

# Understanding Teaching Conditions

■ **Facilitator's Guide**

JANUARY 2020



**MODULE 1: Teaching Conditions Overview**



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## Module 1: Teaching Conditions Overview

### Facilitator's Guide

JANUARY 2020

Center on  
**GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS**  
at the American Institutes for Research® ■

1000 Thomas Jefferson Street NW  
Washington, DC 20007-3835  
877-322-8700  
[www.gtlcenter.org](http://www.gtlcenter.org)

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Sections of this work were originally produced by the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center). The GTL Center was administered by the American Institutes for Research and its partners, the Council of Chief State School Officers and Public Impact, from 2012 through 2019. The original module was developed in partnership with the New Teacher Center in 2014.

This module includes original content as well as new content and is being offered by the American Institutes for Research as part of the GTL Center.

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This *Understanding Teaching Conditions—Module 1: Teaching Conditions Overview* Facilitator’s Guide is intended for use with the following additional resources:

- *Understanding Teaching Conditions—Module 1: Teaching Conditions Overview* Handouts 1–4
- *Understanding Teaching Conditions—Module 1: Teaching Conditions Overview* Slide Presentation

These online resources are available for download on the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders website <https://gtlcenter.org/>.

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## Module Overview

The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) originally developed the content for *Understanding Teaching Conditions* in collaboration with the New Teacher Center in 2014. In 2019, the GTL Center refined and expanded the materials from this single module to a five-part toolkit that explores teaching conditions in greater depth. This module of the toolkit, *Module 1, Teaching Conditions Overview*, contains the materials designed to implement a work session that builds the knowledge and capacity for leaders and staff members from regional comprehensive centers (RCCs), state education agencies (SEAs), and local education agencies on how to use teaching conditions data to facilitate the improvement of school climate. Education leaders may want to review and use the other modules in the *Understanding Teaching Conditions* toolkit, which can be accessed through the GTL Center's technical assistance services:

- Module 2: Collaborative Data Interpretation
- Module 3: Stakeholder Engagement
- Module 4: Root Cause Analysis and Action Planning
- Module 5: Monitoring

The GTL Center can customize the duration, scope, and sequence of the work session of this module and the other modules to accommodate local needs and contexts.

## Teaching Conditions Materials

The following materials are part of *Module 1, Teaching Conditions Overview*:

- Facilitator's Guide
- Handouts 1–4
- Slide Presentation

## Goals

The goals of *Module 1, Teaching Conditions Overview*, for participants include the following:

- To understand what teaching conditions are and how they can help create a more positive teaching and learning environment and improve teacher retention.

## Intended Audiences

**Participants:** Stakeholders who would benefit from participating in this module may include leaders and staff members from RCCs, SEAs, and local education agencies. Given the role that

all stakeholders play in the creation of a positive culture and working conditions, district and school teams (e.g., superintendents, central office staff, district school board members, principals, teacher leaders, teacher association representatives, and other decision makers) will likely benefit and develop strategic action plans as a result of participation in this module.

**Facilitators:** Facilitators for *Module 1, Teaching Conditions Overview*, may include GTL Center staff, RCC staff, SEA staff, regional service agency staff, or other technical assistance providers.

## Using This Facilitator’s Guide

This facilitator’s guide provides suggestions for structuring the work session, notes on how to implement suggested activities, talking points to be used with the slide presentation, and customization points to help you think about how to organize the work session for your participants.

### Materials

- Computer with *Module 1, Teaching Conditions Overview* Slide Presentation
- Projector and screen
- Name table tents (optional)
- Adequate reserved space, time, and materials
- Table arranged to support small-group discussions
- Necessary materials printed:
  - *Module 1, Teaching Conditions Overview* Handouts 1–4

### Preparation for Professional Learning Module Activities

Prior to the start of the workshop, create a poster labeled *Parking Lot*, which will be used for participants to put up any burning questions that they have but cannot be addressed at a given time.

Become familiar with the facilitator’s guide and the handouts. In the facilitator’s guide, the explanations that follow *Facilitation note* and that are in italics are meant to help you guide discussion; the explanations that follow *Explain* are meant to be what the facilitator says during the work session.

### Work Session Agenda

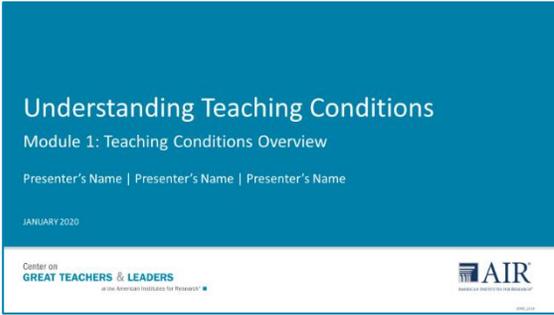
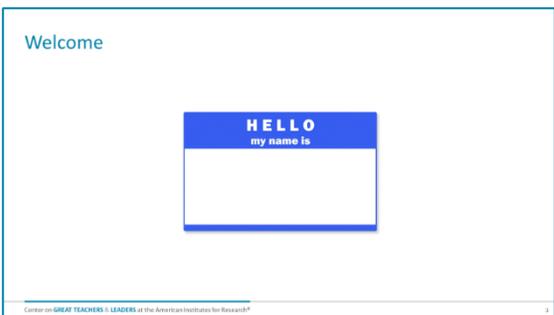
- Welcome, Introduction, and Agenda (5 minutes)

- What Are Working Conditions? (15 minutes)
- Why Do Teaching Conditions Matter? (20 minutes)
- What Are the Teaching Conditions? (20 minutes)
- Practice Rubric Experience (35 minutes)

# Module 1: Teaching Conditions Overview Work Session

## Section 1—Overview (5 minutes)

**Purpose:** Provide an overview of the training, including the introduction of the presenters, introduction to the GTL Center, review of the agenda, and review of the program outcomes.

