



Leading for Change: A Framework for Instructional Leadership

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Leadership Orientations Inventory

This inventory asks you to describe yourself as a manager and a leader. For each item, give the number "4" to the phrase that best describes you, "3" to the item that is next best, and on down to "1" for the item that is least like you.

1. My strongest skills are:
 - ___ a. Analytical skills
 - ___ b. Interpersonal skills
 - ___ c. Political skills
 - ___ d. Flair for drama

2. The best way to describe me is:
 - ___ a. Technical expert
 - ___ b. Good listener
 - ___ c. Skilled negotiator
 - ___ d. Inspirational leader

3. What has helped me the most to be successful is my ability to:
 - ___ a. Make good decisions
 - ___ b. Coach and develop people
 - ___ c. Build strong alliances and a power base
 - ___ d. Inspire and excite others

4. What people are most likely to notice about me is my:
 - ___ a. Attention to detail
 - ___ b. Concern for people
 - ___ c. Ability to succeed, in the face of conflict and opposition
 - ___ d. Charisma

5. My most important leadership trait is:
 - ___ a. Clear, logical thinking
 - ___ b. Caring and support for others
 - ___ c. Toughness and fortitude
 - ___ d. Imagination and creativity

6. I am best described as:
 - ___ a. An analyst
 - ___ b. A humanist
 - ___ c. A politician
 - ___ d. A visionary

Scoring:

___ ST

___ HR

___ PL

___ SY

Leadership Orientations Scoring

The Leadership Orientations instrument is keyed to four different conceptions of organizational leadership. Compute your scores as follows:

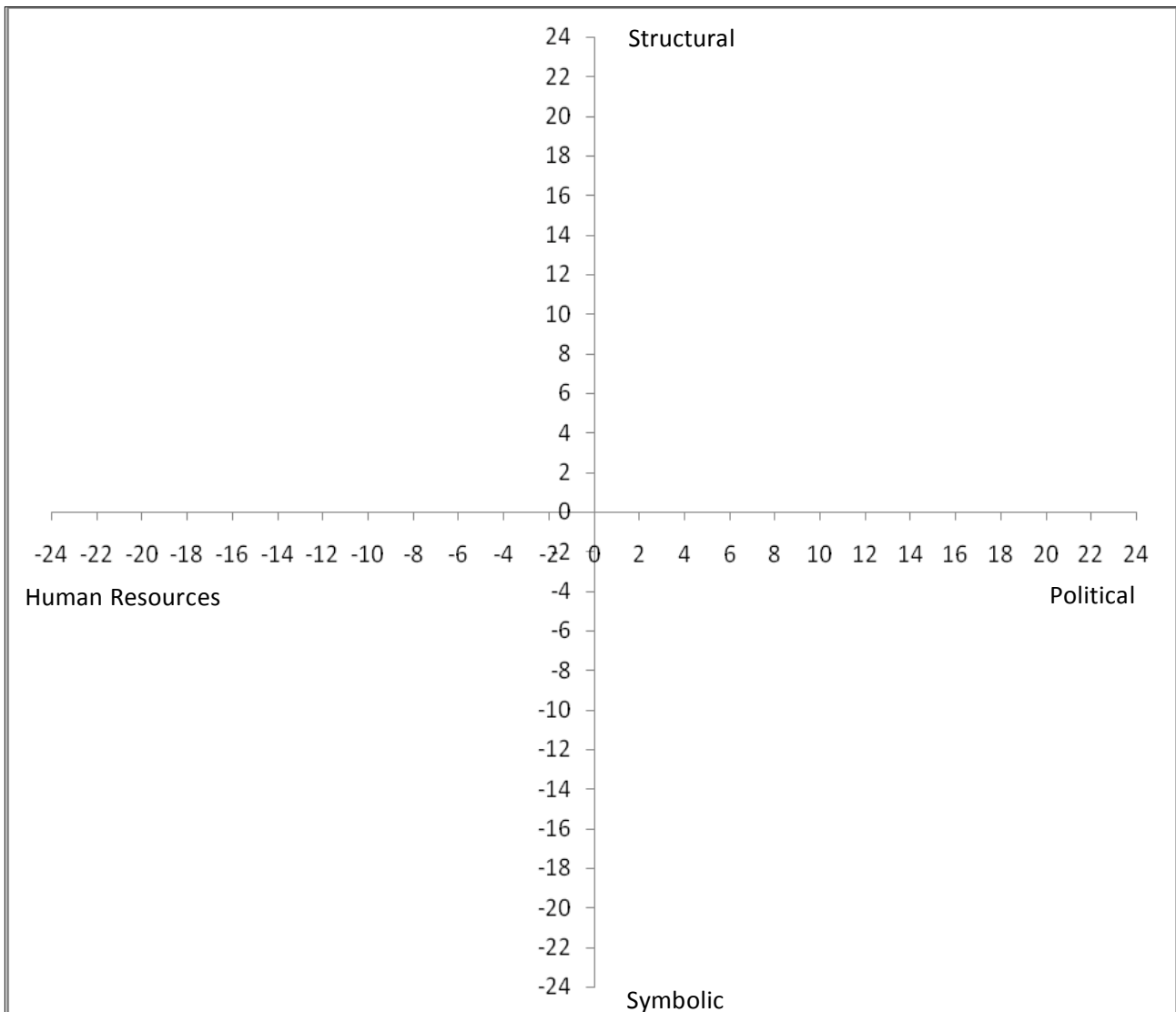
$$\text{Structural Leader (ST)} = 1a + 2a + 3a + 4a + 5a + 6a = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$\text{Human Resource Leader (HR)} = 1b + 2b + 3b + 4b + 5b + 6b = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$\text{Political Leader (PL)} = 1c + 2c + 3c + 4c + 5c + 6c = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

$$\text{Symbolic Leader (SY)} = 1d + 2d + 3d + 4d + 5d + 6d = \underline{\hspace{2cm}}$$

Plot each of your scores on the appropriate axis of the chart below. ST for Structural, HR for Human Resource, PL for Political, and SY for Symbolic. Then read the brief description of these leadership orientations.



Leadership Orientations

1. **Structural leaders** emphasize rationality, analysis, logic, facts, and data. They are likely to believe strongly in the importance of clear structure and well-developed management systems. A good leader is someone who thinks clearly, makes good decisions, has good analytic skills, and can design structure and systems that get the job done.
2. **Human resource leaders** emphasize the importance of people. They endorse the view that the central task of management is to develop a good fit between people and organizations. They believe in the importance of coaching, participation, motivation, teamwork, and good interpersonal relations. A good leader is a facilitator and participative manager who supports and empowers others.
3. **Political leaders** believe that managers and leaders live in a world of conflict and scarce resources. The central task of management is to mobilize the resources needed to advocate and fight for the unit's or the organization's goals and objectives. Political leaders emphasize the importance of building a power base: allies, networks, coalitions. A good leader is an advocate and negotiator who understands politics and is comfortable with conflict.
4. **Symbolic leaders** believe that the essential task of management is to provide vision and inspiration. They rely on personal charisma and a flair for drama to get people excited and committed to the organizational mission. A good leader is a prophet and visionary, who uses symbols, tells stories, and frames experience in ways that give people hope and meaning.

What is Instructional Leadership? (Mining for Information)

Instructional Leadership is... (Draft Definition)

New Ideas/Facts Gathered

Instructional Leadership is... (Revised Definition)

Why an Instructional Leadership Guide?

Whether you have been an instructional leader for years, or are just stepping into the role, you probably have many ideas and many questions about how to best structure a successful school-wide instructional improvement initiative. The purpose of this guide is to help expand upon your ideas while clarifying any questions you may have about being an effective instructional leader.

Instructional Leadership, Then and Now

The concept of “instructional leadership” first emerged in the 1980’s as an outgrowth of the landmark 1983 report on American education, “A Nation at Risk.” That report along with other research drew a high correlation for the first time between effective schools and school leaders whose primary mission was a focus on instruction and achievement. Since that time, the focus on instructional leadership has ebbed and flowed, but the recent arrival of the standards movement, with its focus on accountability and results, has driven instruction back to the top of the education agenda. As a result, instructional leadership is widely accepted today as a key component in successful school reform efforts across the country.

In spite of the general consensus around the need for instructional leadership, it is clear from both our experience in the field and from research (National Governors Association 2003; Elmore and Burney 2000; Murphy 1990) that good examples of instructional leadership are often the exception, not the rule, in many of our nation’s public schools. Which begs the question: with the considerable body of research unequivocally pointing to the importance of instructional leadership, why is it that there aren’t more instructional leaders out there?

There may be three interrelated answers to the question at hand. The first may be found in the structure of school districts themselves, where the traditional

administrative track often runs separately from the instructional one. “School districts are, typically, bifurcated organizations. There is usually an administrative ‘line’ organization that runs from the superintendent and deputy to principals and thence to teachers. Separate from this line, there is typically a ‘school support’ or a ‘curriculum and professional development’ division of the organization.” (Fink & Resnick 2001). This disconnect between administration and curriculum and instruction means that those who are interested in pursuing careers as principals and assistant principals are often pushed away from the core issues of teaching and learning. In essence, choosing to be a school leader means choosing not to be an instructional one.

The second explanation for the dearth of instructional leadership may reside with colleges of education and the preparation of school leaders. Specifically, we need to look at administrator preparation programs and their common focus on a myriad of administrative competencies with, at best, cursory attention given to teaching and learning. The amount of coursework devoted to and focused on instructional leadership is often few and far between. As a result, many prospective leaders are not being prepared for instructional leadership.

