



WORKBOOK

# EAB's Collaborative to Improve Teacher Morale

Use this workbook throughout session #2 to:

- Collect useful qualitative information
- Create a plan to collect input

## Continuing Part 1: Diagnose Causes

---

### Collecting Qualitative Input



This workbook is designed to help you implement the morale momentum loop in your district, and specifically to collect useful qualitative information about the causes of low morale. You will be given time to complete prompts in this workbook throughout today's session. We encourage you to record your ideas, not only during the session, but also afterwards, so you can reference it while implementing the teacher morale momentum loop.

Executive sponsors and implementation leaders should both complete reflections and exercises throughout this workbook. While we recommend answering reflection questions individually, we encourage you to share your answers to foster better collaboration and planning.

# Table of Contents

---

## Part I: Resources for Collecting Qualitative Input

- 1. Formal Qualitative Input Sessions 101.** . . . . .Pg. 7  
*This tool will help districts set up formal qualitative input sessions.*
- 2. Creating a Qualitative Input Conversation Agenda.** . . . . .Pg. 9  
*This tool will help districts repurpose existing teacher meetings/committees to collect qualitative input and/or to conduct formal qualitative input sessions.*
- 3. Meeting Facilitation Scripts.** . . . . .Pg. 12  
*This tool will also help districts who plan to repurpose existing teacher meetings/committees to collect qualitative input and/or to conduct formal qualitative input sessions.*
- 4. Tips for Writing Strong Qualitative Input Questions.** . . . . .Pg. 16  
*This tool will help districts design strong questions to ask teachers regardless of how they collect qualitative input.*
- 5. Qualitative Input Question Bank.** . . . . .Pg. 18  
*This tool will help districts design strong questions to ask teachers regardless of how they collect qualitative input. Districts will scale the number of questions they ask depending on the setting(s) in which they choose to collect qualitative input.*
- 6. Qualitative Input Facilitator Tips.** . . . . .Pg. 26  
*This tool will help facilitators of repurposed existing teacher meetings/committees to collect qualitative input and/or those conducting formal qualitative input sessions.*
- 7. Notetaking and Summary Guides for Qualitative Input.** . . . . .Pg. 29  
*This tool will help districts document and synthesize qualitative information from teachers regardless of how they collect qualitative input. Districts will scale the amount of information documented depending on the setting(s) in which they choose to collect qualitative input.*
- 8. Prosper ISD Stay Interview Case Study.** . . . . .Pg. 32  
*This tool will help districts plan and conduct stay interviews with teachers.*

## Table of Contents (cont.)

---

### Part II: Creating a Qualitative Input Collection Plan

**9. Qualitative Input Collection Planning. . . . .Pg. 36**

*This tool will be used by all participating districts during session #2. It is a continuation of the planning document districts used in the kickoff session.*

**10. Communication Templates. . . . .Pg. 42**

*Use the communication templates to invite teachers to qualitative input sessions and explain how that input will be used.*



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Resources for Collecting Qualitative Input

Use pages 6-34 to learn how to collect successful qualitative  
information from teachers about morale.

---

PART I

2

# Decide How Your District Will Collect Qualitative Input

Use the below strategies to collect qualitative input from your teachers. Districts can use one or all strategies to collect input between now and November 16<sup>th</sup>.

EAB has outlined below a range of options districts can use to collect qualitative input from teachers. These strategies are listed from easiest to implement to most resource intensive. Each strategy will also yield different levels of specificity in responses. Aligned with each of these strategies are supporting tools to help you successfully implement them in your district.

## Embed 1-2 Questions into Faculty Meetings

### Supporting Tools

- + Opportunity to get input from many teachers
- Information not as in-depth as other options

- Tips for Writing Strong Questions (pg. 16)
- Question Bank (pg. 18)
- Notetaking & Summary Guides (pg. 29)

## Repurpose Existing Groups for Morale Sessions

- + Quick way to schedule time with busy teachers to get some input
- May not be fully representative of all teachers

- Conversation Agenda (pg. 9)
- Facilitation Scripts (pg. 12)
- Tips for Writing Strong Questions (pg. 16)
- Question Bank (pg. 18)
- Facilitator Tips (pg. 26)
- Notetaking & Summary Guides (pg. 29)

## Formal Qualitative Input Sessions

- + Able to get robust, representative qualitative data from teachers
- Time intensive to organize and conduct

- Formal Sessions 101 (pg. 7)
- Conversation Agenda (pg. 9)
- Facilitation Scripts (pg. 12)

- Tips for Writing Strong Questions (pg. 16)
- Question Bank (pg. 18)
- Facilitator Tips (pg. 26)

## Stay Interviews

- + Excellent way to make teachers feel heard, get in-depth information
- Time and labor intensive to organize and conduct

- Notetaking & Summary Guides (pg. 29)
- Tips for Writing Strong Questions (pg. 16)
- Question Bank (pg. 18)
- Notetaking & Summary Templates (pg. 29)
- Stay Interview Case Study (pg. 32)



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Formal Qualitative Input Sessions 101

This tool will help districts to set up formal qualitative input sessions.  
The tool includes an overview of the logistics and requirements to make these sessions successful.

---

TOOL

## Formal Qualitative Input Sessions 101

---

Use the guidelines below to establish a formal system for collecting qualitative input. Ideally, school districts should schedule and conduct these sessions after the completion and analysis of the morale diagnostic survey (i.e., quantitative information collection).