<p><b>Facilitation note:</b> Officially welcome the participants. Introduce yourself and fellow facilitators. Discuss your relevant background experiences to build participant confidence in your skills as facilitators.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 1</p>
<p><b>Facilitation note:</b> Let participants know that we will begin with introductions and a review of the agenda.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 2</p>
<p><b>Facilitation note:</b> Ask participants to introduce themselves by sharing their name, role, and one thing that they like about their working environment. Have the room do a quick whip-around.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 3</p>

<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“The materials for this work session were developed by the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center).</p> <p>“One of the focal areas for the GTL Center is safe and supportive learning environments. This includes positive environments for teachers; if teachers are more satisfied with their environments, the more productive they will be.</p> <p>“This professional learning module focuses on introducing people to teaching conditions and why teaching conditions are important.</p> <p>“Specifically, during today’s sessions, participants will be able to do the following:”</p> <p><b>Facilitation note:</b> <i>Read the objective.</i></p>	<div data-bbox="862 201 1416 512"> <p><b>Objective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand what teaching conditions are and how they can help create a more positive teaching and learning environment and improve teacher retention.</li> </ul> <p><small>Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</small></p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 4</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“To meet the objectives, we will go through a series of learning sessions and activities.</p> <p>. . .</p> <p>“Finally, we will conclude with next steps and close out the session.”</p>	<div data-bbox="862 791 1416 1102"> <p><b>Agenda</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome, Introduction, and Agenda</li> <li>What Are Working Conditions?</li> <li>Why Do Teaching Conditions Matter?</li> <li>What Are the Teaching Conditions?</li> <li>Practice Rubric Experience</li> <li>Next Steps and Closing</li> </ol> <p><small>Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</small></p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 5</p>

## Section 2—What Are Working Conditions? (15 minutes)

**Purpose:** Introduce participants to the idea of working conditions.

<p><b>Facilitation note:</b> <i>Introduce this section and its importance to understanding teaching conditions.</i></p>	<div data-bbox="862 1329 1416 1640"> <p style="text-align: center;">What Are Working Conditions?</p> <p><small>Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</small></p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 6</p>
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**Explain:**  
 “We have different perspectives on work settings . . . Let’s look at the photos and discuss reactions.”  
 Explain the set-up for the activity to rank order the pictures on Handout 1 from most to least favorable (1 being the most favorable or positive working condition and 8 being the least favorable working condition).  
*[next slide is activity from Handout 1]*

What Are Working Conditions?



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Slide 7

**Explain:**  
 “Turn to Handout 1. Rank the order of the pictures from most to least favorable working conditions, where 1 is the **MOST** favorable or positive working condition, and 8 is the **LEAST** favorable or positive working condition.  
 “**Step 1.** Based on your **own personal experience**, rank the pictures in the order of your perception of the working conditions represented, from MOST favorable (1) to LEAST favorable (8).”

**Explain:**  
 “Now that you have worked on this individually, let’s take some time to reach some level of consensus about working conditions. Using Handout 1, work together to organize the pictures in most to least favorable order. The challenge—the group has to come to a consensus about the order. This process may take some good problem-solving or negotiation skills.”

What Are Working Conditions?

**Handout 1: What Are Working Conditions?**

Directions: Rank order the pictures from most to least favorable working conditions, where 1 is the most favorable or positive working condition.



1 = MOST positive conditions.  
 8 = LEAST positive conditions.

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Slide 8

**Explain:**  
 Facilitator leads report-out.  
*Does this summarize what I heard you say?*

- People saw things differently because they valued aspects of the work settings differently.
- Because people value work differently, they may need various supports or structures to feel valued in their respective roles.
- Their process for pursuing consensus will be disorganized and difficult for some people.
- There are certain aspects of some of these work settings that would cause some participants to want to leave the profession immediately.

Report Out



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Slide 9

- Also, help point out that some teaching conditions are schoolwide and some teaching conditions might be more individualized.

Take-away. Individuals perceive and value various aspects of these work settings differently. Educators have a similar challenge with discussing teaching conditions.

**Explain:**

- “Let’s look at and briefly describe the eight teaching conditions, which are also listed on Handout 2. We will have a more detailed discussion later in the presentation.
- **Time**, as meant here, is the time available to plan, collaborate, provide instruction, and eliminate barriers to make the most of instructional time during the school day.
- **Facilities and Resources** are the instructional, technology, office, communication, and school resources that are available to teachers.
- **Community Support and Involvement** includes community and parent or guardian communication and influence in the school.
- **Managing Student Conduct** centers on policies and practices that address student conduct issues and ensure a safe school environment.
- When we speak of **Teacher Leadership**, we address teacher involvement in decisions that affect classroom and school practices.
- **School Leadership** is the ability of school leadership to create trusting, supportive environments and address teacher concerns.
- **Professional Development** is regarded primarily as the availability and quality of learning opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching.
- And in number 8, **Instructional Practices and Support** defines the data and support that are available to teachers to improve instruction and student learning.”

What Are Teaching Conditions?



