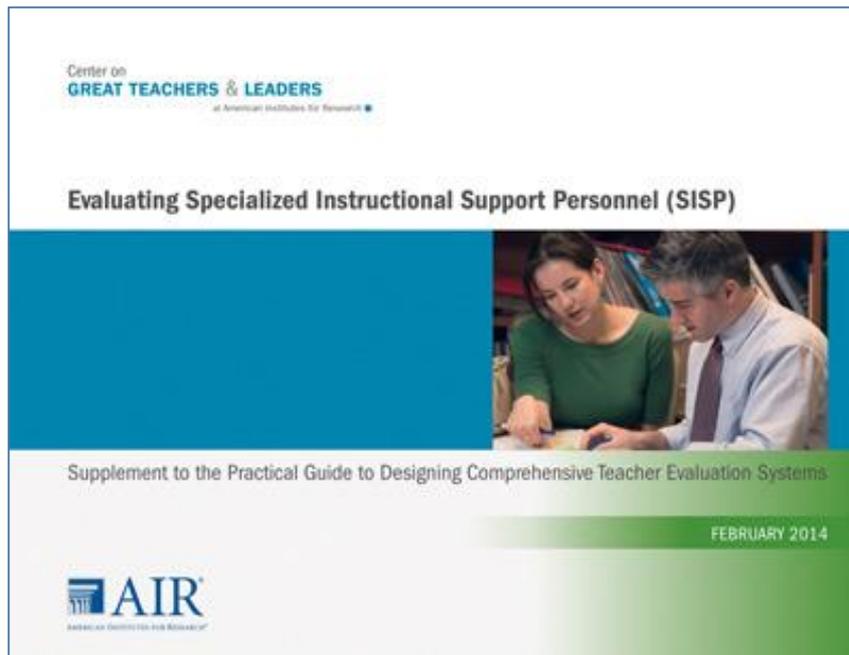
Field Example 1: Florida

- Developed evaluation models and guides to help districts meet state mandate
 - Student Services Personnel
 - School counselors, social workers, psychologists, and nurses
 - Specialized Exceptional Student Education Professionals
 - Behavior specialists, occupational/physical therapists, and speech-language pathologists
- Broad stakeholder collaboration
- Alignment with evidence-based practices and research-based standards
- Grounded in association-adopted professional standards

Field Example 2: Massachusetts

- The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) created a Specialized Instructional Support Personnel [Rubric](#).
- The Massachusetts School Psychology Association developed a [Rubric](#) for Evaluation of School Psychologists based on DESE's rubric.
 - Incorporates National Association of School Psychologists Practice Model
 - Approved by DESE and adopted by most school districts
- [Similar rubrics](#) have been created and vetted for other SISP roles.

Additional Resources: GTL Center Evaluating SISP Brief



[Evaluating Specialized Instructional Support Personnel: Supplement to the Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems](#)

Critical Issues: Measures of Student Growth

Need for Differentiation

- If measuring the growth of students with disabilities was easy, we would not be here!
- Although SWDs present unique challenges in measuring growth, it is important for these students to be included in growth measures. Doing so ensures accountability for growth of diverse learners within educator evaluation systems.

Approaches to Student Growth Measures

- Evaluation systems must recognize the diverse ways in which special educators and SISP:
 - Facilitate, support, and enhance student participation, engagement, and progress in the general education curriculum
 - Provide other less direct or distal services to support students

[Online Resource](#): Sample Approaches, Including Measures of Student Growth for SISP

ONLINE RESOURCE



Sample Approaches for Including Measures of Student Growth for SISP

Interested in seeing some of these approaches in practice? We created an online compilation of state-level approaches for measuring student growth for SISP.

<http://www.gtcenter.org/content/sample-approaches-including-measures-student-growth-specialized-instructional-support>

Contributions to Student Growth

Educator provides direct instruction to students.



Students learn by acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Example: A speech-language pathologist targeting language skills covered in the general education curriculum

Educator provides specialized instructional supports to students.



Students can **access** the general education curriculum.