### Key Logistics to Design Formal Input Sessions



#### Participating Teachers

- Aim for 6-10 participating teachers per session (invite twice as many)
- Decide if you can offer incentives (e.g., refreshments, gift cards, classroom cover) for participating



#### Frequency

- Run sessions after completion of a morale survey to get more detailed information
- Aim to host 2-3 sessions per building to get an accurate picture and representative information



#### Key Roles

- There should be at least one facilitator and one notetaker for each session.
- See pages 26-31 for resources to support both facilitators and notetakers.



#### Length of Sessions

- Sessions should be 30-60 minutes
- Scale agenda and number of core questions asked depending on length of time (30 minutes: 3-5 questions; 60 minutes: 6-8 questions).
- Find the question bank starting on page 18.



#### Communicate Goals and Next Steps

- When inviting teachers to participate, ensure you include the reason for the session and how the information will be used. Go to page 42 for templates.
- Make sure facilitators reiterate the reasoning and next steps during the session. Go to page 12 for scripting.



EAB'S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Creating a Qualitative Input Conversation Agenda

This tool will help districts repurpose existing teacher meetings/committees to collect qualitative input and/or to conduct a series of formal qualitative input sessions. This tool includes guidance on how to structure these sessions.

---

TOOL

# Morale Conversations Agenda Builder

Use the below guidance to build an agenda for 30-60-minute sessions to collect qualitative input from teachers.

1

## Introduction

- ▶ **Share with participants why they are here and how this information will be used**
  - Refer to pages 13-14 for full introductory scripting for facilitators.

2

## Introductions and Ice Breaker

- ▶ **Ask participants to introduce themselves and share: name, role, and how long they've been at the district.**
- ▶ **Other Icebreaker Questions**

If you have a focus group longer than 30 minutes, selecting one additional icebreaker element can be a good use of time to build rapport with the group and get them into the mindset of the session's topic. Examples:

  - *Please share one word that comes to mind when you think about your experience as a teacher in the district: these words can be positive, negative, or neutral.*
  - *Please share one win you've had with a student recently that you found motivating.*
  - *Please share one thing you are hoping to learn from your colleagues during this session.*

3

## Core questions

- ▶ **Core Questions Will Vary Based on Goal/Timing of Your Session**
  - If survey information is collected, use sessions to collect more details on problem areas that the survey uncovered. If the survey is not completed, the sessions can be used more generally to surface problem areas.
- ▶ *Identify main threats to low morale and collect general input*
  - This approach is most useful if morale survey data has not been collected or analyzed.
  - Use a variety of questions to help identify problem areas and root causes of low morale.
  - See pages X for question bank. Select a variety of questions across threat areas.

*(Core questions continued next page)*

## Morale Conversations Agenda Builder (cont.)

Use the below guidance to build an agenda for 30-60-minute sessions with teachers to collect qualitative input.

3

### Core questions (continued)

- ▶ *Collect details on specific threat areas and survey questions*
  - If morale survey data has been collected, teacher conversations can be more targeted to gain details about problem areas surfaced by the survey data to better get to the root of the problem.
  - Limit your focus on 2-4 of the biggest problem areas or questions surfaced by the survey.
  - Select 1-2 questions to ask about each problem area during the session.
  - See page 18 for the question bank.

4

### Additional Comments

- ▶ **Time permitting, ask participants if there's anything else they'd like to share**
  - Provides an opportunity to uncover additional detail leadership the facilitator might have overlooked. This also provides an opportunity to show participants that the conversation is focused on supporting their needs and gives them some ownership over the conversation.

5

### Closing / Wrap Up

- ▶ **Emphasize how the information will be used and next steps**
  - See full scripting on page 15.



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Meeting Facilitation Scripts

This tool will help districts who plan to repurpose existing teacher meetings/committees to collect qualitative input and/or to conduct formal qualitative input sessions. The tool includes detailed scripting leaders can copy and paste for facilitators to use.

TOOL

## Morale Conversations Introduction Scripting

Component of the Introduction	Scripting
<i>Express gratitude for participation</i>	Thank you, everyone for being here today for our conversation. We know your time is limited, and we so appreciate you sharing it with us today.
<i>Highlight Purpose of focus group</i>	As mentioned in the invitation, the purpose of today is to learn more about your experiences as a teacher. As you hopefully know, our district has recently invested in a systemic approach to addressing your work experiences and morale. We've recently launched a survey to collect initial feedback, and we'd like to use this time to get more details about your experiences working in the district—including the challenges.
<i>Introduction of facilitators</i>	My name and role is _____, and I will be guiding the conversation today. We also have _____ who is here to take notes. Please let either of us know if we can do anything to make this conversation or future conversations more comfortable or useful for you.
<i>Assure confidentiality and creating a 'safe space'</i>	I want to clarify the strategies we will use to protect your confidentiality and anonymity. When we summarize today's results, we will remove as much identifying information as possible. While we might use quotes, we will never identify who provided the quote. Let me know if anyone has questions, but I do encourage you to share as much as you feel comfortable. We are interested in understanding your true experiences, so we can work together to improve and maximize them.