Source: <http://teachingandlearningharvest.org>  
Center on GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®

Slide 10

### Section 3—Why Do Teaching Conditions Matter? (20 minutes)

**Purpose:** Explain the importance of teaching conditions to student achievement and teacher retention.

<p><b>Facilitation note:</b> Introduce this section and its importance to understanding teaching conditions.</p>	<p>Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b> “Teaching conditions have an effect on many things—individual teachers, teachers collectively, the school as a whole, and student achievement.”</p>	<p>Teaching conditions impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers individually</li> <li>Teachers collectively</li> <li>School performance</li> <li>Student performance</li> </ul>
<p><b>Explain:</b> Along an educator’s career, policies and practices of institutions of higher education, states, districts, and schools impact a teacher’s career. This graphic from the American Institutes for Research includes many of those areas that impact the quality of an educator. Teaching conditions fit into the educator environment bucket. Research has demonstrated that when teachers perceive more positive teaching conditions, they are more satisfied with their jobs, they are more motivated to do their work, and they feel more efficacious at their jobs. In other words, teachers are happier and feel as though they are more effective and capable educators. Thus, it makes sense that educators in more positive working environments have students who also perceive their environments to be more positive.</p>	<p>Teaching Conditions as Part of Educator Talent Management</p> <p>Attract:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare for teaching</li> <li>• Recruit and hire</li> <li>• Establish a pipeline of candidates</li> </ul> </p> <p>Develop, Support, and Retain:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring</li> <li>• Career Advancement and Career Ladders</li> <li>• Collaborative and Professional Learning</li> <li>• Identification and Coaching Centers</li> <li>• Teacher and Mentoring</li> <li>• Quality Evaluation</li> <li>• Engagement and Retention</li> <li>• Compensation</li> </ul> </p>

**Explain:**

Teachers who perceive more positive teaching conditions are more likely to remain in their schools and remain in the profession. Not only does teacher retention have large financial benefits for schools, because teacher attrition can be costly, but teacher retention within buildings helps maintain a positive school culture and a more consistent instructional culture within a school.

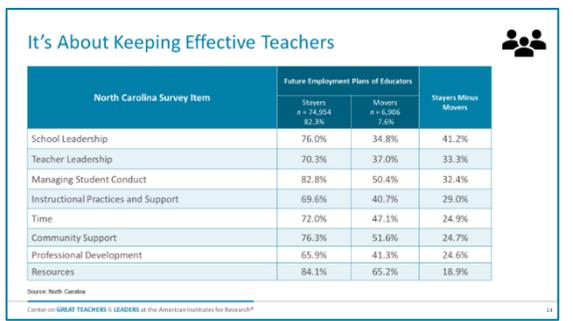
“In a recent research study in North Carolina, participants were asked about their teaching conditions as well as to describe their immediate professional plans. They had the option to continue teaching in their current school (called stayers); continue teaching, but in another school (called movers); leave the classroom but stay in education; or leave education entirely.

“When the researchers looked at educators indicating their intent to stay teaching in the immediate future with educators indicating their intent to move, they saw dramatic differences in how each of these groups viewed its teaching conditions. Stayers are much more positive about every condition in their schools than are movers.

“This slide illustrates the question from each construct with the greatest difference between the two groups.

“Percentages represent the proportion of educators who either *agree* or *strongly agree* that the condition is in place.

“We did not include discussion about leavers here for ease of delivery and because it is hard to explain why folks might be leaving (for example, retirement, health, family, frustration).”



Slide 14

<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research shows that teacher quality has the greatest impact on student achievement among school-related factors.</li> <li>• In fact, teachers in the top 20% of performance can generate 5 to 6 more months of student learning each year than can low-performing teachers.</li> <li>• Research also shows that school leadership is second only to teacher quality in its impact on student achievement.</li> <li>• And, of course, school principals influence whether schools can attract, develop, and retain great teachers.</li> <li>• The impact of quality teaching endures.</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="857 205 1416 514"> <p><b>Great Teachers Matter</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher quality has the <b>greatest</b> impact on student achievement among school-related factors.</li> <li>• School leadership is <b>second only</b> to teacher quality in its impact on student achievement.</li> </ul> <p><small>Sources: Chetty, Friedman, &amp; Rockoff, 2011; The New Teacher Project, n.d. Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</small></p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 15</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“Multiple components of the teaching environment (that is, student conduct, demands on time, autonomy, professional development) are predictive of student learning gains and student perceptions of support and rigor.</p> <p>“The presence of effective student conduct management, adequate time, teacher empowerment, and effective professional development (which are all teaching conditions) are significant predictors of student achievement and student gains. In addition, current research has demonstrated the relationship between teacher perceptions of their working conditions and student perceptions of their learning environment. Specifically, current research has demonstrated a relationship between teaching conditions and student perceptions of teacher support and classroom rigor.</p> <p>“In addition, teaching conditions affect how effective teachers are in the classroom. In other words, teaching conditions can enhance a teacher’s effectiveness if the teacher perceives positive teaching conditions, or teaching conditions can hinder a teacher’s effectiveness if the teacher perceives poor teaching conditions. As I mentioned earlier, teaching conditions may influence the types of teachers students have and the level of teacher effectiveness.”</p>	<div data-bbox="857 793 1416 1102"> <p><b>It’s About Kids</b> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple components of the teaching environment can predict:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Student learning gains</li> <li>– Student perceptions of support and rigor</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Teacher working conditions can influence how effective a teacher is in a particular school.</li> </ul> <p><small>Sources: Reynolds et al., 2011; Ferguson &amp; Walsh, 2014a; Johnson, 2006; Johnson, Kraft, &amp; Papay, 2012; LaParo, 2011 Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</small></p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 16</p>

**Explain:**  
 Measuring and examining teaching conditions matters because where you sit shapes how you see things . . .

