

# Scanning Decision Makers and Influencers

It is crucial to identify stakeholders that can help you leverage the scope of work of your TQI. This scanning tool will help you gather facts and uncover perceptions about groups that can either influence or wield direct power vis-à-vis your TQI.

Use the checklist to generate discussion; record responses and reflections as indicated. The discussion will be richer—and points of agreement/disagreement more likely to emerge—if participants have time to reflect on the issues prior to an exploration of these questions.

- Who:** The TQI team  
**Time to complete:** 2 hours  
**Resources needed:**
- Quiet place to work
  - Flipcharts and markers, or paper and pens

DECISION MAKERS	THINGS TO CONSIDER	
	FACTS	PERCEPTIONS
<b>District school board</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How many members are on the board?</li> <li>■ How are board members selected?</li> <li>■ When will new elections or appointments take place?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What has been the board’s position on reforms related to teacher quality? How powerful is the board?</li> <li>■ Who on the board might be most approachable regarding the TQI?</li> <li>■ How would you characterize the board’s relationship with the superintendent? With the public?</li> <li>■ How would you characterize the relationship between the board and other components of the system such as schools, unions?</li> <li>■ Are there any other factors—leadership styles, current political environment—that might influence the board’s actions on teacher quality?</li> <li>■ What is our relationship with the school board?</li> </ul>
<b>Superintendent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How is the superintendent selected?</li> <li>■ How long has the incumbent held the position?</li> <li>■ What are the superintendent’s past actions on teacher quality issues?</li> <li>■ Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How long is the superintendent expected to remain in the position?</li> <li>■ How powerful is the superintendent?</li> <li>■ What kind of support does the superintendent have from the school board? From the central office? From the schools? From the union? From the public?</li> <li>■ What has been the superintendent’s position on teacher quality reforms? On education reform in general?</li> </ul>

DECISION MAKERS	THINGS TO CONSIDER	
	FACTS	PERCEPTIONS
<b>Superintendent</b> (continued)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there external circumstances—desire for more recognition, leadership style—that might influence the superintendent's actions on teacher quality?</li> <li>What is our relationship with the superintendent?</li> </ul>
<b>Teachers unions</b> <i>Note: Unions can be decision makers or influencers depending on the community and the issue.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Which teachers union is active in our community?</li> <li>What percentage of teachers in the community belong to the union?</li> <li>Who are the union leaders in this community?</li> <li>Other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How powerful is the teachers union in this community?</li> <li>What is the union's position on teacher quality reforms?</li> <li>What is the union's relationship with the district?</li> <li>Are there any factors—recent contract talks, changes in union leadership—that might influence the union's actions regarding a TQI?</li> <li>What is our relationship with the union?</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher preparation programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From which colleges/universities do the greatest percentage of our community's teachers graduate?</li> <li>What percentage of our teachers participate in graduate programs or other educational opportunities at local colleges/universities?</li> <li>Are local teacher preparation programs a part of the operations of the school district, either through mentoring or supervisory activities of new teachers?</li> <li>Are the teacher preparation programs certified according to NCATE or INTASC standards?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are teacher preparation programs undergoing reforms that would impact a TQI?</li> <li>What is our relationship with the local colleges/universities that provide teacher preparation programs?</li> </ul>
<b>Local/state government</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What roles do the mayor and city council play in decisions related to teacher quality?</li> <li>What role does the governor play in decisions related to teacher quality?</li> <li>Which district TQ policies are determined by state legislation/policies?</li> <li>Who are our community representatives in the state legislature?</li> <li>Who sits on the education committee/subcommittees in the state legislature?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What priority does the mayor/city council place on teacher quality?</li> <li>What priority does the governor place on teacher quality?</li> <li>How influential are our representatives in the state legislature?</li> <li>How active/influential are the education committee/subcommittees in the state legislature?</li> <li>How would you characterize the relationships between the mayor, city council, and school board? Between the state superintendent and the governor/state legislature? Between the district and the city/state government?</li> <li>What are our relationships with local/state government officials?</li> </ul>

INFLUENCERS	THINGS TO CONSIDER	
	FACTS	PERCEPTIONS
<b>Community groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Are there any organizations or websites that list the various community groups/nonprofits in the region?</li> <li>■ Which community groups have previously or are currently working on teacher quality issues?</li> <li>■ Which community groups are particularly active in the community? In certain segments of the community?</li> <li>■ With which community groups—civic organizations, grassroots groups, places of worship—have we formed partnerships with in the past? Are there any groups that we would particularly like/not like to work with?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Which community groups would add needed strength to our TQI?</li> <li>■ Which community groups have the necessary capacity and organization to serve as effective partners in a TQI?</li> <li>■ Which community groups are likely to be interested in working on teacher quality issues?</li> <li>■ What barriers might exist to forming a partnership with a specific group or a particular type of community group?</li> </ul>
<b>Parent groups/ community members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ What are the community demographics: race/ethnicity, English-speaking status, socioeconomic status?</li> <li>■ What percentage of the population are parents with children in public K–12 schools?</li> <li>■ In what venues—places of worship, community centers, government buildings—do community members tend to congregate for group discussions?</li> <li>■ What parent groups have we worked with in the past?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How active are parent groups in the schools?</li> <li>■ Who are the parent group leaders in local schools?</li> </ul>
<b>Media</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Which media sources are the most prominent/influential in the community? Which are the most influential in certain segments of the community?</li> <li>■ How much coverage have media sources given to teacher quality and/or education in the past?</li> <li>■ What contacts do we have at different media sources?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How objective are the local media sources in covering education issues?</li> </ul>
<b>Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Who are the prominent business leaders in the community?</li> <li>■ Who are the leaders of the local chamber of commerce?</li> <li>■ Who in the business community has publicly expressed interest in and taken action on education?</li> <li>■ Which business groups have we worked with in the past?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ How does the business community perceive the local school system?</li> </ul>