Finally, there is an inherent difficulty in finding the time to be an effective instructional leader. School leaders are often charged with a multitude of non-instructional duties. Assuming that most people cannot devote 80 hours each week (not including weekends) to their job, how are regular people suppose to accomplish all of the tasks in front of them and find the time for instructional leadership? We believe this guide can help.

Defining the Instructional Leader's Purpose

Too often, instructional leadership is so broadly defined that it becomes an overwhelming set of disconnected tasks and inscrutable characteristics. Coupled with the pressures of day-to-day administration, the school leader settles back into what he/she knows and/or is comfortable with. To avoid this pitfall, an essential first step is to articulate what an instructional leader looks like and sounds like. It may be best to answer this question from the teacher's vantage point rather than the leader's since teachers are the ones who are directly impacted by the presence (or absence) of strong instructional leadership.

Joseph and Jo Blase (2000), in their study of the behaviors of principals who had positive effects on student learning, asked over 800 teachers to respond to a survey describing the characteristics of effective instructional leaders. The data revealed two distinct things that all instructional leaders should do: (1) talk with teachers to promote reflection and (2) promote professional growth. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (2001) describes instructional leadership as "leading learning communities." However, when we look at promoting teacher reflection and professional growth or leading a community of learners, it is important to ask the question, "To what end?" In other words, promoting teacher reflection and professional growth cannot be done in isolation or as an end in itself. There needs to be a sense of direction, a "true north," if you will. Naturally, the difficulty inherent in this proposition is that, depending on whom you ask, there are an infinite number of "ends" or considerations to which a school may be directed.

The Six Goals of Instructional Leadership

Fortunately, we can whittle down the number of considerations from "infinite" to a number that is much more manageable. A synthesis of research on the conditions that impact a school's instructional program reveals six key considerations. By reflecting on and addressing these six considerations, instructional leaders can deepen their understanding of the instructional context and create the conditions for successful implementation of targeted instructional practices.

The Six Goals of Instructional Leadership (Figure 1) are derived from leading research on the characteristics of effective schools (DuFour 2004; Senge 1994; McREL 2003; Garmston and Wellman 1999), and serve as the framework for this entire guide. These Six Goals are also field-tested, as we have used them to frame our work with school leaders and leadership teams throughout the country in supporting their efforts to maximize student achievement. These goals were designed with a logical progression and are meant to be engaged in sequence. Put another way, the six goals are cumulative in the sense that each one builds upon the previous one. As such, we encourage you to tackle one goal at a time in order to ensure optimal effect.

Figure 1. Six Goals of Instructional Leadership

SIX GOALS	APPLICATIONS TO YOUR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
Goal 1. Identify the Instructional Vision School leaders have identified a clear instructional vision and engage the school community in maintaining a relentless focus on that vision.	You must have a clear grasp of the instructional purpose and approach of the school (instructional vision), and continuously relate your words and your practice to that vision. The vision provides an underlying rationale for every instructional activity at your school site.
Goal 2. Prioritize School Initiatives School initiatives relate to and support the instructional vision. The school maintains focus by eliminating competing initiatives and/or bringing them in line with the instructional vision.	You and your team will be more effective given a <i>reasonable</i> number of clearly defined initiatives. Without this level of focus, school-wide improvement efforts can become haphazard, loosely addressing multiple goals without effectively transforming teacher practice in any particular area. An achievable set of initiatives will allow you and your team to hone in on and ultimately improve key focus areas.
Goal 3. Articulate Instructional Expectations Instructional expectations are commonly understood and clearly articulated. The whole staff understands and acts upon a discrete set of school-wide expectations around curriculum and instruction.	When teachers clearly understand exactly what you expect of them instructionally, they are better equipped to meet those expectations. Given well-defined expectations, you can more easily support and assess teacher proficiency in relation to desired outcomes. The expectations should be developed collaboratively - teachers are more committed to implementing the expectations when they have a role in developing them.
Goal 4. Align Professional Development Professional development is clearly aligned to the instructional vision. The school provides a comprehensive, school-wide professional development model.	Any effective improvement initiative should be preceded by high-quality professional development that develops common vocabulary and expectations for all staff. As you work with your team, you can identify new teacher needs, and shape future learning opportunities.
Goal 5. Structure Teacher Collaboration Teachers are valued as professionals and share practices in a safe and trusting environment. Teaching practices are “de-privatized” and teachers are able to seek and offer support within the context of professional communities.	Your role is critical to the establishment and maintenance of a culture of collaboration and shared practice. Through thoughtful individual interaction and skillful facilitation of group learning activities, you set the standard for professional, data-driven conversations that focus on student achievement and continuous improvement.
Goal 6. Provide Continuous Monitoring, Reflection, and Evaluation Systems are in place to continuously monitor student achievement in relation to teacher practice. Teachers have sufficient data and structured time to reflect on and continuously refine their instructional practices.	You need to live and breathe student achievement data! You are ultimately responsible for the impact of school-wide initiatives. Impact is measured in relation to teacher satisfaction and performance, student achievement, and the collaborative culture of the school.

THE SIX GOALS OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP






This section will help you strategically pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of your school's instructional program within the context of the Six Goals of Instructional Leadership (the Six Goals). The Six Goals provide a blueprint for thinking about, planning, and reflecting upon your school's instructional program.

Before implementing a school-wide instructional improvement initiative, it is important to begin by developing an action plan. This will help focus and set in place an infrastructure for your instructional leadership. This will also allow you to assess where your school is and choose actions and initiatives that support the vision of the school. Keep in mind however, this is a very fluid process and adjustments may need to be made along the way.

The first step in beginning this process is by taking stock of where your school is. Using the *Instructional Leadership: Action Planning Guide* included on the following page, rate your school on each of the Six Goals. Although you may elect to do this self-assessment on your own, you may find it helpful to invite other members of your leadership team to complete the survey together. In fact, the research suggests that working through this process with key stakeholders will result in greater commitment to your improvement efforts and the greater likelihood of enduring success. "Collective decision making results in increased morale, ownership, understanding about the direction and processes of change, shared responsibility for student learning, and a sense of professionalism." (McREL 2003). The benefits of which will be essential to creating and sustaining lasting improvement.

After you have completed the *Action Planning Guide*, you will find six specific case studies (one for each of the Six Goals) with accompanying questions to be considered before moving forward. Use these case studies to delve deeper and to understand how to improve in growth areas identified in your self-assessment. Making sure these considerations are addressed will further ensure the success of your improvement efforts.

Instructional Leadership: Action Planning Guide

GOALS AND INDICATORS	Fully	Partially	Not At All	NEXT STEPS
 <p>Goal 1. Instructional Vision School leadership results in continuous improvement. School leaders have identified a clear instructional vision and engage the school community in maintaining a relentless focus on that vision.</p>				
<p>Indicator 1.1: An Instructional Vision is in place.</p>				
<p>Indicator 1.2: All staff members understand the Instructional Vision and can articulate it.</p>				
 <p>Goal 2. School Initiatives School initiatives relate to and support the Instructional Vision. The school maintains focus by eliminating competing initiatives and/or bringing them in line with the instructional vision.</p>				
<p>Indicator 2.1: All current school initiatives are aligned to and prioritized in relation to the Instructional Vision. The number of initiatives and the work they require is thoughtfully structured so as not to overwhelm the staff and students.</p>				
<p>Indicator 2.2: A decision-making process for the consideration of new initiatives has been developed.</p>				
 <p>Goal 3. Instructional Expectations Instructional Expectations are commonly understood and clearly articulated. The whole staff understands and acts upon a discrete set of school-wide expectations around curriculum and instruction.</p>				
<p>Indicator 3.1: A set of specific expectations around the implementation of instructional initiatives has been developed. A list of posted indicators identifies evidence of effective implementation of school-wide initiatives and expectations.</p>				
<p>Indicator 3.2: A timeline for implementation of school initiatives and expectations has been developed so as to ensure the success of each initiative.</p>				

GOALS AND INDICATORS	Fully	Partially	Not At All	NEXT STEPS
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Goal 4. Professional Development
 Professional Development is clearly aligned to the Instructional Vision. The school provides a comprehensive, school-wide professional development model.

Indicator 4.1: A school-wide professional development plan (scheduling, initiatives, topics & deliverables) for current initiatives has been developed.				
Indicator 4.2: Continuous, high quality professional development is provided for school staff.				
Indicator 4.3: Ongoing support for implementation of the professional development expectations is provided.				



Goal 5. Teacher Collaboration
 Teachers are valued as professionals and share practices in a safe and trusting environment: Teaching practices are “de-privatized” and teachers are able to seek and offer support within the context of professional communities.





Indicator 5.1: The school provides formal time for teachers to collaborate regularly.				
Indicator 5.2: A specific process for teacher collaboration is in place.				
Indicator 5.3: Teams are held accountable for collaboration time.				





Goal 6. Continuous Monitoring, Reflection, and Evaluation
 Systems are in place to continuously monitor student achievement in relation to teacher practice. Teachers have sufficient data and structured time to reflect on and continuously refine their instructional practices.

Indicator 6.1: A data-inquiry process is in place. The school provides formal time and structures for teachers to regularly reflect upon and to set instructional goals based on the data.				
Indicator 6.2: A system for monitoring individual teacher’s ability to meet expectations is in place.				
Indicator 6.3: The school conducts and reflects upon regular staff surveys in order to measure teacher satisfaction, student achievement, and organizational culture.				
Indicator 6.4: The school leadership has a system for consistently monitoring, supporting, and addressing gaps in student achievement.				