Measuring and Examining Teaching Conditions Matters Because...

Where You Sit Shapes How You See Things

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Slide 17

**Explain:**  
 “In a study in Kentucky, principals and teachers were asked about the various teaching conditions. This slide illustrates the differences between principals’ and teachers’ perceptions of teaching conditions. The percentages are the proportion of educators who either *agree* or *strongly agree* that the condition is present.  
 “The percentages illustrate how differently the two groups view teaching conditions.”  
 Some possible responses to challenges for coming to consensus:

- Decisions should include as many voices as possible. A narrow representation of school educators may not capture all the different perceptions of school conditions and could lead to decisions that do not meet the needs of some educators.
- All stakeholders need to work together to create positive teaching conditions.
- School leaders are the drivers of the teaching conditions in the schools. If school leaders do not have an accurate understanding of how their teachers perceive their environment, strategically improving the school culture will be difficult.
- People in leadership positions in the schools may not be addressing things that educators view as challenging because the people in leadership positions do not view these things as problems.

Where You Sit Shapes How You See Things

2013 TELL Kentucky Questions With the Greatest Difference Between Principals and Teachers	Percent Agreement		
	Principals	Teachers	Difference
Efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine paperwork teachers are required to do.	93.0	54.1	38.9
Teachers feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them.	98.8	70.2	28.6
School administrators consistently enforce rules for student conduct.	99.0	71.3	27.7
Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruptions.	95.5	69.0	26.5
Teachers are assigned classes that maximize their likelihood of success with students.	98.1	72.1	26.0
The noninstructional time provided for teachers in my school is sufficient.	90.8	65.2	25.6
There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in this school.	97.6	73.0	24.6
Students at this school follow rules of conduct.	97.0	72.9	24.1

Source: Kentucky  
 Center on GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®

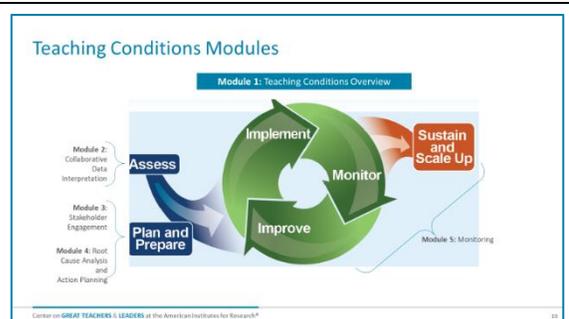
Slide 18

**Explain:**

Implementing a review of teaching conditions fits well into a continuous improvement cycle of school improvement.

The graphic in the middle of the slide represents a process to assess, plan, and prepare; implement, monitor, and improve; and sustain and scale up any school or district improvement initiative.

- *Module 1: Teaching Conditions Overview.* An introduction defines and discusses teaching conditions.
- *Module 2: Collaborative Data Interpretation.* This module takes place, ideally, after a teaching conditions survey has been administered in the school or district and other teaching conditions data have been collected.
- *Module 3: Stakeholder Engagement.* This module discusses how to communicate teaching conditions data and ensure the right people are lending their perspectives to the planning process.
- *Module 4: Root Cause Analysis and Action Planning.* This module guides participants through a root cause analysis process of the prioritized data from the collaborative data interpretation, followed by action planning for implementing identified changes to teaching conditions.
- *Module 5: Support and Monitoring for Success.* This module invites participants to think about ways to support the implementation of teaching condition changes and monitor the changes to promote sustainability.



Slide 19

**Explain:**

Systemic changes such as improving teaching conditions doesn't just happen from doing a survey. Changes require leaders focusing and implementing a continuous improvement model to enhance sustainability and scale-up. The more successful education initiatives are those that use data to assess the quality of the initiative as these steps focus the work on continuous improvement. Implementation science acknowledges that improved educational outcomes require not only intervention outcomes but implementation outcomes such as changes in teacher and staff behavior and changes in organization (for example, policy, guidelines, and funding). In other words, it is not just the "what" of an evidence-based intervention that is important but the "how" it is implemented as well (Blasé et al., 2005; Fixsen et al., 2005). The teaching conditions modules focus on how schools can continuously improve their teaching conditions through implementation science.

**Implementation Science**

- Evidence-based interventions often fail by focusing only on the "what."
- How initiatives or interventions are implemented is key for success.
- Improving teaching conditions requires changing the minds, actions, and behaviors of teachers, administrators, professional development providers, and policymakers.

Sources: Blase et al., 2005; Fixsen et al., 2005  
Center on GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®

Slide 20

**Section 4—What Are the Teaching Conditions? (20 minutes)**

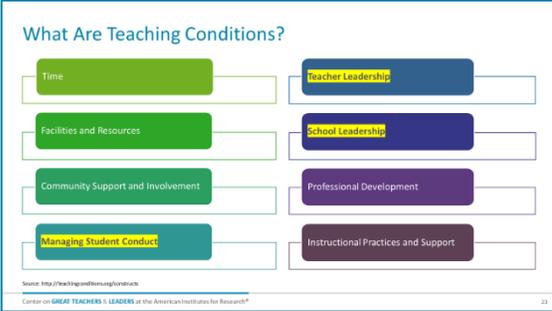
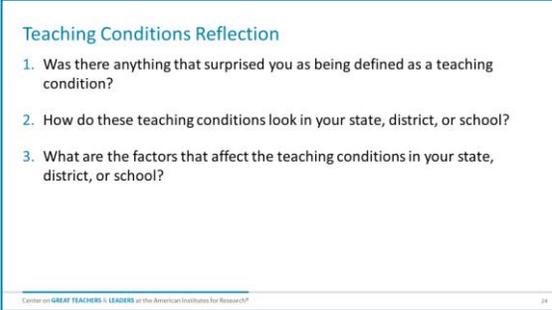
**Purpose:** Discuss the components of each teaching condition in more depth, and allow participants to reflect on teaching conditions in their own context.