## Introduction Scripting (continued)

Component of the Introduction	Scripting
<i>Address Incentives (if applicable)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you haven't already, please help yourself to the refreshments provided today.</li> <li>• We do have some gift cards available to thank you for your participation—I'll distribute those at the end of the session.</li> <li>• Remember to report your participation to your principal, so they can provide you with a time bank incentive</li> </ul>
<i>Ground Rules</i>	<p>We do have a relatively full house today—so I'll note now that I might need to limit comments and direct us to move along in our agenda. I want to ensure we address all our focus areas for today and give all participants an opportunity to speak. Also, if we can work together to make sure only one person is talking at time, that would be much appreciated!</p>
<i>Opportunity for initial questions</i>	<p>Does anyone have any questions on the context of this conversation or the logistics before we get started?</p>

# Closing Scripting

---

Component of the Closing	Scripting
<i>Give participants final opportunity to ask questions</i>	Those are all of the questions I have for you today. Does anyone have any last questions for me? Or want to bring up anything I missed?
<i>Thank everyone</i>	Again, I'd like to thank everyone for participating in today's conversation.
<i>Assure participants comments will be shared, but anonymously</i>	I want to assure you that your comments will remain anonymous. I will protect your anonymity by summarizing key takeaways without names or attribution to any specific comments when sharing with others.
<i>Emphasize next steps and how information will be used</i>	Your comments have been invaluable and will help us better understand the survey information we've collected and better commit to our investment in you. We will be in touch in the coming weeks on how we plan to use this information the next steps in this process.



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Tips for Writing Strong Qualitative Input Questions

This tool will help districts design strong questions to ask teachers regardless of how they collect qualitative input.

---

TOOL

## Tips for Writing Strong Qualitative Input Questions

---

Below are suggestions for writing strong questions to use during qualitative input sessions with teachers. The purpose of any question should be to gain details to diagnose the causes of low morale.

### General Tips for Writing Strong Questions



#### Ask simple questions, one at a time

- *Complex question:* Can you walk me through your tasks in a typical workday and tell me which parts of your workload you think take too much time?
- *Suggested Improvement:* Can you walk me through your tasks in a typical workday?



#### Avoid jargon-rich questions

- *Jargon question:* Do you have the appropriate materials and resources to execute on PLCs and restorative justice programming with fidelity?
- *Suggested improvement:* What materials do you find yourself needing to do your job well that the district does not provide you with?



#### Minimize closed or yes/no questions

- *Closed question:* Do your colleagues treat you fairly?
- *Suggested improvement:* Without using names, can you describe an experience where a colleague treated you or someone you know unfairly?



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Qualitative Input Question Bank

This tool will help districts design strong questions to ask teachers regardless of how they collect qualitative input. Districts will scale the number of questions they ask depending on the setting(s) in which they choose to collect qualitative input.

TOOL

## Specific Diagnostic Follow Up Questions Bank

The below questions are options to gain details and clarity on each of the EAB morale diagnostic questions. These questions can be used if districts have specific follow up questions based on survey responses. Be sure to provide context as to why you are focusing on these specific questions. Share with teachers that you are following up on survey results and these are areas that the district scored lower on, so you are looking to get additional details to inform next steps. These questions are great as follow up to the questions found on page 25.



### Threat Area: Personal Safety and Belonging

Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers do not feel safe at school.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you hear 'school safety', what do you think about?</li> <li>• What makes teachers (or you) feel unsafe at school?</li> <li>• Describe an experience where you felt unsafe at school.</li> <li>• Who or what most often causes feelings of unsafety?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that the benefits provided by the district meet their needs.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When you think of your benefits as a teacher, can you describe what you think of most?</li> <li>• Which benefits do you receive as a teacher are most important to you?</li> <li>• Which benefits are most inadequate?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that someone seems to care about them at school.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What has made you feel supported and cared for in the past by colleagues?</li> <li>• Can you explain if you get this support and care frequently?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they are treated fairly by their colleagues.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you collaborate with colleagues?</li> <li>• Can you explain if you and your colleagues feel like you can rely on each other?</li> <li>• Without using names, can you describe an experience where a colleague treated you or someone you know unfairly?</li> </ul>

## Specific Diagnostic Follow Up Questions Bank (cont.)

The below questions are options to gain details and clarity on each of the EAB morale diagnostic questions in the **'Time and Resources'** threat area.



### Threat Area: Time and Resources

Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they have the materials and resources to do their jobs well.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What materials do you find yourself needing that your school does not provide you with?</li> <li>• What staffing resources are missing that would help you perform better at your job (e.g., substitute teachers, classroom aides)?</li> <li>• Describe an experience where you didn't have the right materials to do your job. What happened?</li> <li>• Describe a time where there were not the right staff available for you to do your job. What happened?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they have a manageable workload most days.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could you walk us through a typical day?</li> <li>• What tasks are you doing in an average day and how long do they take?</li> <li>• What parts of your workload do you think take unnecessary time?</li> <li>• How many hours a week on average do you spend completing work outside of the school day?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they have training and skills needed to do their best at work.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What professional development experiences have been most useful to you? (<i>In follow up: Can you explain why?</i>)</li> <li>• Which have been least useful? (<i>In follow up: Can you explain why?</i>)</li> <li>• Describe an experience that you received training or professional development that you could not translate into the classroom.</li> <li>• What teaching or job skills do you think district teachers would benefit from more support?</li> </ul>

# Specific Diagnostic Follow Up Questions Bank (cont.)

The below questions are options to gain details and clarity on each of the EAB morale diagnostic questions in the '**Leadership Trust and Values Alignment**' threat area.