OVERVIEW MATRIX

Process #	Name of Process	Page #	Related Indicator	Process Purpose	Deliverable	Time	Materials/Advance Prep
 Goal 1. Instructional Vision							
1	Getting Started with Instructional Visioning	35	1.1	To initiate a conversation on the instructional vision	• A clear instructional vision	60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Instructional Visioning Template</i> (pg. 38) • Chart paper, markers
2	Drafting an Instructional Vision	39	1.1	To evaluate vision statements & to draft your site's instructional vision		45-60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Instructional Vision Rubric</i> (pg. 43) • White board, markers • <i>Recommended: Computer & LCD projector</i>
3	Communicating the Instructional Vision	44	1.2	To ensure that all staff members understand the vision		varies	varies
 Goal 2. School Initiatives							
4	Prioritizing School Initiatives	45	2.1	To inventory and prioritize all initiatives at your school site	• A list of prioritized school initiatives that are tightly aligned to the instructional vision	45-60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prioritizing Initiatives Template</i> (pg. 49) • <i>Initiatives Tally Sheet</i> (pg. 50) • Chart paper, markers • Dot stickers
5	Drafting an Instructional Vision	51	2.2	To ensure that proposed initiatives are connected to the vision		varies	• <i>Instructional Initiative RFP</i> (pg. 54)
 Goal 3. Instructional Expectations							
6	Creating a Shared Understanding	55	3.1	To develop a shared understanding of the instructional vision	• A list of shared instructional expectations	60-75 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart paper, markers • <i>Recommended: Computer & LCD projector</i>
7	Developing Instructional Expectations	59	3.1	To develop a set of shared expectations, including a list of posted indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A list of posted indicators • An implementation timeline 	varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart paper, markers • <i>Recommended: Computer & LCD projector</i>
8	Creating a Timeline	60	3.2	To create a timeline in order to ensure the success of each initiative		varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Implementation Timeline Template</i> (pg. 61) • Chart paper, markers • Post it notes
 Goal 4. Professional Development							
9	Creating a Professional Development Plan	62	4.1	To draft a year-long comprehensive PD plan	• A targeted, year-long professional development plan aligned to identified school initiatives	60-75 min	• <i>Recommended: Computer & LCD projector</i>
10	Providing High Quality Professional Development	64	4.2	To ensure that professional development at your school is top-notch		varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sample Agenda Template</i> (pg. 65) • <i>Sample PD Feedback Form</i> (pg. 66) • <i>PD Rubric</i> (pg.67)
11	Supporting Professional Development	68	4.3	To develop a plan for supporting PD		varies	varies

OVERVIEW MATRIX (continued)

Process #	Name of Process	Page #	Related Indicator	Process Purpose	Deliverable	Time	Materials/Advance Prep
 Goal 5. Teacher Collaboration							
12	Making Time For Teacher Collaboration	69	5.1	To provide formal time for teachers to collaborate regularly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An organized structure that supports ongoing teacher reflection, conversation, and collaboration 	varies	varies
13	Collaboration Protocols*	70	5.2	To provide structure to teacher collaboration opportunities		varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coaching for Change* (pg. 89)
14	Holding Collaborative Teams Accountable	71	5.3	To keep teachers accountable for their collaborative work		varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration Goal Setting Sheet (pg. 72)
 Goal 6. Continuous Monitoring, Reflection, and Evaluation							
15	Using Data to Drive Instruction	73	6.1	To establish a data inquiry process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A comprehensive system and strategy for analyzing, monitoring, and responding to data 	varies	varies
16	Teacher Evaluation Rubric	76	6.2	To monitor teacher performance and ability to meet expectations		varies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher Evaluation Rubric (pg. 77) Rubric Spreadsheet (pg. 78)
17	Sample Staff Survey	79	6.3	To collect feedback from the staff on your school's performance		20 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sample Staff Survey (pg. 80) Recommended: Access to SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com)
18	Supporting Student Achievement	84	6.4	To monitor and support student achievement		varies	varies

* Teacher collaboration protocols can be found in [Coaching for Change: A Practical Guide to Instructional Coaching](#)



Identify the Instructional Vision

The instructional vision sets the stage/foundation for the rest of the work the school engages in. This vision must be clear to everyone responsible for instructional practices at the school.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION 1

What is the instructional focus of my school and does everyone understand it?

Use ESSENTIAL QUESTION 1 to frame the following case study, keeping the following key considerations in mind:

- ✓ *What is the instructional vision at the school? How was the instructional vision developed? What will the vision look like when it is achieved?*
- ✓ *Does the staff understand the vision? Are they committed to moving toward this vision?*
- ✓ *Does the instructional leader feel comfortable articulating this vision? Does the instructional leader's words and actions support the vision?*

CASE STUDY #1

Phoenix Public School's faculty is a progressive one – many teachers subscribe to a constructivist approach to educating students. Teachers pride themselves on emphasizing cooperation over competition and encourage children to work at their own pace. In some classrooms, students can be observed working in mixed-age environments. One teacher describes this approach as part of the school's vision of creating “a well-rounded child.” Another teacher articulates the need to “foster a warm environment” and a handful of teachers identify the school's goal as “providing a world-class education.”

Despite this shared philosophy, the school has experienced a steady decline in test scores and the overall perception of the school's vision varies quite a bit. Changes in leadership, at both the district and site level, as well as teacher turn over have contributed to a lack of clarity and focus at the school. In an effort to streamline school-wide instruction, the principal adopts a mission statement from another school in the district. A modest placard is installed in the teachers' lounge and reads, “It is the vision of Phoenix Public School to create lifelong learners by providing a challenging, 21st century curriculum.” Although the statement confuses a few teachers, many teachers do not notice it. In fact, it is soon lost amongst other documents that are strewn across the wall.

Prior to the first day of school, the principal meets with her staff to discuss the need to raise test scores in light of last year's disappointing results. She proposes a new, scripted reading curriculum that prescribes specific time allocations for each task and activity. Specifically, she describes “mastery of state content standards” as part of both the school's vision and responsibility. The new reading program will require extensive training and ongoing classroom monitoring. This announcement is met by the faculty with silence – a reflection of subdued frustration at what many teachers perceive as a curtailing of professional freedom and autonomy. One teacher comments, “I thought our goal was to educate the whole child.”

Implementation of the reading program is initially bumpy as teachers struggle to reconcile their beliefs with the new curriculum. In addition to a lack of teacher buy-in, the divergent perspectives held amongst the staff with regards to the school's vision create a lack of cohesion and no sense of purpose at the school. Although the principal reminds teachers to “keep focused on the kids,” she is rarely seen in classrooms because of meetings, phone calls, and other crises that arise during the school day. During the course of the school year, these mixed messages eventually take their toll and manifest in the classrooms as lackluster instruction and large discrepancies in curricular implementation.

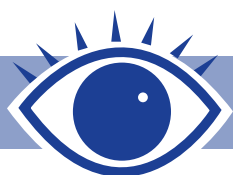
KEY CONSIDERATIONS	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CASE STUDY	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AT YOUR SITE
Have you identified the instructional vision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Although a banner is posted, the principal has not identified a clear instructional vision. ✔ Staff has varying conceptions of the school’s vision. 	
How was the instructional vision developed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ The principal provides the vision. No effort is made to create a shared vision. 	
What will the vision look like if and when it is achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Aside from a goal of creating “life long learners,” the language in the vision is vague. ✔ It is unclear how the realization of this vision would manifest itself in the day-to-day operations of the school. 	
Do the teachers know and understand the instructional vision? Are they committed to moving toward this vision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Staff is less committed to raising test scores and adopting a new reading program. ✔ Teachers are anxious that the new reading program will stifle their creativity. ✔ Once a shared vision is created, the school leader should tie the adoption of the new reading program to the instructional vision by adapting it to the needs of the site. 	
Do you feel comfortable articulating this vision to teachers and staff?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ The principal articulates a variety of visions. Particularly lacking is a consistent message around instructional practices and outcomes. ✔ Once the school leader has clarity around the instructional vision, she must work relentlessly to relate her words and her practice to that vision. 	
How can you shape your words and your actions so that they consistently support the vision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ The school leader needs to constantly engage the school community in maintaining a focus on the school’s instructional vision. (See Instructional Visioning activities in Section 3) ✔ “Adapting, not adopting” should be part of the leader’s vocabulary that will run throughout the implementation of the new reading program. 	

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- ✔ The instructional leader must have a clear grasp of the instructional vision. The leader must have a high degree of clarity here as a prerequisite to teachers having both a clear understanding and commitment to the vision.
- ✔ The vision should be focused on instructional practices and outcomes. Without this level of specificity, vision statements can become grandiose declarations that lack focus.
- ✔ The instructional leader who takes advantage of the opportunity to collaboratively develop the vision with teachers has a greater likelihood of having a team committed to the realization of that vision.
- ✔ As the instructional leader, you are the “keeper of the vision” and it is your charge to maintain a laser-like focus – and ensure your team does as well – on the vision. Your words and your practice should constantly relate to that vision.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✔ Specific instructional visioning activities can be found in Section 3 on page 35.



Drafting an Instructional Vision

TIME

45 -60 minutes

MATERIALS

- *Instructional Vision Rubric* (pg. 43)
- White board, markers
- *Recommended: Computer & LCD projector*

PROCESS PURPOSE

To evaluate vision statements & to draft your site's instructional vision.