**Facilitation note:** *Introduce this section and its importance to understanding teaching conditions.*

What Are the Teaching Conditions?

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Slide 21

<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“There are eight teaching conditions, as we mentioned earlier.”</p> <p>Remind participants the teaching conditions are listed on Handout 2.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 22</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“Highlighted are the teaching conditions that most correlate with teacher retention. These are the top three conditions that float to the top in research nearly every time.</p> <p>“Although all of these teaching conditions are important, in several research studies, for example, in studies reported by Boyd and colleagues in 2011 and Ladd in 2009, three working conditions—managing student behavior, school administration and leadership, and teacher influence and empowerment—consistently have strong relationships with teacher retention, teacher job satisfaction, and student achievement. In another study, reported by Wynn and colleagues in 2007, among first- and second-year teachers who considered leaving the profession, 82% of teachers stated that salary was the most likely reason to leave the profession, followed by 58% because of student behavior, and 43% because of administrative support. Research demonstrates that no single condition but rather a combination of teacher working conditions influences a teacher’s decision to stay in the profession.”</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 23</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“Now we are going to look more closely at each of the teaching conditions. As we do that, consider the following questions.”</p> <p>Read the questions.</p> <p>“These questions and spaces for answering them are included on Handout 3.”</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 24</p>

**Explain:**

- Schools protect teachers’ time to plan, collaborate, and provide effective instruction.
- Teachers should have time available to plan thoroughly lessons that will address all of their students’ needs.
- Time available to teachers should include time for collaboration and eliminate barriers to maximize instructional time during the school day.
- EXAMPLE: ADVISORY PERIODS AND SETTING TIME ASIDE FOR THEM

Time	
Class size facilitates high-quality instruction.	Planning time meets diverse learning needs of students; class sizes and course are appropriate, and assignments match training.
Sufficient time is available for effective instruction for all students.	Interruptions are minimal and sufficient instructional time is available. School leadership sets instructional schedules and supports teachers by protecting instructional time. School leadership seeks teachers’ input on ways to limit the full range of interruptions in instruction experienced by teachers and students.
Time is available during the school day to plan and collaborate.	Minimum sufficient time is available for short- and long-term planning. Minimum sufficient time is available for teacher collaboration to develop common plans and share effective lessons. Interruptions are limited during noninstructional time.
Schools make efforts to streamline processes to increase instructional time and decrease required paperwork.	School leadership makes some effort to minimize completion of school business during instructional time, target essential assessments, and reduce the amount of associated paperwork.

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Slide 25

**Explain:**

*Facilities and resources are provided for teachers to deliver quality instruction.*

Teachers should have instructional materials and technology so that they can provide students with 21st Century opportunities. Teachers should have access to technology support to assist with resolving issues with technology when they arise. The physical school environment should be well maintained, and teachers should have ample work space.

EXAMPLE: CREATING PLANNING CENTERS IN CLEVELAND METROPOLITAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Facilities and Resources	
Materials and resources are available to facilitate quality instruction.	Sufficient instructional materials are available to meet the needs of teachers and students. Resources are available for administrative and instructional needs.
Technology facilitates 21st century learning opportunities.	Technology is reliable and available to meet 21st century instructional needs. Support is available for accessing and using technology.
Physical environments support teaching and learning.	Physical environments support teaching and learning. Physical environments are clean and well maintained. Adequate work space is available. Most teachers have access to their own work space as well as shared space.
Teachers have access to a broad range of professional support personnel.	Professional support personnel are available to assist teachers with meeting the needs of students.

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Slide 26

**Explain:**

*Parents, guardians, and community members are engaged in substantive ways to support and influence the school.*

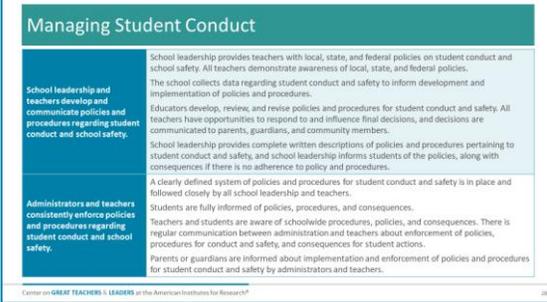
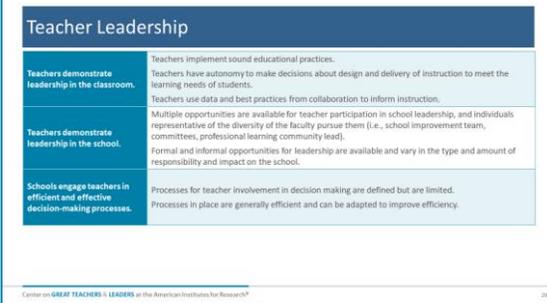
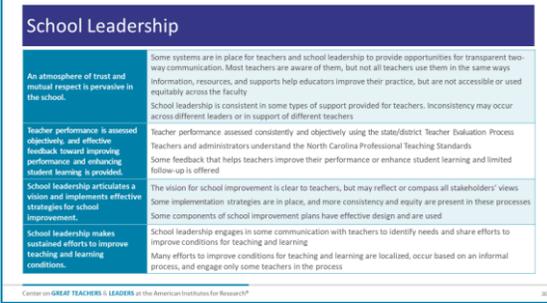
The community and parents or guardians are informed about school and classroom policies and procedures and have the opportunity to influence policies and procedures that will make the school successful.