## Threat Area: Leadership Trust and Values Alignment

Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they understand how their daily work contributes to their school district's mission.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you describe the school district's mission?</li> <li>• Can you explain how that mission connects to your daily work?</li> <li>• Are there tasks you spend time on consistently that misalign with your understanding of the school district's mission?</li> <li>• Do you think that misalignment stems from a shortcoming of the mission?</li> <li>• Do you think that misalignment stems from a shortcoming of the tasks that are expected of you?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that the actions of district leadership reflect the district's mission and values.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How would you describe the district's mission and values?</li> <li>• How often are you notified of district leadership's actions and decisions?</li> <li>• Describe an action or decision that district leadership made that you <i>did</i> understand (whether or not you agreed with it).</li> <li>• Describe an action or decision that district leadership made that you <i>did not</i> understand (whether or not you agreed with it).</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they are treated fairly by district leaders.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you collaborate with district leaders?</li> <li>• Do you feel like you can rely on district leadership for support?</li> <li>• Without using names, can you describe an experience where a district leader treated you or someone you know fairly?</li> <li>• Without using names, can you describe an experience where a district leader treated you or someone you know unfairly?</li> <li>• What could that the district leader have done instead?</li> </ul>

# Specific Diagnostic Follow Up Questions Bank

## (cont.)

The below questions are options to gain details and clarity on each of the EAB morale diagnostic questions in the '**Ownership and Input**' threat area.



### Threat Area: Ownership and Input

Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they have ownership and control over their teaching practice and classroom.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What parts of your teaching practice do you feel you have most control over?</li> <li>• What parts of your teaching practice do you feel like you have the least control over?</li> <li>• Who makes decisions over your teaching practice and your classroom?</li> <li>• Describe a time when you felt like you had ownership and autonomy over your classroom.</li> <li>• Describe a time when you felt like you did not have ownership and autonomy over your classroom.</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they're opinions are heard and valued by district leaders.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What opportunities have you had to share your opinions and input with district leadership?</li> <li>• Can you explain a time when you felt your voice was heard by district leaders?</li> <li>• Can you describe a time when you felt your voice was not heard by district leaders?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that in their current role, they get to do what they do best every day.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a teacher, what do you feel you do best at?</li> <li>• Do you feel like you can use that skill or talent regularly?</li> <li>• What prevents you from feeling like you have the opportunity to do your best work?</li> <li>• What helps you feel like you are doing your best work?</li> </ul>

# Specific Diagnostic Follow Up Questions Bank

## (cont.)

The below questions are options to gain details and clarity on each of the EAB morale diagnostic questions in the '**Recognition and Value**' threat area.



### Threat Area: Recognition and Value

Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they are recognized for excellent work by district leadership.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In what ways does district leadership recognize excellent teacher work?</li> <li>• Describe a time when district leadership recognized when you did excellent work as a teacher.</li> <li>• Describe a time when you think district leadership missed an opportunity to recognize excellent work by yourself or your colleague(s).</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they feel valued for their work as a teacher.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What makes you feel valued as a teacher?</li> <li>• What makes you feel not valued as a teacher?</li> <li>• Describe an experience that made you feel valued as a teacher.</li> <li>• Describe an experience that made you feel de-valued as a teacher.</li> <li>• What groups of people make you feel most valued?</li> <li>• What groups make you feel valued least?</li> <li>• Are there ways you can feel valued as a teacher to compensate for the detractors to that value?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that they have received recognition for doing their job well (weekly).</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long ago was the last time you received recognition for doing your job well?</li> <li>• Who most often gives you recognition when you receive it?</li> <li>• Describe a time you received recognition that was meaningful.</li> <li>• Describe a time that you received recognition or appreciation that was less (or not very) meaningful.</li> </ul>

# Specific Diagnostic Follow Up Questions Bank

## (cont.)

The below questions are options to gain details and clarity on each of the EAB morale diagnostic questions in the '**Professional Growth**' threat area.



### Threat Area: Professional Growth

Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that the district has provided opportunities to learn and grow as a teacher within the last year.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What opportunities have you had to improve your teaching practice across this past school year?</li> <li>• Which of these opportunities have been most valuable to you?</li> <li>• Can you share why those opportunities have been valuable?</li> <li>• Which of these opportunities have been most the least valuable to you?</li> <li>• Can you share why those opportunities have been least valuable?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that their direct supervisor supports their career aspirations and goals.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When is the last time you had a conversation with your direct supervisor (or someone else in the district) about your career goals?</li> <li>• Who do you most often have these conversations with?</li> <li>• When you have these conversations, can you explain what makes them helpful or not helpful?</li> <li>• When you have these conversations, how are you supported and encouraged to pursue these goals?</li> </ul>
Finding from survey question:	<b>Teachers disagree that there is a path forward for professional growth in their district.</b>
Follow up Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can you describe what you see as options of a professional path forward in your district?</li> <li>• Can you describe what a professional path forward could be if you remain in the classroom?</li> <li>• Can you describe what a professional path forward could be if you leave the classroom but remain in the district?</li> </ul>

## Qualitative Input Question Bank (cont.)

---

Included here are some more general ways to frame questions. These can serve as a general starting point to ask teachers questions about threat areas or survey questions. Be sure to provide context as to why you are focusing on these specific questions. Share with teachers that you are following up on survey results (or potential survey results) and these are areas that the district scored lower on, so you are looking to get additional details to inform next steps.

### Additional Questions for Specific Threat Areas, Survey Questions

---

- Why do you think [*threat area, survey questions*] surfaced as an issue in the district?
  - *Specific example:* Why do you think teachers responded to the survey that they feel unsafe at school?
- How is [*threat area, survey questions*] different now than it was in the past?
  - *Specific example:* How is feeling safe at school feel different that it did in the past?
  - *Follow up:* What changed?
- What has the district done to try and address [*threat area, survey questions*] in the past?
  - *Specific example:* What has the district done to try and address school safety in the past?
- What has worked to address [*threat area, survey questions*] in the past?
  - *Specific example:* What has worked to address school safety in the past?
  - *Follow up:* What hasn't worked?
- Can you tell me more about why you think [*idea*] did or didn't work?