INDICATOR 1.1

An Instructional Vision is in place.

OVERVIEW

Drafting an Instructional Vision is a process designed to assist your school in drafting a unique instructional vision. While the steps are straightforward, the actual process is somewhat fluid and may require a series of conversations with your group. If you feel the need to create some additional context for your team, consider using Process #1, *Getting Started with Instructional Visioning* immediately prior to using this one.

As part of this activity, your team will have the opportunity to review and evaluate a series of vision statements in light of the *Instructional Vision Rubric* (pg. 43) and guiding questions outlined below. From this review, your group will draft a unique instructional vision statement. We are deliberate in the distinction between a vision and an *instructional* vision. The former refers to what is commonly found in schools – a broad, flowery declaration that is often inscrutable and eventually left to gather dust. The latter is a clear, memorable statement that speaks confidently to what students will accomplish or achieve and becomes a living part of the school's identity.

We feel strongly that your instructional vision statement explicitly refers to mastery of your state's academic content standards. Given the current epoch and the urgency around closing the achievement gap, a non-negotiable for all schools must be high quality standards-based instruction. That said, be unapologetic in your group's commitment to (and expression of) standards as part of your instructional vision.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- ✓ Does your vision statement reflect a standards-based environment?
- ✓ Is your vision easy to remember and articulate?
- ✓ Is your vision concrete? Is your vision achievable?
- ✓ Does your vision statement include key elements (i.e. non-negotiables) of your school's instructional program? (e.g. Project Based Learning, etc.)

SUGGESTED PROCESS

1 Introduce the activity and the general purpose of the activity.

Note: ✓ Remember that the vision provides an underlying rationale for every instructional activity at your school site.

- ✓ Discuss the difference between a vision statement and an instructional vision statement (as described in the activity overview).

2 Use the *Instructional Vision Rubric* (pg. 43) to evaluate the vision statements below. Specifically, analyze each statement against the considerations outlined in the rubric.

Note: ✓ The purpose of showing these statements is not to hold them up as exemplars. Rather, they are to help your group become critical consumers of such statements. In addition, the review of these statements will provide you and your group a context within which to inform your drafting process.

3 Use the *Instructional Vision Rubric* to discuss strengths, weaknesses, and realizations discovered through the evaluation of these sample vision statements.

Note: ✓ Keep your group focused on evaluating vision statements against the rubric (rather than personal bias/opinion).

- ✓ There is no “right” answer when it comes to evaluating and creating vision statements. The power in this process lies in the group calibration that occurs as your team discusses and works through the five considerations outlined in the *Instructional Vision Rubric*.
- ✓ Close this part of the process by using lessons learned from the discussion to segue into Step 4.

4 List the non-negotiables (i.e. key elements – for example, Project Based Learning) related to your school’s instructional program

Note: ✓ Consider using the following three categories during your brainstorm: classroom instruction, student achievement, professional development. Keep the group focused on these three categories.

- ✓ Statements should be made in the present tense. For example: “Teachers use benchmark data to improve instruction. Academic indicators are continually rising. Active student engagement is the norm.”

5 Draft your own instructional vision. It should be:

- Indicative of a standards-based environment (the word “standards” should be somewhere in your instructional vision)
- Easy to remember and articulate
- Concrete
- Related to your non-negotiables
- Achievable

Note: ✓ If your team is struggling here, consider revisiting some of the sample vision statements (see below).

- ✓ This step works better if the drafting occurs on a white board or an LCD projector, which allows for changes to be made easily.

6 Use the Instructional Vision Rubric to evaluate your instructional vision.

7 Display your vision statement in a prominent, common area.

Note: ✔ *The vision does no good if it is simply window dressing. As the instructional leader, you are the “keeper of the vision” and you and your team must clearly grasp and be invested in it.*

✔ *As the instructional leader, you must continuously relate your words and your practice to the vision.*

SAMPLE VISION STATEMENTS

The following are some vision statements that other schools have created. The purpose of showing these is not to hold them up as exemplars. Rather, they are to provide you and your group a context within which to inform your drafting process.

Sample Vision Statement	Strengths	Weaknesses	Additional Notes
<p>1. The Science & Technology Academy provides students with a rigorous standards-based education through the integration of highly-effective and innovative instruction.</p>			
<p>2. The Stepford Middle School community will create inquiring, lifelong learners by providing relevant and rigorous standards-based content. Through interdisciplinary instruction and learning, all Stepford students will become global citizens.</p>			
<p>3. Phoenix Public School is a community of learners committed to helping students reach their potential in academic and extracurricular endeavors. As our mission statement affirms, we believe that our mission is to educate for life-long learning with an uncompromising commitment to excellence.</p>			
<p>4. Eagle Hill High School exists to develop in all of its students the academic and character skills needed to excel in top tier colleges, to achieve success in a competitive world, and to serve as the next generation of leaders in their communities.</p>			

INSTRUCTIONAL VISION RUBRIC

This rubric is designed as a tool to evaluate instructional vision statements. Use it as a conversation starter with your team as you begin the process of drafting a shared vision for your school site.

	Importance of Content Standards	Easy to Remember & Articulate	Concrete	Related to your non-negotiables	Achievable
Excellent 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rigorous, standards-based instruction is at the heart of the vision statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concise use of language Easy to summarize 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easy to understand Reflects a laser-like focus on instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects strongly held beliefs about teaching and learning Strong sense of purpose and direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All elements of the vision statement can be measured and evaluated
Good 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards-based instruction is important to the school's vision statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear use of language Avoids repetition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understandable Narrow and focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflects beliefs held about teaching and learning Sense of purpose and direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most elements of the vision statement can be measured and evaluated
Fair 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards are mentioned in the vision statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somewhat concise Language doesn't always fit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Somewhat understandable Clear in some aspects, fuzzy in others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some evidence that the vision reflects a set of beliefs Purpose and direction is unclear and/or inconsistent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some elements of the vision statement can be measured and evaluated
Poor 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No evidence of standards in the vision statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbose "Big" words used only to impress the audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult to understand Vision is not clearly recognizable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May reflect a desire to be all things to all people No sense of purpose and direction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficult or impossible to measure or evaluate

HOW TO USE THIS RUBRIC

Assign a score of 1–4 to each of the five considerations (i.e. Importance of Content Standards, Easy to Remember & Articulate, Concrete, Related to your non-negotiables, Achievable).

Add your 5 scores. For example, if you gave a "1" to each of the five considerations, your total would be "5." Thus, the lowest score possible would be a "5" and conversely, the highest score would be a "20."

SUGGESTED SCORING SCALE

18-20	Excellent
13-17	Good
8-12	Fair
5-7	Poor



Prioritize School Initiatives

School initiatives are intended to support the vision. Taking inventory of all the school's initiatives and assessing their alignment to the vision will help clarify the goals and everyone's role in working toward achieving those goals.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION 2

Do all school initiatives (new curricular programs, professional development, etc.) relate to the instructional focus?

Use ESSENTIAL QUESTION 2 to frame the following case study, keeping the following key considerations in mind:

- ✔ *What are the current school initiatives? Do all initiatives clearly support the school's instructional vision?*
- ✔ *Are there any competing or redundant initiatives? Can they be eliminated or brought in line with the vision?*
- ✔ *Is there a reasonable and manageable number of initiatives? Is there a structured process in place to review current initiatives and consider new ones?*

CASE STUDY #2

The vision of Merriweather Public School is to provide students with a standards-based education through project-based learning. Similarly, the school's faculty believes in the importance of exposing students to authentic learning opportunities. As a result, the school has taken on a number of new initiatives. Most of these are teacher initiated – the school has a culture where ideas originate from the ground up. In fact, initiatives that are proposed by teachers at Merriweather are almost always adopted.

The school recently applied for and received a technology grant that allows them to purchase a mobile computer lab. The grant also provides for a technology consultant to regularly observe classrooms and facilitate the implementation of the lab. The principal has created a diversity coordinator position in response to teacher complaints that the curriculum does not represent the school's growing multi-racial and multi-ethnic demographic. The school has also adopted a new English Language Development (ELD) program to address the needs of their ELL students. As part of this initiative, a group of teachers looks to establish a robust after-school program focused on both athletics and the language acquisition needs of many of their students.

Meanwhile, the district has been pushing schools to focus on student engagement. As part of this push, a school-based committee is researching the possibility of becoming an International Baccalaureate (IB) school in order to ensure students have access to a comprehensive program that engages higher order thinking skills. The principal has also approved the humanities department's request to establish a social service component to the school's curriculum, which will include the establishment of a food bank and clothing distribution center. In addition, a group of teachers receive a service-learning grant that they will use to integrate the history curriculum and community service.

