

1:04:22—17:02

Randi Weingarten

Actually what the union did—what our union did—you both know this, is that we actually spent some time in the last couple of years saying, “Ok how do we do this right?” And so we saw that you can’t just take—we used to actually do what Rick suggested, finger-point at administrators. Say, “you’re wrong.” Say, “you haven’t done what you need to do.” And actually we stopped that, and what we started doing instead was saying, let’s figure out what is the right way to do this. And, number one, we know that confidence matters. Any school teacher you talk to will tell you that they want teachers teaching side-by-side with them who know their stuff and know how to engage kids, and love kids.

And so, the first iteration that our union tried in terms of getting at this was through a peer review process. And some school districts did it, and some school districts didn’t. The second iteration in this generation that we’ve tried to do is that we said in January of 2010, after a lot of work with our leaders, and looking at evaluation systems, is that this drive-by evaluation of an administrator sitting in your classroom for twenty minutes once a year, twice a year, doesn’t work. But also the test score evaluation doesn’t work either. And particularly given that this generation of test scores don’t actually align to what kids need to know and be able to do.

Having said that we need to have evaluations that both measure what teachers are doing in a classroom, how they engage, but also whether or not kids have learned. What am I teaching, and whether or not kids have learned it. And so we’ve actually tried to come up with a framework that does that. That includes, to some extent—you all know this, because this is the only thing that got any attention—that includes student learning and test scores, but also includes practice. And there are about a hundred districts, including, you know, Pittsburgh and Hillsborough and others, that use this kind of evaluation system. It’s very different than IMPACT in two respects: number one, the system we’re talking about is not simply about sorting, it is primarily about supporting teachers to grow their craft, and number two, it is something that was done with teachers, not to teachers.

19:20—10:21

Rick Hess

Ok, two points. One, I think the issue here is like the one we raised before, that when it comes to evaluation as a formative tool, absolutely, I think there’s a hugely constructive role for dealing teachers in it. And I think systems in which how, you know, especially using today’s relatively crude value-added metrics, incorporating that without building these systems so that they rest on that is smart and healthy. But, I think just like we talked about before, there also things that teachers are going to resist. I think, when we start talking about using those, even thought-fully constructed, systems to terminate teachers, the nature of a union is that it doesn’t represent the good teachers, it’s legal responsibility is to represent all teachers who are members. And it is simply difficult to convince, I think, all teachers that—to be enthusiastic about removing low performers. So I think that there is going to be much more room for collaboration on the formative side of it, than on the removal side.”