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Qualitative Input Facilitation Tips

This tool will help facilitators of repurposed existing teacher meetings/committees to collect qualitative input and/or those conducting formal qualitative input sessions.

---

TOOL

## Facilitator Tips

Use the following tips and phrases to help facilitate productive conversations about the causes of low teacher morale.



### Tip #1 Be Direct to Ensure Every Voice Is Heard

The best facilitators manage conversations so that one or a few participants don't dominate the conversation, and that the conversation stays on topic. The facilitator should aim to find balance between involving quiet or inactive participants without discouraging more talkative participants.

#### Direct Phrases to Balance the Conversation

- "Thank you, [name], for sharing that. I'd love to hear from others on that topic as well."
- Thanks, [name] for sharing that. I'd like to hear how others feel on that topic. [Other name], what were your experiences with that?"
- "It's wonderful that you have so much to share about [the topic] and if we have time later, we can discuss it more fully. Right now, I'd like to get back to [the original question]."



### Tip #2 Prompt Additional Conversation Without Interfering

While facilitators should encourage conversation and interrupt as little as possible, probing for additional details or alternative points of view is encouraged.

#### Probe Type

- Clarify a response
- Elicit additional details
- Encourage alternative point of views

#### Example Questions

- "Can you say more about that..."; "Can you share an example..."
- "What experiences have made you feel that way?"; "Is there more you'd like to share?" or "Is there more you'd be willing to share?"
- "Has anyone had a different experience?"; "Does anyone see it differently?"; "What about other points of view?"

## Facilitator Tips (cont.)

Use the following tips and phrases to help facilitate more productive conversations aimed to further understand the causes of low morale.



### Tip #3 Remain Neutral

#### Non-Neutral Phrases to Avoid

- "Correct"
- "Excellent"
- "I can't believe it"
- "That's impossible!"
- "Are you sure it happened that way?"

#### Exchange with More Neutral Phrases

- "Thank you" or "Thank you for sharing"
- "Ok"
- "Go ahead"
- "Would anyone else like to share their experience?"
- "That's helpful, thanks"
- "Tell me more"



### Tip #4 Employ Quick Strategies If Conversation Is Slow

Facilitators should be comfortable with some silence. However, if the conversation is too quiet, they can employ easy strategies to encourage participants to share.

#### Strategies to Encourage More Conversation

- *Silently Count to 10:* The facilitator should silently count to 10 to give participants an opportunity to collect their thoughts.
- *Round Robin:* The facilitator asks each participant to take a turn to share their specific thoughts on each question in the script.
- *Write-then-Share:* The facilitator poses a question and encourages participants to jot down their thoughts. Then, encourages participants to share what they've written.
- *Paired Sharing:* Facilitator first ask participants to share their thoughts on a particular item with just one other person. After, they are encouraged to share those thoughts with the rest of the group. This works particularly well with more sensitive topics, because participants get a chance to 'feel out' another's reaction. Keep in mind, this method is not the most time-efficient technique.



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Notetaking and Summary Guides for Qualitative Input

This tool will help districts document and synthesize qualitative information from teachers regardless of how they collect qualitative input. Districts will scale the amount of information documented depending on the setting(s) in which they choose to collect qualitative input.

TOOL

# Live Notetaking Guide

---

## **Include Goal of Session:**

---

- The facilitator and notetaker should clarify what the goal of this session (i.e., identify more detail to diagnose causes of low morale, elevate teacher voice) is in advance.

## **Provide Details of the Session:**

---

- The notetaker should record the details of this session including the facilitator, notetaker, total number of participants, location, date and time, and session length.

## **Live Notetaking Tips:**

---

- Facilitators should share the question they plan to ask with notetakers ahead of the meeting, and notetakers should list those questions on their note form in advance. However, they should also leave notetaking space when the conversation goes 'off-script' to probe for more information, etc.
- Notetakers can also add notes about the conversation based on observed body language (e.g., eye rolling) and tone.
- Facilitators and notetakers should agree on notetaking preferences in advance. Things to consider:
  - Will there be a recording the notetaker can revisit for details? (if so, ensure participants are aware and notetaker actually has time to listen in follow up)
  - Is the goal of these notes as best a transcription as possible?
  - Or is the goal to just highlight key takeaways live and note down the essentials of the conversation?
  - How will the notetaker ensure anonymity of participants?

# Qualitative Input Summary Guide

---

**Note:** The facilitator and notetaker should take 5-10 minutes to debrief and agree on the key takeaways from the session and discuss what could be improved for future sessions to make them more productive.

## **Include Overall Key Takeaways:**

---

- The goal is to highlight the 3-5 biggest takeaways from this session.
- Focus on root-cause problems of morale that teachers highlighted or moments when teachers pointed out a problem that was unexpected.
- The main point of each takeaway should be summarized in one, bolded sentence, with 2-3 supporting sentences to add additional information.
- Keep this short and concise.

## **Summarize Key Findings Per Question:**

---

- This includes an overall summary of each question in the conversation to give readers/district leaders an understanding of what was discussed for each question asked.
- Keep the summary for each question concise—1-2 sentences each.
- Supplement with specific examples, stories, or paraphrased quotes from participants when useful.

## **Highlight Any Red Flags:**

---

- This should be reserved for major problem areas or hostility that may have come up during the conversation. This section will likely be blank/absent for most sessions.
- Use this section to alert the reader/district leader of any extreme emotional context in the room and/or if direct follow up might be necessary (with sensitivity towards anonymity).



EAB'S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Prosper ISD Stay Interview Case Study

This tool will help districts plan and conduct stay interviews with teachers. It includes an overview of Prosper ISD's stay interview strategy including the questions they use during these conversations.