As the school year progresses, teachers begin to feel overwhelmed by the number of initiatives. Every teacher serves on multiple committees and the work involved often means meeting during prep times or after school. Due in part to teachers having less time to focus on lesson preparation, they are less prepared to teach, causing student misbehavior to rise. The principal responds swiftly by adopting a comprehensive classroom management system and implementing a new school-wide code of conduct. The new focus on discipline diverts attention from some of the other initiatives at the school. For example, the mobile computer lab is suspended, the food bank is closed, and the launch of the after-school program is postponed. This cycle continues through the school year – initiatives are not given sufficient time to take hold and are often scrapped, frequently replaced with new ones.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CASE STUDY	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AT YOUR SITE
<p>What are all of the current school initiatives? List them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technology integration ✓ Service-Learning ✓ After-school program ✓ Diversity ✓ Student engagement ✓ IB ✓ ELL ✓ Classroom management 	
<p>Do all the school initiatives support the vision?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No. Almost everyone at the school proposes initiatives, with varying degrees of alignment to the vision. There are “too many cooks in the kitchen.” ✓ The school leader needs to have clarity around which initiatives support the school’s vision. 	
<p>Are there any competing initiatives? Can they be eliminated or brought in line with the instructional vision?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Technology integration, diversity, and ELD are not tightly aligned to the school’s vision of standards-based instruction through project-based learning. ✓ The school leader, in collaboration with his team, will need to decide which initiatives to delay, integrate, or eliminate. 	
<p>Is the number of initiatives manageable or overwhelming to teachers and students?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There are currently too many. As a result, some initiatives have fallen by the wayside. 	
<p>Is there a structured decision-making process in place for review of current initiatives and consideration of new initiatives?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The efficacy of current initiatives is not reviewed and there is not a structured process by which to do so. 	
<p>After considering the previous questions, can you prioritize the school’s initiatives given the instructional focus of the site?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ By “prioritizing” every initiative, the school has in effect prioritized none of them. 	

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- ✔ Less is more. You and your team will be more effective given a reasonable number of clearly defined initiatives. Without a high level of focus, school-wide improvement efforts can become haphazard. That said, it is important to choose initiatives that support each other and can be easily integrated in support of the school's vision.
- ✔ The hardest thing to do is to let go. One of your biggest roles as the instructional leader is to eliminate competing initiatives and/or bring them in line with the school's instructional vision.
- ✔ While there is inherent value in teacher-generated initiatives, there also needs to be a structured process to ensure that every initiative ties back to the instructional vision.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✔ Specific prioritizing initiatives activities can be found in Section 3 on page 45.



PROCESS 5

Aligning New Initiatives to the Vision

TIME

varies

MATERIALS

- *Instructional Initiative RFP* (pg. 54)

PROCESS PURPOSE

To ensure that proposed initiatives are connected to the vision.

INDICATOR 2.2

A decision-making process for the consideration of new initiatives has been developed.

OVERVIEW

This activity addresses one of the challenges brought up in the *Goal 2: Prioritize School Initiatives* case study in Part II of this guide (pg. 17). Specifically, the importance of having a structured process to ensure that every initiative ties back to the instructional vision.

In the case study, initiatives that are proposed at the school are almost always adopted. Furthermore, proposed initiatives have varying degrees of alignment to the instructional vision. The purpose of this activity is to get you and your team thinking about balancing the value of teacher-generated initiatives with the importance of ensuring tight alignment between every initiative and the vision.

The key part of this activity is the *Instructional Initiative RFP* (Request For Proposal) found on the following page. This document is designed to allow anyone who proposes an initiative to reflect upon some key considerations. Not limited to teachers, this RFP may also be used by administrators and other stakeholders involved in selecting new initiatives.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- ✓ Do all initiatives support the instructional vision?

SUGGESTED PROCESS

1 Introduce the activity and the general purpose of the activity.

Note: ✔ You can do this in a straightforward manner by reviewing the overview of this activity (see above)..

2 Show participants the *Instructional Initiative RFP*.

3 Remind your group that this activity will help the group better understand the current number of initiatives as well as the need to prioritize them.

Note: ✔ Consider vetting one of your identified initiatives through this document. This will help you and your team understand the utility of the RFP.

✔ This RFP is designed as a skeleton. Feel free to modify it as you see fit.

4 Discuss the adoption or modification of the RFP for use at your school site.

5 Discuss anticipated obstacles and seek clarification on specific sections, as needed.

Note: ✔ Remember, the goal is not to create paperwork. Rather, the purpose is to establish a thoughtful process for selecting new initiatives at your school

RFP SECTIONS

The following describes each section of the *RFP*.

RFP SECTION	DESCRIPTION
Name of Initiative	For example, technology, service-learning, classroom management, diversity, etc.
Description & Rationale	In this section, provide a brief narrative describing the initiative and the reason why this initiative is being proposed.
Does your proposed initiative connect with a current school initiative?	It may be helpful to have a list of current initiatives to refer to.
Please describe	If the proposed initiative connects with a current initiative, explain how they are closely related.
How does your proposed initiative connect with the school's instructional vision?	This may be the key section in the RFP. Encourage participants to think carefully about <i>how</i> the proposed initiative supports the vision.
Resources necessary	List the fiscal, human, and material resources necessary to implement the proposed initiative.
Calendar / Timeline	Describe how the proposed initiative will be carried out. It may be helpful to attach a school calendar showing key dates and events.
Supporting Documentation	This is a good way to encourage participants to be research-practitioners. Having them attach relevant research also holds people accountable for ensuring that data supports the implementation of the proposed initiative.

INSTRUCTIONAL INITIATIVE RFP

Name of Initiative: _____

Description & Rationale: _____

Does your proposed initiative connect with a current school initiative? Y/N

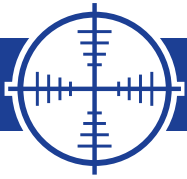
Please describe: _____

How does your proposed initiative connect with the school's instructional vision?

Resources necessary (e.g. fiscal, human, etc.): _____

Calendar / Timeline (e.g. start/end date, frequency, key events, etc.): _____

Attach any additional / supporting documentation (e.g. research, data, etc.).



Articulate Instructional Expectations

You need to clearly articulate your instructional expectations so that all teachers and staff understand them. Understanding what the teachers should be doing in their classrooms helps focus their work and the work you will do with them. In order for this happen, you must visit classrooms regularly. This will help you more easily support and assess teacher proficiency in relation to desired outcomes.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION 3

Based on the instructional vision, what is expected in the classroom?

Use ESSENTIAL QUESTION 3 to frame the following case study, keeping the following key considerations in mind:

- ✓ *What are the instructional expectations at the school? Are the instructional expectations commonly understood and clearly articulated?*
- ✓ *How were the instructional expectations developed? How have they been communicated to teachers?*
- ✓ *Is there a system in place for monitoring teacher implementation of these expectations? How do you support teachers who are struggling to meet them?*

CASE STUDY #3

The principal at Pawnee Public School is fully committed to student mastery of standards and she keeps a laser-like focus on the school's instructional vision. She often speaks with her assistant principal and the leadership team about the need for teachers to use their content standards to plan instruction. Specifically, she believes teachers must post their standards and refer to them in their unit plans – though she has not explicitly articulated this to her teachers. The rest of the leadership is more focused on the need for teachers to collaboratively develop lesson plans and to use a variety of instructional strategies. However, the leadership team has neither communicated this to the principal nor the rest of the faculty. This lack of clarity has resulted in a disconnect within the leadership team and between administration and teachers with regards to instructional expectations.

The principal conducts infrequent observations and does not have a clear grasp of what is really going on in classrooms. When she does visit teachers, her feedback is varied and inconsistent. She does not have a uniform format for evaluating and providing clearly articulated expectations to teachers. For example, she provides feedback to one teacher that his “standards and objectives are not posted.” However, after visiting another classroom that also did not have standards or objectives, the principal tells the teacher that her room environment “looks really solid.” As a result, some teachers post standards and objectives while others do not. The mixed level of support has also contributed to poor classroom management in some classrooms and teacher confusion around instructional expectations.

Similarly, there is a mixed level of implementation with the use of rubrics and student exemplars – two things that the principal feels are integral components to rigorous standards-based instruction. She has communicated these expectations to her senior teachers, but not to the staff as a whole. Not surprisingly, rubrics and student exemplars are inconsistently displayed in classrooms. Again, the principal's words have not translated into teacher practice throughout the school.

A handful of senior teachers are assigned to mentor teachers that are new to Pawnee. These senior teachers have worked with their mentees to plan lessons that incorporate a variety of instructional strategies. Many have benefited from this support, though it is unstructured – teachers meet on an ad hoc basis. As a result, teachers who don't receive

ongoing support continue to struggle with implementing standards-based instruction. There are even some teachers who question the rationale behind posting standards and objectives in the first place. One teacher expresses this sentiment by asking, “What’s the point of writing objectives? It takes a long time and my students don’t even read them. Besides, no one’s ever noticed that I don’t post them.”

When Pawnee receives its results from the state test, the principal is surprised to see that only 15% of students are performing reading and math at the state’s proficiency level. She shakes her head and thinks to herself, “I’ve got every teacher at my school focused on standards and the kids are still performing badly.”

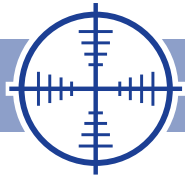
KEY CONSIDERATIONS	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CASE STUDY	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AT YOUR SITE
What are the specific instructional expectations for standards-based instruction at the school site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Align instruction to standards. ✓ Use a variety of instructional strategies. ✓ Pace out unit plans. ✓ Collaborate with peers. 	
Are the instructional expectations at your site commonly understood and clearly articulated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instructional expectations are not clearly understood within the admin team, let alone the faculty. ✓ The principal’s expectations seem to change from context to context. 	
How were the instructional expectations developed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Principal did not discuss expectations. ✓ Teacher input was not solicited. 	
How have instructional expectations been communicated to teachers at your site?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Some senior teachers communicated expectations to newer teachers. 	
Do the instructional expectations align with your school’s instructional vision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Although they have not been clearly communicated, instructional expectations align well with the vision. 	
Do you have a system for monitoring whether individual teachers meet these expectations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No formal system in place. 	
How do you support teachers who are struggling to meet these specific expectations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Although the principal conducts informal walkthroughs, this feedback is insufficient in meeting the needs of all teachers. ✓ The principal does not have a firm grasp on which teachers are struggling to meet expectations. 	
Is there a pacing plan or timeline for classroom implementation of these expectations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No plan/timeline in place. As a result, it is impossible to determine/evaluate the efficacy of classroom implementation. 	