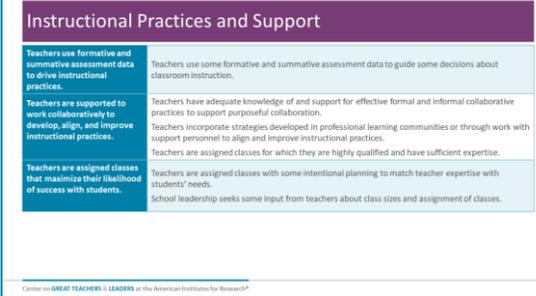
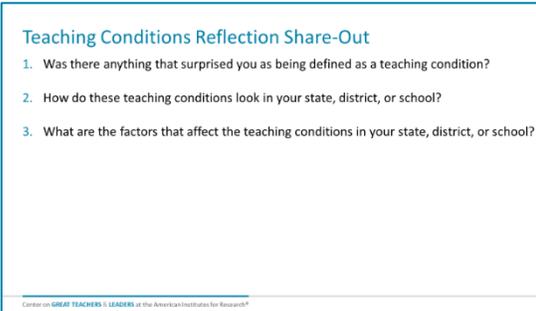
EXAMPLE: ASSIGNING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS ACTIVE MEMBERS IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Community Support and Involvement	
Parents, guardians, and community members support the school and teachers.	Parents, guardians, and community members support classrooms and school activities and participate in meaningful ways at the school.
Parents, guardians, and community members are knowledgeable about classroom and school policies and practices.	School educators regularly and reliably disseminate information about the school and individual classrooms. A variety of communication systems are in place to promote accuracy of information.
Parents, guardians, and community members are provided opportunities to influence success of school.	Parents, guardians, and community members are aware of the school improvement processes and have opportunities to participate. School educators have established partnerships with community members and communicate in ways that encourage participation. The school improvement team follows state guidelines and statutory requirements, providing multiple opportunities for input and influence on school practice. An established parent organization meets regularly and makes efforts to have participation representative of school populations.

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<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p><i>Schools implement policies and practices to address student conduct issues and ensure a safe school environment.</i></p> <p>Policies and practices are implemented to address student conduct issues and ensure a safe school environment, which means that school leadership and teachers develop, communicate, and enforce policies and procedures regarding student conduct and school safety.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: CREATING SHARED AGREEMENTS (for example, classrooms or faculty meetings) AND DETAILING HOW WE WILL HOLD EACH OTHER ACCOUNTABLE</p>	 <p>Slide 28</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p><i>Teachers are involved in decisions that affect classroom and school practices.</i></p> <p>Teachers are provided opportunities to demonstrate leadership ability and decision making. Their participation should be diverse and representative of the faculty.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: TEACHERS ARE ASKED TO LEAD THE DISCIPLINE COMMITTEE AND DATA USE COMMITTEE</p>	 <p>Slide 29</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p><i>School leadership maintains trusting, supportive environments that advance teaching and learning.</i></p> <p>School leadership demonstrates ability to create a trusting and respectful environment. School leadership effectively addresses teacher concerns, provides constructive feedback, and makes sustained efforts to improve the teaching and learning conditions.</p>	 <p>Slide 30</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p><i>Quality learning opportunities are available for teachers to enhance teaching and learning.</i></p> <p>Quality professional learning opportunities that enhance teaching and improve student learning are available for educators.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: HEARING MORE ABOUT BLENDED LEARNING FOR TEACHERS WHERE THERE IS MORE TIME FOR DISCUSSION AND COLLABORATION</p>	 <p>Slide 31</p>

<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p><i>Schools provide support for data analysis and teachers’ collaboration to improve teaching and learning.</i></p> <p>Data are used to drive instructional practices. Supports are available to teachers to improve instruction and student learning so that teacher expertise aligns with students’ needs.</p> <p>EXAMPLE: DATA ARE PROVIDED TO TEACHERS IN A READABLE FORMAT, AND SHARED AGREEMENTS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED SUCH THAT TEACHERS FEEL COMFORTABLE DISCUSSING DATA TOGETHER IN THE NAME OF IMPROVEMENT (IT’S NOT A BLAME GAME!)</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 32</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“Let’s revisit the reflection questions you were considering.”</p> <p>Ask each question, and allow participants to respond.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 33</p>

## Section 5—Practice Rubric Experience (35 minutes)

**Purpose:** Introduce the teaching conditions rubric, and allow participants to generate this type of perception data.

<p><b>Facilitation note:</b> <i>Introduce this section of the session and its importance to understanding teaching conditions.</i></p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 34</p>
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**Explain:**

Let’s think about the collection and analysis of teaching conditions data.

1. To capture a snapshot of multiple teaching condition constructs, you can use a rubric, which provides perceptions along a continuum of practice—which we will do today—or through an anonymous survey, which many of you took back in June.
2. Anonymous surveys of educators are one approach in which educators complete either a paper-and-pencil or online survey. Surveys provide a level of anonymity in which educators may be more open and honest about their perceptions of the teaching conditions. Furthermore, surveys can provide multiple levels of analysis and results, which can be used for school improvement planning. Both paper-and-pencil or electronic surveys are fairly easy to use, can collect large samples of data, and can provide a holistic perspective of the quality of conditions at one or multiple schools. They also can produce results that can be compared with results from other schools or normed across multiple schools; finally, these data can be collected electronically.