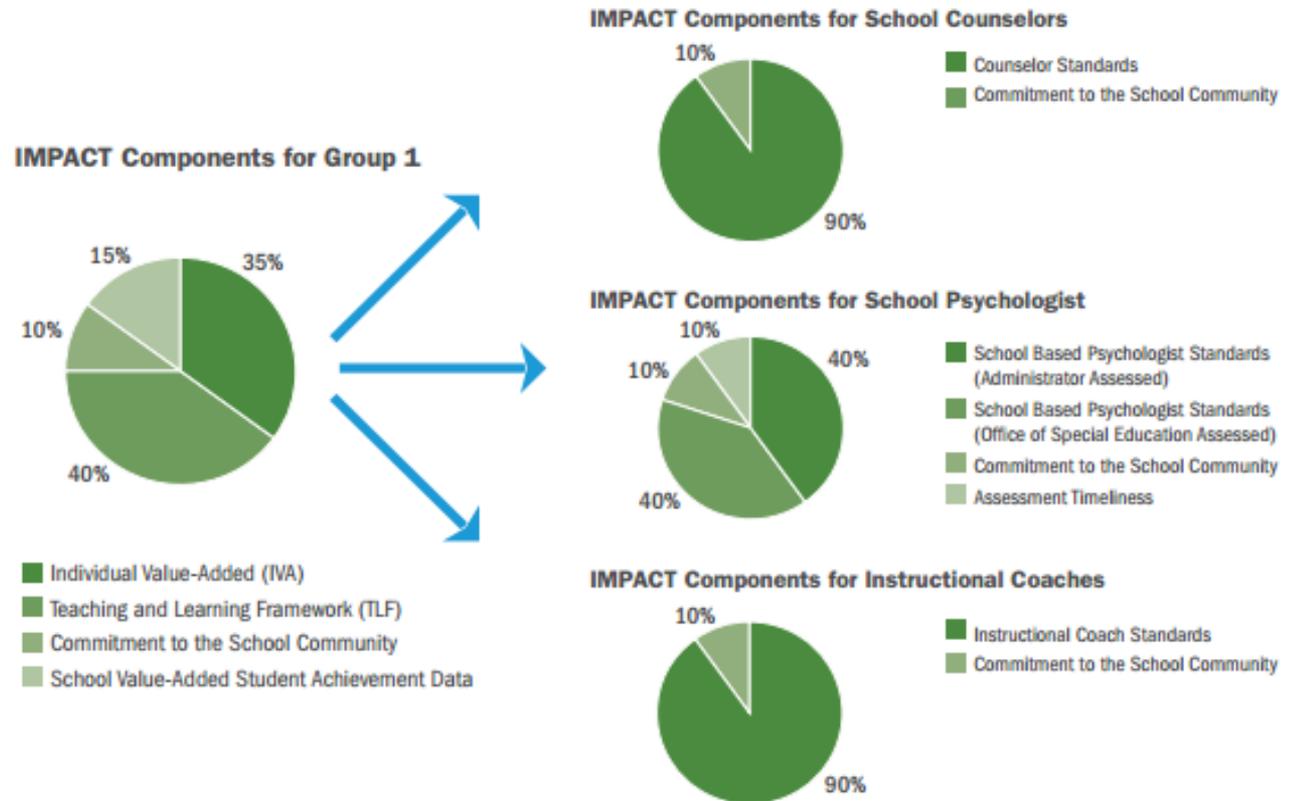
Students learn by acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Example: A speech-language pathologist teaching a student to use an augmentative communication device

Weighting of Measures

Case Study 1:
Weighted
Model
[District of Columbia
Public Schools
IMPACT Model](#)

Figure 1. Example: Weighting Measures in SISP Evaluation



Weighting of Measures

Figure 3: Intersection of Summative Performance and Student Impact Ratings

Performance Rating	Exemplary	1-yr Self-Directed Growth Plan	2-yr Self-Directed Growth Plan	
	Proficient			
	Needs Improvement	Directed Growth Plan		
	Unsatisfactory	Improvement Plan		
		Low	Moderate	High
		Impact Rating		

Case Study 2:
Matrix Model
[Massachusetts Framework for Educator Evaluation](#)

Role of State Assessments in Teacher Evaluation

- What is the current status of the use of state assessment data in teacher evaluations?
- Are states considering making changes to how state assessments/student growth measures are used within their teacher evaluation systems?