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- ✔ Frequent classroom observations and feedback are key ingredients to support the effective implementation of instructional expectations. This goes beyond “inspecting what you expect” (although this is important). The instructional leader should engage teachers in an ongoing dialogue about pedagogy and learning in the classroom.
- ✔ Higher levels of implementation will result from working collaboratively with your teachers to develop school-wide instructional expectations. Make sure these expectations tie back to a manageable list of prioritized initiatives. In addition, work with your team to create a list of observable indicators – items such as posted standards and unit boards that reflect a total commitment to the instructional vision.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✔ Specific articulating instructional expectations activities can be found in Section 3 on page 55.



PROCESS 8

Creating a Timeline

TIME

45 minutes

MATERIALS

- *Implementation Timeline Template* (pg. 61)
- Chart paper, markers
- Post it notes

PROCESS PURPOSE

To create a timeline in order to ensure the success of each initiative.

INDICATOR 3.2

A timeline for implementation of school initiatives and expectations has been developed so as to ensure the success of each initiative.

SUGGESTED PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTING SCHOOL INITIATIVES

1. Using one of the initiatives you have identified as most urgent...
 - Identify benchmark steps* to implementing that initiative.
 - Record each benchmark on an index card or post-it note.
 - Create a timeline poster that makes sense for your school schedule (monthly, quarterly, semester, trimester, etc.). See *Implementation Timeline Template*.
 - Place the benchmarks on the timeline.
2. Repeat the process with your other top initiatives.
3. Review your timeline: is the pace of implementation realistic and feasible? If not, revisit your prioritization of initiatives.

*HOW TO IDENTIFY BENCHMARK STEPS

Using the “Sample Instructional Expectations” from Process #7 (pg. 59), the following is a list of possible benchmark steps for instructional expectations around a standards-based instruction initiative. Each item in the bulleted list below would be individually recorded on an index card or post-it note.

INSTRUCTIONAL EXPECTATIONS	POSSIBLE BENCHMARK STEPS
Review and constantly revisit daily objectives with students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conduct professional development on SMART objectives ✓ Incorporate use of daily objectives into the teacher evaluation instrument ✓ Implement systems and strategies for student understanding of objectives
Design standards-based lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Conduct professional development on backwards mapping and Bloom’s Taxonomy ✓ Implement monthly submission of unit plans ✓ Select teachers in ELA department begin backwards mapping of key units ✓ Create formalized time for teachers to collaboratively develop lessons of study



Align Professional Development

Providing on-going professional development opportunities for all parties involved in school improvement is important for keeping everyone focused and up to date on current initiatives and strategies as well as ensuring that teachers have the tools and the capacity to implement expected strategies.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION 4

Do all of the school's professional development activities support the instructional vision and school initiatives?

Use ESSENTIAL QUESTION 4 to frame the following case study, keeping the following key considerations in mind:

- ✔ *What are the school's professional development priorities? Do they align with school initiatives and the instructional vision?*
- ✔ *How was the professional development plan created? Does the plan reflect the input of key stakeholders?*
- ✔ *How does professional development impact the efficacy of classroom instruction?*
- ✔ *How are teachers supported with the implementation of professional development expectations? How often do teachers receive this support?*

CASE STUDY #4

Bethesda Academy's vision is to offer all students a consistent, rigorous instructional program, based largely on the state's content and performance standards. The school strives for consistency from class to class and grade to grade.

The principal at Bethesda has decided to follow the lead of the district by focusing whole school staff development on building literacy skills through the content areas. He hires an outside professional development provider to present a series of Friday workshops throughout the year covering topics such as using graphic organizers, note-taking, and making connections. This decision is made with little input from teachers or the leadership team. However, all of his professional development choices are well intentioned and meant to provide teachers with ample learning and growth opportunities.

Bethesda also offers an assortment of "drive-by" professional development sessions, with wide-ranging topics such as brain-based research, bullying, eco-literacy, and thematic unit design. Similarly, these topics were selected by the principal with little teacher input. The large variety of topics contributes to the feeling that teachers are at a "professional development buffet." In other words, the content of staff development often feels haphazard and disconnected to teachers – with an emphasis of breadth over depth. This has contributed to the negative perception that teachers have around professional development. Furthermore, the quality of these staff development sessions is mixed and a few are actually very poor. One Bethesda teacher offers, "We don't need so much PD each week."

Teachers at Bethesda are allotted 50 minutes of common professional development time each day. The principal tells teachers to decide upon individual focus areas for professional development during these daily periods, chosen based on needs identified from the workshop series presentations or the "drive-by" ones. However, in practice, teachers do not use their professional development time as such. Rather, many use this time to make parent phone calls, grade papers, make copies, or to catch a breather during a frenetic day.

The principal observes classrooms regularly, though he doesn't attend staff development sessions with regularity. As a result, there is no weight behind the expectations that are articulated during professional development. In fact, there is no way to tell how or if professional development impacts classroom instruction.

Finally, there are a number of other staff development initiatives, focused on parental involvement, that are carried out through a series of monthly after-school in-services. However, similar to staff development at Bethesda as a whole, there is usually no follow-through after any given session and there are no school-wide expectations for implementation of ideas or lessons learned. As a result, teachers pick and choose what they end up taking away. Ironically, a number of teachers – in spite of the quantity of staff development sessions – actually lament what they perceive as a lack of professional development activities. Case in point, a couple of teachers nod in agreement when one faculty member laments, “I never get sent to conferences.”

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CASE STUDY	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AT YOUR SITE
What are your school's professional development priorities? Do they align with school initiatives and the instructional vision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Professional development is offered as a series of discrete, stand-alone sessions. ✔ PD is loosely connected to school initiatives. ✔ PD is multifarious, without a clear focus. 	
How was the professional development plan created? Does the plan reflect the input of key stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ The PD plan was created by the principal without teacher input. 	
Does the professional development plan include an implementation timeline with goals and deliverables?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ The school's PD plan is a laundry list of topics to be covered. Expectations for what teachers need to walk away with (i.e. put into practice in their instruction) are not made explicit. 	
Does each PD topic clearly align to a prioritized initiative?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Alignment between PD topics and identified initiatives is not clear. 	
How does professional development impact the efficacy of classroom instruction?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Because PD is so hodgepodge, there is no way to assess if and how professional development impacts classroom instruction. 	
How are teachers supported with the implementation of professional development expectations? How often do teachers receive this support?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ The principal observes classrooms somewhat regularly. However, since he has not participated in many PD sessions, he is not equipped to adequately support teachers with the implementation of PD expectations. 	

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- ✔ Regular classroom visitations are essential to supporting teachers in implementing practices gleaned from professional development. Visiting classrooms will allow you to answer important instructional questions: Are teachers on track with the curriculum? Are students mastering key standards? Which teachers need closer attention and support? The best instructional leaders have continuous, candid conversations with teachers around teaching and learning.
- ✔ Teacher training must be targeted. In addition to tight alignment to the instructional vision, it could be based on performance data and focused on two questions: 1) On what standards are our students doing well, poorly? and 2) What are the most effective and efficient means of teaching those standards?
- ✔ Professional development should be largely site-based, targeted to the school's needs, and include regular follow up. There is a misconception in some schools that professional development is an external event that is measured by the number of conferences teachers attend.
- ✔ The best professional development occurs within the context of a professional learning community, where teachers and administrators wrestle with and research solutions to key instructional questions such as those posed in the second bullet point.
- ✔ It might be valuable to involve your teachers in developing the professional development plan and identifying new teacher needs. In this way, you can work with your team to shape future professional development opportunities.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✔ Specific aligning professional development activities can be found in Section 3 on page 62



PROCESS 10

Creating a Professional Development Plan

TIME

varies

MATERIALS

- Sample Agenda Template (pg. 65)
- Sample PD Feedback Form (pg. 66)
- PD Rubric (pg. 67)

PROCESS PURPOSE

To ensure that professional development at your school is top-notch.

INDICATOR 4.2

Continuous, high quality professional development is provided for school staff.

SUGGESTIONS

- ✓ Consider using a standard template (see Sample Agenda Template) for all of your school's professional development. This template should include the overarching goal of the PD session, assigned roles, discrete objectives, and time allocations.
- ✓ Solicit regular feedback in order to evaluate the success of each PD session and identify ways to improve and/or build upon follow-up training. See Sample PD Feedback Form.
- ✓ Use the PD Rubric to regularly discuss the strengths and weaknesses of your school's professional development program.

RESOURCES

Missouri Staff Development Council, Commissioner's Award of Excellence for Professional Development. St. Louis, MO. February 2007. Rubric. www.msdc-mo.org/user/New%20Awards/ComRubric_MSIP4_Feb07.doc

SAMPLE AGENDA TEMPLATE

Meeting Purpose: _____

Facilitator: _____ Process Checker: _____ Recorder: _____ Time Keeper: _____

Item	Objective	Person(s)	Time/Duration	Next Steps: Who?/By When?
Check-In				
Process Check				

Notes:

SAMPLE PD FEEDBACK FORM

Name of Session: _____ Session leader(s): _____

Date: _____ Location: _____

Thank you for participating in this session. Your feedback is essential in our efforts to constantly improve the quality of the professional development provided to you. Please take a moment to complete this evaluation form.