---

TOOL

# Prosper ISD Stay Interview Case Study

Use the below case study from Prosper Independent School District (ISD) in Texas to inform your district's approach to conducting stay interviews.

## Details of Prosper ISD's Stay Interviews



### Timing

- Proactive, 30-minute conversations with teachers who have not shared they are leaving the district.
- Prosper ISD conducts interviews throughout the school year, often during teachers' prep time in teachers' classrooms.



### Frequency

- Prosper ISD aims to conduct 3-4 interviews per elementary campus annually;
- 8-10 per middle and high campus each year.



### Key Roles

- The Director of HR conducts all stay interviews at Prosper ISD;
- The interviewer then organizes the notes and key takeaways to share with district leaders.



### Communicate Goals and Next Steps

- Prosper ISD shares key takeaways from the conversations with district leaders to help diagnose the causes of low morale.
- The interviewer also prioritizes following up with teachers on any specific requests or issues that came up during the conversation, even if the district is not able to respond to it at that point in time.
- Teachers always appreciate the follow up even if the answer to their requests is 'no for now'.

“I know that it's working because these teachers stay in touch with me—they continue to share their thoughts, requests, and feedback with me after the interview has ended. And teachers I haven't interviewed before continue to be enthusiastic to speak with me.”

**Bernie Gerace**

Director HR, Prosper Independent School District

Sources: Fahrenheit Advisors, [Stay Interview Improve Retention](#), October 2020; Finnegan, Richard, [How to Conduct Stay Interviews: 5 Key Questions](#), SHRM, 2018; Finnegan, Richard, [The Power of Stay Interviews](#), 2013; Gerace, Bernadette, Director of HR, [Prosper Independent School District](#), Texas; Work Institute, [Gathering the Data: Stay Interviews](#); EAB interviews and analysis.

## Prosper ISD Stay Interview Case Study (cont.)

---

Use the below questions from Prosper ISD in Texas to inform your district's approach to conducting stay interviews.



### Prosper ISD Stay Interview Questions

These are questions Prosper ISD uses and can serve as a starting point for districts. Stay interviews are also a good opportunity to incorporate questions from the question bank (pages 18-25) to get morale details on threat areas and survey follow up. Prosper ISD spends more time on different questions, depending on the teachers' experience. They allow the teacher to guide these conversations as much as possible.

#### ***Positive Stay Factors***

---

- What causes you to enjoy the teaching role?
- What reasons do you give others for liking your job?
- Do you feel like you are doing the best work of your life?
- What brought you to this district and what keeps you here?

#### ***Negative Experiences, Feedback***

---

- Is there an experience you can describe that you've had in school that has negatively impacted you?
- When was the last time you thought about leaving this school and what prompted you to think about leaving?



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Creating a Qualitative Input Collection Plan

Use the following pages (36-44) to plan out the timeline, owners, and details to collect qualitative input about the causes of low morale.

---

PART II



EAB'S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale

# Qualitative Input Collection Planning

This tool will be used by all participating districts during session #2. It is a continuation of the planning document districts used in the kickoff session.