Current Status of State Assessments

- 43 states require the use of objective measures of student achievement to be included in teacher evaluation systems
- 8 states specify the use of state assessments in their student growth measures: Arizona, Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, New York, and Oregon

Source: Education Commission of the States Policy Database

Examples of States Strengthening Use of Student Growth Measures

District of Columbia

- Increased the weight of the value-added score back to 35% after removing the requirement and shifting weights of measures over the past few years.

New Jersey

- Weight of student test scores in their evaluation system will increase to 30%. During early implementation of the evaluation system, New Jersey decreased the weight to 10%.

Examples of States Relaxing Use of Student Growth Measures

Georgia

- During the 2015–16 regular legislative sessions, Georgia passed [Senate Bill 364](#) which reduced the weight of student growth from 50% to 30%.
- The bill also made SLOs an optional at the district level.

New York

- Board of Regents voted in late 2015 to impose a 4-year moratorium on the use of state assessments in the state teacher evaluation system.

Examples of States Relaxing Use of Student Growth Measures

Ohio

- For the past 2 years, Ohio has allowed district flexibility in using [measures of student growth](#).
- During 2014–15 and 2015–16, teachers were able to reduce the weight of student growth from 50% to 35% because of the transition to new state assessments; however, this change ends in 2016–17.

Examples of States Relaxing Use of Student Growth Measures

Oklahoma

- The state recently announced increased [flexibility](#) that affords districts a choice in how to measure student growth as a percentage of their teacher evaluation system and authority to determine which measures to implement.

Tennessee

- The Tennessee Teaching Evaluation Enhancement [Act](#) reduced the weight of student growth from 35% to 15%, although 15% of the overall evaluation still will be based on student achievement data.

Examples of States with Pending Changes

Colorado

- Proposed Senate Bill 16-105 would give school districts the option to eliminate use of student academic growth data in teacher evaluations and annual ratings for teachers rated as *effective* or *highly effective*.

Florida

- Proposed House Bill 903 would delay the use of student growth measures in teacher and principal evaluations. The proposed bill prohibits the use of statewide assessments in evaluation ratings until the 2017–18 school year.

Examples of States with Pending Changes

Oklahoma

- Proposed House Bill 2265 would remove references to qualitative and quantitative components in state policy.
- It would also codify the requirement that districts choose additional measures based on a list approved by OSDE and would prohibit the use of VAMs as a measure of student academic growth.

Tennessee

- Proposed House Bill 1453 would waive the use of student growth data in teacher evaluations for two school years.