Your name (optional): _____

Please rank this session (4 highest, 1 lowest)

	Very Effective		Very Ineffective	
Overall ranking of this training session	4	3	2	1
The goal of the session was made clear	4	3	2	1
The goal of the session was successfully completed	4	3	2	1
The session leader knew the material	4	3	2	1
The session leader is an effective presenter	4	3	2	1
This session presented the material in an engaging manner	4	3	2	1
This session will help me improve student achievement	4	3	2	1
This session will help improve school culture/discipline	4	3	2	1
I would recommend this presentation to other teachers	4	3	2	1

What was most helpful about this session? What worked?

What didn't work in this session? What was not as valuable to you?

If we do this session again next year or with a different group, how could this session be improved?

PD RUBRIC

This rubric is designed as a tool to reflect upon the strengths and weaknesses of your school's professional development offerings.

	Design	Learning	Data-Driven	Evaluation	Research-Based
Excellent 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD consistently includes collaborative lesson design, examining student work, curriculum development, case studies, action research, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD consistently promotes the practice of new skills that would improve student achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school consistently uses data as the basis for professional growth. Clear evidence that student achievement data is used to determine professional development focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD is consistently evaluated based on its impact on teacher practice and student achievement. Evidence that PD is significantly impacting student achievement over time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher teams consistently conduct pilot studies and/or action research to support, confront, and/or generate new knowledge and evidence about the effectiveness of innovations and initiatives.
Good 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD often includes collaborative lesson design, examining student work, curriculum development, case studies, action research, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD often promotes the practice of new skills that would improve student achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff collaborate using student data in study groups, action research groups, and other professional growth activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD is often evaluated based on its impact on student achievement. Evidence that PD is beginning to impact student achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many teacher teams use pilot studies and action research to monitor initiatives and make informed decisions about the continuation and institutionalization of initiatives.
Fair 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD occasionally includes collaborative lesson design, examining student work, curriculum development, case studies, action research, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD occasionally promotes the practice of new skills that would improve student achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some evidence of staff working together to analyze student data and monitor progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD is sometimes evaluated based on its impact on student achievement. Evidence that PD is targeting student achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some teachers collaborate and share research-based information.
Poor 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD seldom moves beyond training, workshops, courses, and large group presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD seldom promotes the practice of new skills that would improve student achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little to no evidence that staff work together to analyze student data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PD is based on personal satisfaction rather than its impact on student achievement. Little to no evidence that PD is linked to student achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little to no collaboration for research exists nor is it encouraged.



GOAL 5

Structure Teacher Collaboration

When facilitated appropriately, teacher collaboration creates a culture of support, camaraderie, and success for teachers and the school overall. Specifically, when teachers work together, talk about instruction, and share best practices, teacher isolation is reduced. In fact, the free, open exchange of information and ideas may energize teachers and keep them refreshed about their work, their teaching practice, and their lives.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION 5

Are teachers expected to work with each other to meet the instructional vision and are they given structured opportunities to do so?

Use Essential Question 5 to frame the following case study, keeping the following key considerations in mind:

- ✔ *Are teachers provided with a structured time to collaborate on a regular basis?*
- ✔ *Is there a specific process by which teacher collaboration occurs?*
- ✔ *How are teaching teams held accountable for their collaboration time?*
- ✔ *Have teaching practices at the school been “de-privatized?” Are teachers comfortable supporting each other in the context of a professional learning community?*

CASE STUDY #5

In order to promote the sharing of best practices, Elmer Unified School District has implemented a mandatory teacher collaboration period at all schools across the district. This initiative is part of a well-intentioned effort to increase teacher dialogue and promote the sharing of best practices.

As is the case at Sam Houston School, the first 45 minutes of each day in the master schedule is allotted for teacher collaboration. The principal describes this time by saying, “Our teachers begin each day talking with one another about what works best for kids.” Moreover, he would like even more time made available for teachers to work with one another.

In practice, morning “collaboration” at Sam Houston is a meeting time where teachers are often talked at. Most of the topics discussed (e.g. frustration with the lack of school-wide systems, dissatisfaction with school maintenance, complaints against the district) are neither pre-planned nor directly related to student achievement and classroom instruction. As a result, some teachers skip the morning time and arrive on campus immediately before students arrive. Any real collaboration at Sam Houston happens informally, either at lunch or after-school. Some departments do not meet together at all. The one exception is the English department – the members of that team are committed to collaboration and use their morning time to discuss common instructional challenges and to brainstorm new ideas.

Historically, Sam Houston School has had an organizational culture where teachers are generally resistant to being observed and receiving feedback. Teachers arrive for work each day and attend a professed collaboration meeting where, in fact, no real collaboration occurs (and some teachers use this period as an excuse to arrive 45 minutes late). They proceed to enter their rooms and shut the door to teach – in many cases, whatever they want. Teachers operate in a vacuum, each an island to themselves (i.e. doors are closed and dialogue is limited). In essence, teachers operate as independent contractors where isolation is prevalent.

In terms of deliverables and creating accountability, teacher teams are expected to regularly submit their daily agendas and minutes from morning collaboration time. These items are collected in order to allow the principal to monitor meeting content and to provide feedback. However, in reality, these items are seldom reviewed and are usually filed away by the school office manager into a “collaboration binder.”

Nevertheless, the principal has occasionally asked teachers to share what they have gotten out of morning collaboration during monthly staff meetings. Unfortunately, these group shares are somewhat superficial because the principal never attends morning collaboration. Not surprisingly, many teachers at Sam Houston report that although they “collaborate” everyday, they view collaboration as a waste of time. One teacher succinctly puts it like this, “We could probably finish collaborating in 10 minutes rather than waste 45 minutes doing so.”

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CASE STUDY	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AT YOUR SITE
Are teachers provided with a structured time to collaborate on a regular basis?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Teachers have 45 minutes of “collaboration time” every morning. However, aside from the English department, teachers do not engage one another on instructional issues during this time. ✔ Most teachers collaborate during lunch or after school. 	
Is there a specific process by which teacher collaboration occurs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Collaboration time is not standardized across grade levels. Some grade levels do not meet together at all. 	
Are teachers held accountable for their collaboration time?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Aside from submitting agendas and minutes, teachers are not asked to report on what they do together during common planning time. 	
What do you do to make sure that teaching practices at your site become “de-privatized?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ The principal has asked some teachers to share their ideas and practices during staff meetings. 	
Are teachers comfortable seeking and offering support to each other within the context of a professional learning community?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Teachers do not feel comfortable sharing best practices, in large part, because real teacher collaboration is not expected or provided for. 	

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- ✔ As the instructional leader, it is your role to cultivate an organizational culture that is rich in teacher inquiry and dialogue. You can open the doors (literally and figuratively) to teaching and learning by facilitating team meetings, bringing teachers to other teachers, and keeping instruction front and center.
- ✔ Teacher collaboration time should be protected and not usurped by non-instructional, business meetings.
- ✔ Teacher collaboration must be structured in order to ensure optimal results. There are a number of meeting protocols that can be used to effectively facilitate conversations around teaching and learning. For a complete set of teacher collaboration tools and protocols, please refer to *Coaching for Change: A Practical Guide to Instructional Coaching*.
- ✔ Effective teacher collaboration is skillfully facilitated. Someone at the school site should be trained and supported in the effective use of the *Coaching for Change* collaboration protocols.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✔ Specific structuring teacher collaboration activities can be found in Section 3 on page 69.



PROCESS 14

Making Time For Teacher Collaboration

TIME
varies

MATERIALS

- *Collaboration Goal Setting Sheet* (pg. 72)

PROCESS PURPOSE

To keep teachers accountable for their collaborative work.

INDICATOR 5.3

Teams are held accountable for collaboration time.

SUGGESTIONS

Consider using a form like the *Collaboration Goal Setting Sheet* to both hold teachers accountable for collaboration and to encourage ongoing reflection. The following describes each section of the goal setting sheet. Steps 1 and 2 should be completed prior to each meeting while step 3 is completed afterwards

COLLABORATION GOAL SETTING SHEET SECTION	DESCRIPTION
1. Collaboration Time Objective	✓ In this section, teachers provide a specific objective(s) for their collaborative work time. For example: “By the end of today’s collaboration time, teachers will create a 6-point rubric for student debate.”
2. Process/Directions	✓ This step allows teachers to think through and plan their collaborative work ahead of time. Using the previous example, this may include: reviewing sample debate rubrics, brainstorming evaluation criteria (e.g. opening & closing statements, rebuttals, use of persuasive appeals, performance, etc.), and defining each of the 6 points.
3. Reflection/Next Steps	✓ After collaboration, teachers reflect upon the successes and challenges of a particular work session. This information is used to inform the development and refinement of future collaborations.

COLLABORATION GOAL SETTING SHEET

Date: _____ Grade Level/Department: _____

1. Collaboration Time Objective:

By the end of today's collaboration time, teachers will:

-
-
-

2. Process/Directions:

-
-
-
-
-

3. Reflection/Next Steps:

What excited you about today's collaboration time?

-
-

What are your remaining questions or concerns?

-
-

What additional support do you need?