**Data Collection**

Macro level

1. Practice Rubric
2. Anonymous Survey



Micro level

1. Guided Discussion
2. Individual Item Prompts



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**Explain:**

Macro level = big picture. These strategies support system level need and next steps:

- A practice rubric supports the **interpretation and application** of the teaching conditions standards.
- The process prepares school educators for **school improvement planning**.
- Evaluating teaching conditions on a developmental continuum allows for consideration of growth (*where a school is at developmentally on providing positive teaching conditions*).

The first macro-level or holistic approach is the placement on a practice rubric. The basis of this approach comes from the teaching conditions standards work adopted by North Carolina and Kentucky. The practice rubric approach supports the interpretation and application of standards. The difference between this method and the

**Example of Teaching Conditions Indicators—Time**

Teaching Conditions Standard 3—Time				Indicator(s) of Proficiency
Schools protect teachers' time to plan, collaborate, and provide effective instruction.				
Strong	Proficient	Growing	Element	
			3a – Teachers' class sizes facilitate high-quality instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers have time to plan in order to meet the diverse learning needs of students because of their having appropriate class sizes, course loads, and assignments that match training.</li> <li>Teachers have minimum, sufficient uninterrupted instructional time.</li> <li>School leadership determines daily/weekly instructional schedules for teachers and supports teachers in protecting instructional time.</li> <li>School leadership seeks teachers' input on ways to limit the full range of interruptions to instruction experienced by teachers and students.</li> <li>Minimum sufficient time is provided during the school day for short- and long-term planning.</li> <li>Minimum sufficient time is available for teachers to work collaboratively to develop common plans and share effective lessons.</li> <li>There are limited interruptions to the noninstructional time provided to teachers. Teachers have the state minimum time to plan and collaborate (beyond free lunch and a planning period).</li> <li>School leadership makes some effort to minimize completion of school business during instructional time, to target essential assessments and reduce the amount of associated paperwork.</li> </ul>
			3b – Teachers have sufficient time to provide all students with effective instruction.	
			3c – Teachers have time during the school day to plan and collaborate.	
			3d – Schools make efforts to streamline processes to increase instructional time and decrease required paperwork.	

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anonymous survey method is that the rubric provides further description about what the teaching condition looks like in a school at each rubric level. Thus, when educators work together to when complete the rubric, compared with taking a survey, they develop more common understanding about what each score means.

“The more people who participate in the process, the more complete your understanding of the teaching conditions will be as experienced by educators across your site. Inclusion of all educators to participate is very important in using the results to drive school improvement planning and obtaining buy-in on next steps.”

Explain the rubric:

- Each teaching condition as defined by the rubric has corresponding **elements** (1a, 1b, and so forth) with indicators of proficiency—the description of what the indicators mean. Each row represents an element, or important aspect, of the condition.
- There is a longer rubric for each element but **we are using the abridged version today**. Contact the GTL Center if you would like access to the full rubric.
- We are about to do some self-assessment. Here’s an example of a section of the rubric—**TIME**. You’ll review each of the conditions as a school team, which I will explain further on the next slide.

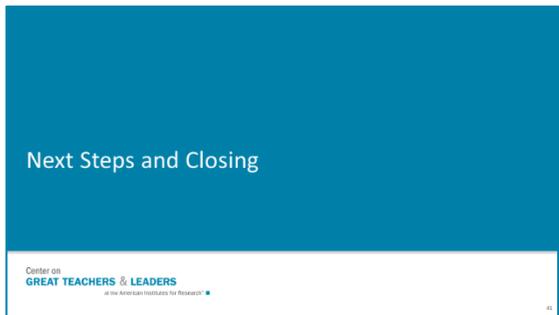
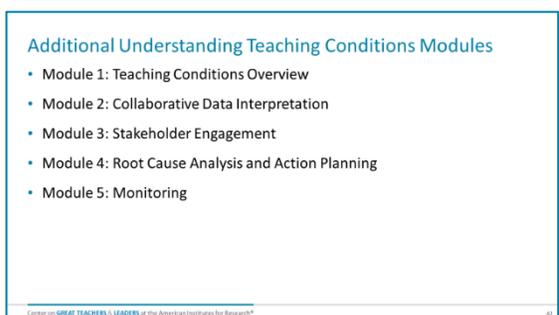
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>Explain the activity. Use Handout 4 to complete this work.</p> <p>Read each element and associated indicators of proficiency. As a school team, reflect on your school’s conditions.</p> <p>This handout asks you whether your school is at, above, or below a proficient level: growing (below), proficient (at), or glowing (above). After coming to consensus about each element within a condition, decide whether you think the <b>condition</b> will be a high priority. You can revise this at the end when you select the 2 conditions to focus on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose: deeper understanding of what each of the teaching conditions are and the concrete practices that correspond to the 8 conditions</li> <li>• Your job is to go through each of the 8 conditions and come to consensus as a school team on a rating for each element. Once you finish all the elements in one condition, you can give yourselves a mark for the condition overall (<b>low/medium/high OR growing [below], proficient [at], or glowing [above]</b>).</li> <li>• Goal: This exercise will eventually help you zoom in on 2 conditions to focus on for the action planning portion of today. (We’ll use two high-priority conditions in the next activity.)</li> </ul> <p>After reviewing all 8 conditions, rank order the conditions from strongest (1) to weakest (8). PUT THE NUMBER ON THE UPPER RIGHT-HAND CORNER OF EACH RUBRIC PAGE.</p>	<div data-bbox="862 205 1414 516" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Activity: Experiencing the Rubric</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the rubric to <b>reflect</b> on your school’s conditions with your school <b>team</b>.</li> <li>• Select <i>growing</i>, <i>proficient</i>, or <i>glowing</i> for each <b>element</b> by marking an X.</li> <li>• After you review each <b>element</b> within a condition, decide whether the <b>condition</b> is a high priority (to improve or to leverage).</li> </ul> <p style="background-color: #e0f0ff; padding: 2px;">After reviewing all eight conditions, rank their order from strongest (1) to weakest (8).</p> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 37</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was the experience?</li> <li>• Which conditions did you choose and why?</li> <li>• Was it difficult to agree on rank order?</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="862 1381 1414 1692" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p><b>Group Share-Out</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How was the experience?</li> <li>• Which conditions did you choose and why?</li> <li>• Was it difficult to agree on rank order?</li> </ul> <p style="font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 38</p>