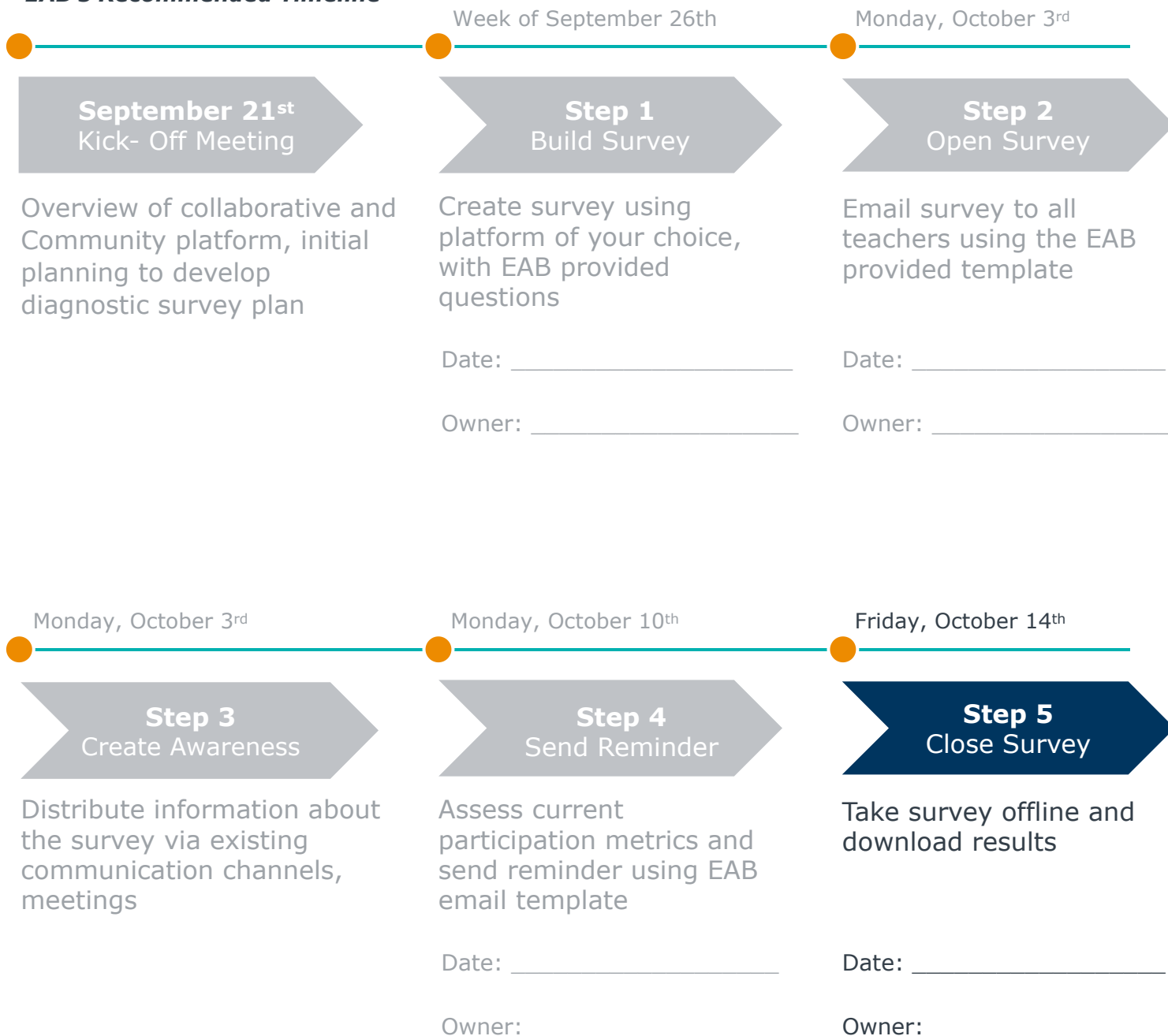
---

TOOL

## Execute Survey

Steps 1-5 were covered in Session 1, and steps 1-4 should be nearly completed.

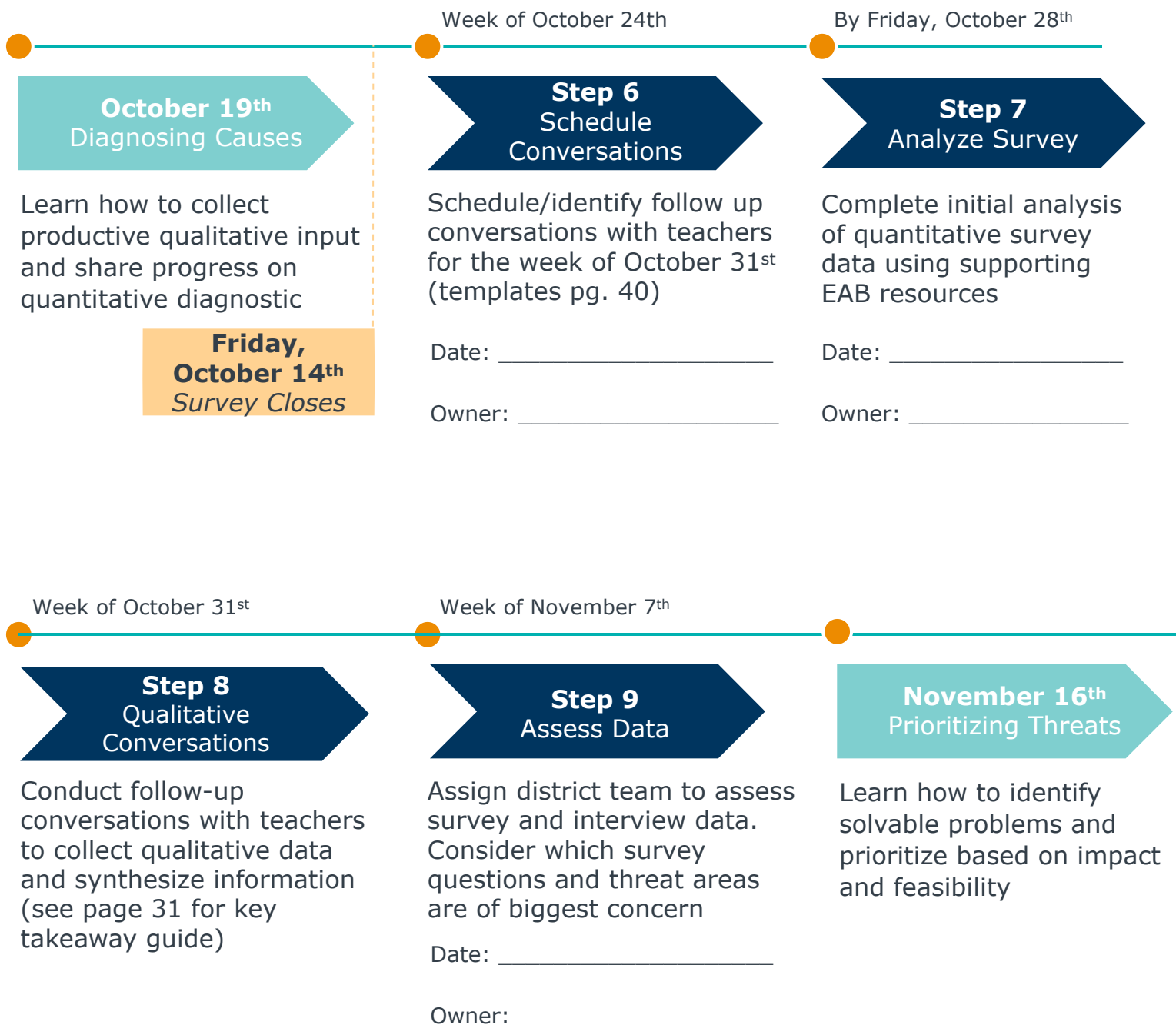
### EAB's Recommended Timeline



## Analyze Results and Create Plan

Steps 6-9 are the focus today in Session 2.