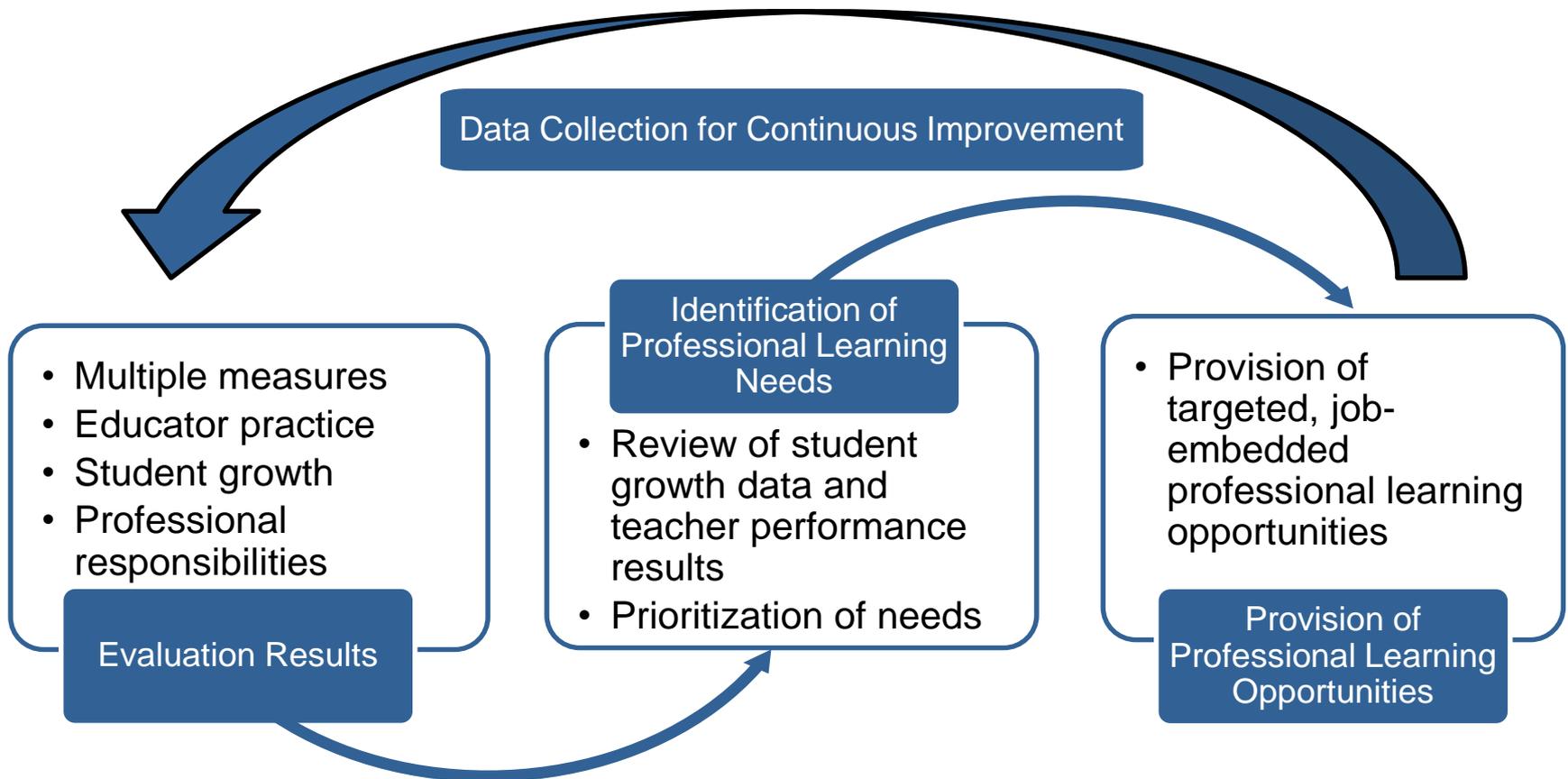
Implications for Special Educators

- Many states are relaxing requirements for the use of state assessment data in educator evaluation systems
- There is further need to examine data related to:
 - Performance of SWDs on new generation assessments
 - Alternate assessments for populations with severe disabilities
- Some state continue to use Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) as an alternative

ESSA: What's Next?

- Removal of “highly qualified” requirement and the impact on special educators
- Requirement to ensure that poor and minority students are not taught at disproportionate rates by “**ineffective**, out-of-field, or inexperienced teachers”
- Emphasis on professional learning opportunities for educators driven at the state and local levels

Opportunities to Promote Professional Learning



Discussion

Reflection

- What issues and concerns are you seeing in the field related to educator evaluation for SWDs?
- What issues and concerns are you seeing in the field around the role of state assessment and the use of student growth measures in educator evaluation systems?

Reflection

- What opportunities and/or challenges does ESSA present for evaluation of personnel who serve SWDs?
- What topics related to educator evaluation would you like to explore further?

This is Important Work

- People won't do what they can't **envision**.
- People can't do what they don't **understand**.
- People can't do well what isn't **practiced**.
- But practice without **feedback** results in little change, and work without **collaboration** is not sustaining.

Our job, as professionals, is to help teachers envision, understand, practice, receive feedback, and collaborate.

This is what leads to outcomes for students.

Leinwand, S. (2012). *Sensible Mathematics: A Guide for School Leaders in the Era of Common Core State Standards*. New York: Heinemann.

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“Advancing state efforts to grow, respect, and retain great teachers and leaders for all students”