

CPS Continuous Improvement and Data Transparency

Accountability Technical Advisory Group

Meeting #1 Summary

1 NOVEMBER 2023 | 10:00-4:00 | CPS Central Office, 3rd floor, Room 3C103

ATTENDEES

A-TAG Members: Alahrie Aziz-Sims, Cy Hendrickson, Elaine Allensworth, Monica Bhatt, Nelson Gerew, Nicole Abreu Shepard, Paul Zavitkovsky, Paula Barajas, Pavlyn Jankov, Peter Leonard, Sara Kempner

CPS CIDT Implementation Staff: Augusta Smith, Jeff Broom, Lauren Brumett, Morgan Chase

Center for Assessment Staff: Erika Landl, Laura Pinsonneault

Meeting Materials

All meeting materials are available on this A-TAG webpage:

<https://sites.google.com/view/cidt-atag/home>

AGENDA

Welcome, Introductions, and Norm-Setting

Jeff Broom opened the meeting by welcoming the group and starting introductions, inviting participants to share some of their history with this work. He also reviewed the meeting agenda with the group.

Augusta Smith then facilitated a conversation about the District's approach to Accountability Redesign (and other strategic initiatives), grounding the work through the implementation of the CPS Equity Framework (slides 2-5). She shared information about liberatory thinking and used it to tee up goal norms for this group: to engage in deep reflective work and embrace courageous conversations. All of this must take place in a safe space and with the understanding that the group may not come to unanimous agreement, so different perspectives and recommendations will be documented when they arise.

Establishing Context

In order for the group to support implementation of the Continuous Improvement and Data Transparency Policy (CIDT), it is important to understand the history and context underlying the development and adoption of the policy by the Chicago Board of Education (Board). Information presented to the group included an overview of the project history, the CIDT content, and information about the metric development process that is underway in the District.

Project history

Jeff started with project history, dating back to June of 2019 and the original direction to redesign the School Quality Rating Policy (SQRP) with a promise at the time to develop something entirely new following work on “SQRP 2.0”.

Understanding the pushback to continued focus on SQRP, the District remained committed to following through on a complete rethinking of accountability in Chicago Public Schools (CPS). This work has been grounded in stakeholder priorities and values, the CPS Equity Framework, and targeted universalism.

In order for the group to understand their role in supporting implementation, Jeff shared information about the roles of different groups that have been involved in this work to date, and the organizations comprising those groups, as well as the extensive stakeholder outreach undertaken over the last two years (slides 6-10). He also discussed the critical role of transparency throughout the process in the past and going forward (slides 11-12).

CIDT Content

Jeff next shared an overview of the CIDT (slides 13-17), starting with key design principles that have informed the work and are carried forward into implementation. These principles are 1) accountability should start with District commitments; 2) school accountability should focus on conditions and supportive learning environments; and 3) conversations about the above topics should be complemented by the use of outcome data. He described the components—Daily Learning Experiences (at the core), Inclusive and Collaborative School and Community, Adult Capacity and Continuous Learning, and Evidence of Student Learning and Wellbeing—and other key elements—resources, support, conditions, and outcomes—of the policy, and provided the rationale for the components and other key elements. To connect the CIDT from past to present, Jeff highlighted what

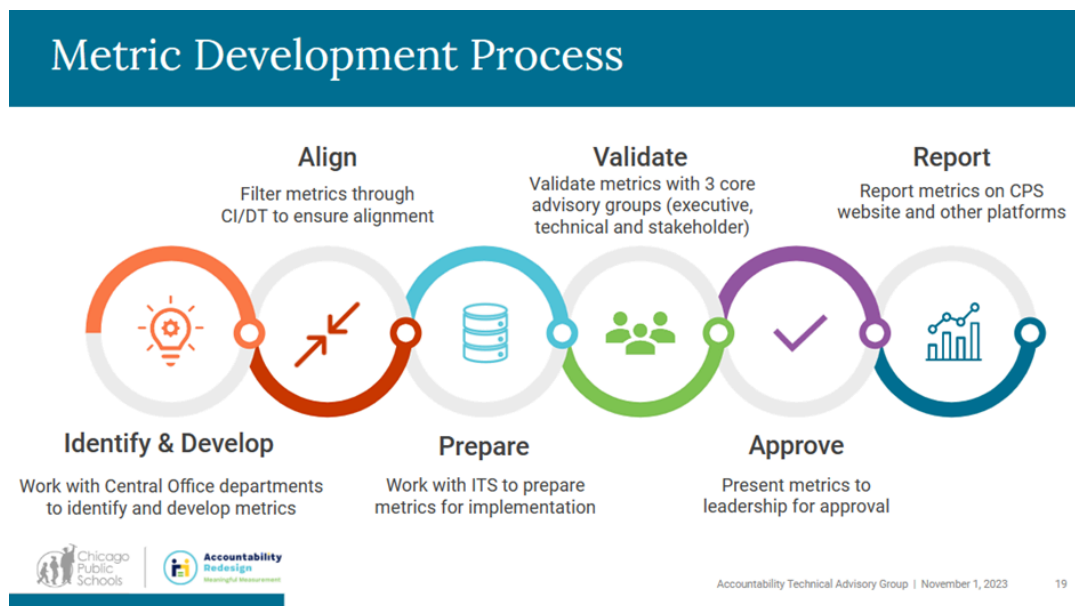
is ending, what is staying, and what is new as a result of the policy and she asked the group to consider key questions that can inform a more holistic narrative about school and District quality:

1. What are the things a high-quality school should be doing, and why?
2. Is my school doing these things?
3. To the extent my school needs to improve in these areas, how is the District supporting my school community in those efforts?

CIDT Metric Development

The District is establishing an iterative process to develop metrics in line with the CIDT. Augusta framed this process as a development and validation process. She described how the process employs subject matter experts (SMEs) from various District departments. There was a question about whether there are foundational “rules” that ground the metric development process. Augusta explained that there is a metric development toolkit to ensure the process is consistent across departments, and that the goal of this meeting is to start work on criteria that will both guide and inform metric development by SMEs and structure the feedback provided by A-TAG.

These SMEs will engage in a structured process to develop metric proposals for review by 1) an Executive Committee composed of CPS leadership, 2) the Accountability Technical Advisory Group (A-TAG), and 3) a Data Transparency Stakeholder Advisory Group.



Importantly, A-TAG's role is to provide structured feedback in the development process, but the role of approving the metrics resides with the Executive Committee. Iteration of this work takes place between SMEs, A-TAG, and the Stakeholder Advisory Group.

Subsequent discussion highlighted the importance of being clear about intended and appropriate use of each metric and indicator. There were also some questions about the metric development process:

1. Is there a starting point for SMEs or do they have a blank slate? Augusta noted that there are schools using some metrics as currently described, but all SMEs are told that there is room to re-envision metrics to better align with the vision for continuous improvement and data transparency across the District. Some metrics, by necessity, will start from scratch because no data are currently collected in these areas.
2. What technology will be available to support reporting? This led to discussion about the value of transitioning from static to interactive dashboard, thinking about how school leaders in particular will interact with this information. Members felt strongly that people can engage with (e.g., drill through) the data.

At this point, Jeff described the tension between blue-sky thinking and completely throwing away years of research and work that has informed metrics already in use across the District. The role of the SMEs is to help determine whether it is appropriate and best for the District to start with something new or to work with something already in place. He articulated a starting point for SMEs to consider what's already in place, to examine that against stakeholder preferences and what is in the CIDT, and then to adjust based on the criteria recommended by A-TAG. Importantly, the District is committed to collecting new data if doing so is necessary to implement the policy with fidelity.

To conclude this portion of the agenda, Augusta covered the CIDT timeline for the metrics, as divided across two years for fall 2024 and fall 2025 (slides 24-27).

Discussion About Indicators and Metrics

The group requested additional information and clarification about indicators and metrics; there was some confusion about the distinction. Metrics were described as the mechanism to operationalize the indicators set in board policy. Returning to the earlier discussion about whether the development process starts from a blank slate, there was some concern about metrics already being set, to which facilitators reiterated the role of A-TAG to help establish principles for reporting as well as criteria that

will inform both development of metric and indicator proposals and the review and provision of feedback for those proposals.

Much of this discussion queued up later agenda items, i.e., considering what counts as evidence for the metrics and indicators, discussion about reporting priorities. One member voiced concern that there could be a risk of rolling out something that looks and feels a lot like SQRP (the group wants to guard against that). Laura highlighted some key differences that should attenuate that risk including no summative ratings and a scope that includes more holistic data. Jeff expressed that the perception that this policy is SQRP 3.0 would be a fundamental failure and something the District is also interested in guarding against.

Overall the group expressed that the District should continue to remain highly transparent, sharing as much as possible about the metric development process throughout that process and ensuring space for this group to offer substantive feedback.

Reporting Vision

Laura situated the meeting's focus on reporting vision with an understanding that discussion about reporting priorities and eventually about reporting details will be ongoing across A-TAG meetings. She reminded the group of three design principles that the Accountability Redesign Advisory Group used that should inform plans for CIDT reporting (slides 28-31): 1) all aspects of the new accountability system must be transparent and communicated in a way that will be understood by all stakeholders; 2) reporting should clarify how school performance information is intended to be interpreted and used; and 3) the system must focus on improving student outcomes.