### EAB's Recommended Timeline (cont.)



## Communicate Next Steps and Co-design Solutions

Steps 10-13 will be covered in Session 3, but we recommend beginning to think about them concurrently with steps 6-9.

### ***EAB's Recommended Timeline (cont.)***



## Detail Planning for Steps #6–7

Use this worksheet to identify opportunities for gathering qualitative data from teachers, and to start assessing all of the information gathered.

### Step #6: Schedule / Identify Conversation Opportunities (see pg. 6 for ideas)

Which existing meetings could be used for asking teachers morale questions?	Will we also schedule group teacher interviews solely to discuss morale? If so, who will run those meetings?	How do I ensure that teachers feel that their answers will be valued, and encourage them to share honest feedback?

### Step #7: Analyze Survey

What tools and/or skills does the designated data analyzer have or need to do this well?	What priorities and directions should I give the owner of data analysis (reference EAB's excel addendum for guidance)?

## Part 2: Detail Planning for Steps #8–9

---

### Step #8: Conduct Qualitative Conversations

How will our survey data inform what questions we ask?	What do facilitators (and notetakers) of these conversations need to be successful?	How will we track, collect, and organize this information?

### Step #9: Assess Data

What trends do we expect to see across the survey data and the additional information from qualitative conversations?	What preparatory work do I need to assign those who will participate in analysis, decision-making, and prioritization conversations?



EAB' S Collaborative to Improve Teacher  
Morale  
Session #2

# Communication Templates

Use the following templates to invite teachers to qualitative input conversations about morale and give them context on the sessions.

---

WORKSHEET

## Invite Teachers to Qualitative Input Sessions

---

Below are sample messages for inviting teachers to take part in morale conversations.

### ***Advance notice that principal will ask morale questions during a faculty meeting:***

#### **Email from Principal:**

**SUBJECT:** Planning to ask questions about your teacher experience at next faculty meeting

**EMAIL:**

Hi all,

I wanted to touch base to share that during our next faculty meeting, I plan to take 5-10 minutes of the agenda to focus on some questions related to the teacher survey we recently launched. This will be an opportunity for you to share some feedback on your experience as a teacher in our district. No need to prepare anything!

As you may be aware, our partner research firm, EAB, is guiding us through a process of better understanding and addressing the challenges you're facing. Having these conversations is part of this process. It is invaluable to hear your voices to be effective, so we wanted to set aside time to listen. We are looking forward to the conversation!

Best,

Principal Name

---

### ***Incorporating the conversation into an existing meeting:***

#### **Email from Facilitator:**

**SUBJECT:** Upcoming [name of typical meeting] will be focused on morale

**EMAIL:**

Hi all,

I'm looking forward to our next [name of] meeting on [date].

I wanted to share ahead of time that we will be pausing our typical agenda to focus on some questions related to the teacher survey we recently launched. During this meeting, we will spend \_\_\_\_ minutes inviting you to share feedback on your experience as a teacher in our district. No need to prepare anything!

As you may be aware, our partner research firm, EAB, is guiding us through a process of better understanding and addressing the challenges you're facing. Having these conversations is part of this process. It is invaluable to hear your voices to be effective, so we wanted to set aside time to listen.

We are looking forward to the conversation!

Best,

Facilitator Name

## Invite Teachers to Qualitative Input Sessions

---

### ***Inviting teachers to take part in a morale-focused qualitative input session:***

#### **Email from district leader**

##### **SUBJECT:**

##### **EMAIL:**

Dear teachers,

I wanted to invite you to take part in a series of conversations we plan to have with teachers across the district to invite you to share feedback on your experience as a teacher in our district. These conversations are related to the survey we recently launched about your experiences.

As you may be aware, our partner research firm, EAB is guiding our district leadership team through a process to better understand our teacher's needs and systematically address the challenges you're facing. It is crucial that we hear from as many voices as possible and want to create a space for you all to come openly share. No need to prepare anything!

If you are interested, these meetings will be held [insert time, date, and place options]. Each will be led by [facilitator name]. Thank you in advance for taking the time to take part in this process.

Best,

District leader name

---

### ***Inviting teachers to take part in stay interview:***

#### **Email from district leader who will conduct stay interview**

**SUBJECT:** Willing to talk with me about your experience as a teacher?

##### **EMAIL:**

Hi [NAME],

I wanted to invite you to take part in a 30-minute conversation with me to share feedback on your experience as a teacher in our district. These conversations are related to the survey we recently launched about your experiences.

As you may be aware, our partner research firm, EAB is guiding our district leadership team through a process to better understand our teacher's needs and systematically address the challenges you're facing. It is crucial that we hear from as many voices as possible and want to create a space for you to share about your experiences with me. No need to prepare anything!

If you are willing, please let me know, and we can find a time for me to come to your classroom and chat. I'd come with a few specific questions, but I really want to use it as an opportunity to hear about what's most important to you. Thank you in advance your consideration in taking part.

Best,

District leader name



Washington DC | Richmond | Birmingham | Minneapolis

202-747-1000 | [eab.com](https://eab.com)

 @eab  @eab\_  @WeAreEAB  @eab.life

## ABOUT EAB

At EAB, our mission is to make education smarter and our communities stronger. We work with thousands of institutions to drive transformative change through data-driven insights and best-in-class capabilities. From kindergarten to college to career, EAB partners with leaders and practitioners to accelerate progress and drive results across five major areas: enrollment, student success, institutional strategy, data analytics, and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). We work with each partner differently, tailoring our portfolio of research, technology, and marketing and enrollment solutions to meet the unique needs of every leadership team, as well as the students and employees they serve. Learn more at [eab.com](https://eab.com).