<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p><i>Because the group of folks looking at data today is not the entire school staff, the perspectives of participants may or may not be reflected in the schoolwide teaching conditions data. Therefore, after using the rubric, we ask participants to reflect as a group on the following:</i></p> <p>What do you expect to see in your teaching conditions data?</p> <p>What strengths do you predict will arise?</p> <p>What areas for growth do you predict you will see?</p>	<div data-bbox="862 222 1349 249" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>Based on Your Opinions From the Rubric Experience . . .</p> </div> <ul data-bbox="883 256 1292 323" data-label="List-Group" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you expect to see in your teaching conditions data?             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What strengths do you predict will arise?</li> <li>– What areas for growth do you predict you will see?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <div data-bbox="883 499 1109 512" data-label="Text"> <p><small>Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</small></p> </div> <div data-bbox="1321 522 1414 552" data-label="Text"> <p>Slide 39</p> </div>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“There are some important things to keep in mind when using perceptual data . . .</p> <p>“Teaching conditions are not about any one individual. In schools with challenging conditions, sometimes school leaders can mistake data as a representation of them personally. Although school leaders certainly play a unique and important role in the function of a school, they are only one of a group of educators contributing to the school’s teaching conditions.</p> <p>“Perceptual data are real data. Educators’ perceptions are their reality; but, at the same time, be careful not to base high-stakes cumulative decisions about your personnel on these data alone. These data should be one of multiple measures included in formative discussion about school improvement planning.</p> <p>“Conversations need to be structured and safe. The topic of teaching conditions can be difficult if the conditions are not addressed systematically and collaboratively, where all faculty members can participate in a meaningful and safe way. Using data can help to frame the conversation without pointing fingers or assigning blame.</p> <p>“Create a common understanding of your school’s conditions. Any data collected about teaching conditions should be considered a starting point and not an ending point for understanding what is important to teachers for them to do their best work.</p> <p>“Focus on what you can solve. Particularly in the beginning of new strategies and processes, it is better to address low-hanging fruit than the most</p>	<div data-bbox="862 663 1336 690" data-label="Section-Header"> <p>When Using Teaching Conditions Data, Remember . . .</p> </div> <ul data-bbox="883 697 1325 898" data-label="List-Group" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching conditions are <b>not about any one individual</b>.</li> <li>• Perceptual data are <b>real data</b>.</li> <li>• Conversations need to be <b>structured and safe</b>.</li> <li>• A <b>common understanding</b> of your school’s conditions needs to be created.</li> <li>• Focus on what <b>you can solve</b>.</li> <li>• Solutions can be <b>complex and long term</b>.</li> <li>• Teaching conditions data are <b>not intended for external evaluative purposes</b>.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="883 940 1109 953" data-label="Text"> <p><small>Center on GREAT TEACHERS &amp; LEADERS at the American Institutes for Research®</small></p> </div> <div data-bbox="1321 963 1414 993" data-label="Text"> <p>Slide 40</p> </div>

<p>difficult and complex of challenges. This approach helps to achieve necessary short-term wins to gain momentum and support of the work for more challenging actions later on.</p> <p>“Solutions can be complex and long term. Avoid marathon or one-time extensive trainings. It would be better to sprinkle 5 to 10 minutes into other activities already in place pervasively throughout the school year than a ‘one and done.’</p> <p>“Teaching conditions data are not intended for external evaluative purposes. Rather, they are intended to be reviewed by teachers and school leaders collaboratively to facilitate dialogue, contextualize the data, and illuminate perspectives of those individuals who know the school best.”</p>	
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## Section 6—Next Steps and Closing (5 minutes)

**Purpose:** Discuss next steps, and bring the session to an end.

<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“We will close the session today by thinking about some next steps.”</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 41</p>
<p><b>Explain:</b></p> <p>“There are additional <i>Understanding Teaching Conditions</i> modules that cover other important topics in implementing a review of teaching conditions.”</p>	 <p style="text-align: right;">Slide 42</p>

**Facilitation note:** These slides provide the references cited in the slide presentation.

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“Thank you, and please contact the presenters with any questions. We look forward to working with you in this partnership!”

Contact Name  
 XXX-XXX-XXXX  
 email@air.org

1000 Thomas Jefferson Street NW  
 Washington, DC 20007-3835  
 877-322-8700  
 gtlcenter@air.org  
 www.gtlcenter.org | www.air.org

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