Laura then highlighted established CPS' priorities, pointing back to earlier discussion about the District's commitment to gather data as needed to satisfy both the requirements but especially the vision of the CIDT. This is not business as usual. She shared an example dashboard that illustrates one way measures outside of traditional outcome metrics can be reported. Last, members were invited to share their early thoughts in response to three questions:

1. How can the District clearly represent its commitment to reciprocity through reporting?
2. What features are necessary to ensure the intended interpretations and uses of different types of information are clear?
3. Should all stakeholders be able to access all information or are different types and vehicles for communication necessary to support different intended users?

Members shared their thoughts in an [IdeaBoard](#). Their contributions will inform future conversations and work focused on CIDT reporting plans.

The group next adjourned for a lunch break.

Establishing Criteria for Indicators and Metrics (slides 33-56)

Erika started by sharing the Center for Assessment's history of work nationally and specifically with CPS, starting with the curriculum equity project (Skyline) and including two years of work on the first stage of the Accountability Redesign project, as well as work with the Office of Early Childhood Education.

Erika then set this context: If the language of components, indicators, and metrics doesn't meet our needs, or is a distraction from our work to develop criteria, we can adjust. Laura reminded the group that none of the words currently employed ever need to show up in any dashboards or reports for this system. Erika then described the goals and purposes of the criteria and some key principles that should inform the work. Finally, she reminded the group about the purpose of the CIDT and intended uses of that system. This led to a review of who will use the criteria: SMEs, A-TAG, and CPS leadership.

There was some discussion about how much is "locked" into Board policy (referencing, as an example, slide 41). Jeff responded that most things are locked as minimum requirements, but definitions are not locked. To clarify the role of A-TAG, this group develops the criteria for the metric and suggests evidence that may demonstrate the acceptability of a metric proposal, and then employ the criteria to offer structured feedback to the proposals (as this group will, in future meetings, delve into each indicator and metric).

The group returned to discussion of reporting, again highlighting the importance of clearly communicating how users are expected to use the information provided. These descriptions have to be specific enough that the metric will drive change.

Erika then provided direction for the activities.

Activity #1

For the first activity, the group started with individual review time—of just the draft criteria—with a [Jamboard](#) to document their thoughts on each criterion. They then transitioned to full-group

discussion, addressing whether anything was missing, seemed duplicative, and whether the language was clear and sufficient to inform intended uses.

The resulting discussion made clear that discussion about evidence to support each criterion would be helpful for the group. There were questions about performance expectations for different metrics and indicators, about adequacy and alignment and again about evidence. A member requested that evidence for each claim should attend to each of the different student groups that are impacted. The group wanted criteria to be wary of unintended consequences and liked language about “interrogating” the metrics for such risks.

The group wanted to make sure that there was a criterion to address the research or evidence base for a metric or indicator, with appropriate cautions around bias that may have been “baked into” the research. Or, put differently, with appropriate attention to and consideration of the CPS context.

Attendance arose as an example of a type of metric that could benefit from looking beyond the outcome (whether students are chronically absent). It is also important to consider the underlying factors that impact attendance rates in schools, and plans for how and when a network or the District would provide support or play an advocacy role to help improve attendance rates.

Activity #2

This activity focused on identifying evidence that may demonstrate acceptability of a metric or indicator proposal. Members were provided time for individual review, and then engaged in table discussion for each indicator, taking notes in a [Google doc](#). They had both specific example (not final or formalized) metrics they could use to inform their contributions and general descriptions of each CIDT indicator and metric, if they preferred a broader approach to considering evidence.

In the large-group discussion that followed, it was shared that each group identified a similar approach in their work: they both used questions to frame up the type of evidence they would consider appropriate for each criterion. This led to discussion about whether the criteria/claims themselves were clear enough for SMEs to use effectively and the group generally agreed that the criteria should be revisited for clarity and simplicity.

Both groups also found it helpful to think about uses and users for each metric. And somewhat to this end, the group wanted to make sure that it was clear how District accountability is built into each criterion. They want to know how the District will monitor and offer support.

Wrap-up

To conclude the meeting, Laura provided some information about what to expect in future meetings, both in terms of meeting cadence and likely topics to cover. The group was asked to complete a meeting evaluation and demographics survey, as well as a Doodle poll in order to identify when to meet in December. She reiterated that the group is welcome to get in touch between meetings and pointed out contact information on the CIDT A-TAG webpage.

Laura, Erika, and Jeff thanked the group for their engagement and thoughtful questions and contributions throughout the meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

- 1. Members were asked to complete a meeting evaluation.**
- 2. Members were asked to complete a brief demographics survey.**
- 3. Members were asked to complete a Doodle poll to help identify a date and time for a remote meeting in December. (This meeting was set for December 19 from 1:00-4:00.)**
- 4. Center staff committed to updating the draft criteria based on feedback gathered in this meeting.**
- 5. Center staff will provide this meeting summary and advance-reading materials at least one week prior to the December meeting.**
- 6. CPS and Center staff will review all meeting notes (IdeaBoard, Jamboard, Google docs) to inform development of a metric and indicator proposal template.**