-
-



Provide Continuous Monitoring, Reflection, and Evaluation

Self-reflection is a continuous process. In order to measure the effectiveness of your instructional improvement initiative, you need to identify which key indicators will be assessed, set aside and protect time for teachers and staff to reflect, and solicit feedback from them on a regular basis.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION 6

Are systems in place to continuously monitor student achievement in relation to teacher practice and in instructional initiatives?

Use Essential Question 6 as a frame as you read the following case study, keeping the following key considerations in mind:

- ✔ *Is there a school-wide benchmark assessment system in place to regularly monitor student progress?*
- ✔ *Are teachers provided structured time to examine benchmark data and to set instructional goals based on the data? Are teachers held accountable for student performance on these assessments?*
- ✔ *Does the school regularly survey the staff on measures such as teacher satisfaction, student achievement, and organizational culture?*

CASE STUDY #6

Stephen Douglas Public School is currently in “school improvement” status. The school has not made AYP (adequate yearly progress) for three consecutive years. The principal of Douglas is considering a number of options for improving upon the school’s results. Two years ago, he worked with his teachers to implement a discrete number of initiatives in order to address the school’s improvement status. The principal is now interested in seeing how those initiatives have impacted the school’s academic performance.

Specifically, the school adopted a progressive math curriculum a couple years ago. The principal wants to survey the teachers on the program’s efficacy and to create a study that would allow his teachers to assess how effective the program has been. In addition, the principal is mulling over a re-boot of the entire academic program, including adopting new reading and math programs as well as the reassignment of a number of teachers.

Upon closer examination of the school’s data, which is available on the state department of education’s website, the reason for Douglas’s performance can be traced to a specific subgroup: Hispanic/Latino students have not made AYP targets in mathematics. Aside from this, all other subgroups are on track in math and all AYP targets have been met in reading language arts. Unfortunately, the principal is not familiar with the details of the school’s achievement data and does not know how to use the state website to locate it.

When it comes to monitoring student progress, Douglas uses copies of the state’s released test as a benchmark exam. Students are tested with the same released exam at the end of each semester. The principal believes that this allows students to develop familiarity with test format while allowing teachers to analyze student progress. However, after the test is given each semester, the results are submitted to the main office without any real collaborative analysis occurring. One teacher at Douglas describes the benchmarking process as “going through the motions.”

In fact, once the benchmark test is given, it is usually forgotten about until the following cycle – at the end of the next ten weeks. A handful of teachers do plot and track benchmark data on a teacher-created spreadsheet, though most tend to pass the tests back to students for a whole-class review – without reflecting on the results.

Midway through the school year, the Douglas faculty is surveyed about poor student performance on both the benchmark and state assessments. In the responses, teachers write comments such as, “The test is too hard,” “We haven’t taught this yet,” or “My kids don’t know how to read, so how are they suppose to pass this test?” In addition, most teachers report that they do not know how to use data to drive instruction. The principal reviews these responses and files the information by his desk. At the next staff meeting, he informs them that the school is in the process of looking into more test prep materials that will help Douglas’s students get over the hump.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE CASE STUDY	IMPLICATIONS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AT YOUR SITE
Is there a school-wide benchmark assessment system in place to regularly monitor student progress?	✔ The school’s benchmark assessment system consists of giving students the same state-release test every semester. As a result, assessment results may be reliable though invalid.	
Are teachers provided structured time to examine benchmark data and to set instructional goals based on the data?	✔ Teachers receive the results from benchmark data. However, the use of the data to adjust instruction is inconsistent across the school.	
Are teachers held accountable for student performance on benchmark assessments?	✔ No. Benchmark assessment feels like another “motion” that teachers need to go through.	
Does the school regularly survey the staff on measures such as teacher satisfaction, student achievement, and organizational culture?	✔ The school conducts a mid-year survey of teachers. However, it is unclear if and how this data is used. The data is not shared with the staff.	
Does the school continuously monitor the efficacy of instructional initiatives?	✔ The school is in the process of surveying the staff and creating a study to measure the impact of the math program adoption.	

KEY TAKE-AWAYS

- ✔ Effective instructional leaders track data, preach data, and live data! Instructional decisions should always be solidly based on and backed by factual information.
- ✔ A school-wide benchmark assessment system should be tightly aligned with both the state standards (and thus the state test) and the school's curricular scope and sequence. You should work collaboratively with your team on an ongoing basis to address any issues or gaps that may yield unreliable data about student performance.
- ✔ The most powerful lever you may have when it comes to establishing a reflective culture at your school is for you to model reflective behavior all the time. Ask instructional questions without assigning blame (e.g. How could we re-teach this standard? What if you gave your students _____? How can we raise student performance?) and constantly engage your team by looking at data and planning next steps.
- ✔ School-wide initiatives should be regularly reviewed and evaluated in light of student achievement.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ✔ Specific providing continuous monitoring, reflection, and evaluation activities can be found in Section 3 on page 73.



PROCESS 15

Making Time For Teacher Collaboration

TIME
varies

MATERIALS
varies

PROCESS PURPOSE

To establish a data-inquiry process.

INDICATOR 6.1

A data-inquiry process is in place. The school provides formal time and structures for teachers to regularly reflect upon and to set instructional goals based on the data.

OVERVIEW

Many schools today are inundated with student achievement data. School leaders need to know what to do with this data in order to improve student learning. In addition, teachers need to be given regular opportunities to analyze data and to set instructional goals with the instructional leader (e.g. principal, department head, academic VP) at the school.

To this end, effective schools are constantly asking themselves data-driven questions. After all, the key word in data-inquiry is “inquiry.”

GETTING STARTED

For schools that are at the initial stages of establishing a data-inquiry process, we suggest taking stock by asking the following 7 questions with your leadership team.

1. What is the purpose of your school?
2. What is the purpose of collecting data at your school?
3. How do you want to use the data that will be collected?
4. What are the roadblocks (e.g. people, products, reasons) to collecting data at your school?
5. What are the roadblocks to *analyzing* data at your school?
6. What are the roadblocks to *using* data at your school?
7. How can you eliminate those roadblocks so data can be used on a systemic and continuous basis?

CONSIDERATIONS

Here are some considerations for questions 1-3. Questions 4-7 will be specific to your school site.

Question 1: What is the purpose of your school?

Clarifying the guiding principles (i.e. instructional vision) of the school sets the stage for all systems and data analysis work.

- ✔ What do you expect students to know and be able to do by the time they leave the school?
- ✔ What do you expect students to know and be able to do by the end of each quarter/semester?
- ✔ What would your school and educational processes look like if your school were achieving its purpose, goals, and expectations for student learning?

Question 2: What is the purpose of collecting data at your school?

- ✔ How will data help you achieve your purpose/vision?

Question 3: How do you want to use the data that will be collected?

The ways in which you want to use data, dictate the type of data to be collected, how it is collected and the analysis mechanisms appropriate for the task.

- ✔ How will data be used to inform and improve daily instruction?
- ✔ How will data be used to measure program success and effectiveness?
- ✔ How will data be used to provide students with feedback on their performance?

SUGGESTIONS

There are many ways to cultivate a culture of data-inquiry. Strategies include, but are not limited to, the following:

✔ SWOT Analysis

SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. One way to use SWOT is to create a four quadrant poster focused on an area of inquiry. For example, here are some guiding questions for a SWOT analysis on advisory:

- ✔ Strengths: What makes an advisory program strong? What was effective in your advisory last year?
- ✔ Weaknesses: What are the characteristics of a weak advisory program? What was challenging or difficult about advisory last year?
- ✔ Opportunities: What would you like advisory to do for the students and the school?
- ✔ Threats: What challenges or obstacles do you anticipate?

✔ **Benchmark Assessments with follow-up**

Before reviewing assessment data, teachers should reflect on a number of questions in advance, including but not limited to the following.

- ✔ Which standards has the class mastered that you can immediately incorporate into homework and other ongoing review assignments?
- ✔ What standards require more time for whole-class instruction and review?
- ✔ What standards require more time for small-group instruction and review? What will other students be doing during this time?
- ✔ Which students need additional help and for which specific skills? What strategies might you incorporate to ensure these students master these skills?
- ✔ Do you need additional materials, strategies, support to help you work with students to master the standards covered in this (and subsequent) benchmark assessments?

This is an effective strategy to support student achievement and is also discussed in Process 18 (pg. 84).

✔ **Cycle of Inquiry**

Data-inquiry can be thought of as a cyclical process. For example:

- ✔ Collect
Collect relevant data to be analyzed. This can be done by an individual or a designated data team.
- ✔ Summarize
Organize your data to make it easier for your staff to understand. Excel is a great program to help accomplish this.
- ✔ Drill
Use targeted questions (e.g. What standards require more time for whole-class instruction and review?) to look for patterns, identify trends, and make links across different data sets.
- ✔ Reflect
Focus in on what the data means with regards to adjusting instruction. It is important to frame this work as a “problem of practice” that your team will address.
- ✔ Prepare
Develop an action plan. Identify strategies to close gaps and marshal the resources to provide additional support.
- ✔ Act
Adjust instruction based on your action plan. When the time comes to measure student mastery, the cycle begins again at Step 1.

RESOURCES

Boudett, K., City, E., and Murnane, R. “The ‘Data Wise’ Improvement Process.” *Harvard Education Letter* 22, 1 (2006): 1-3.

Goal	What Is It?	Why is it important?
Instructional Vision		
School Initiatives		
Instructional Expectations		
Professional Development		
Teacher Collaboration		
Continuous Monitoring, Reflection, Evaluation		

What constitutes effective instructional leadership? What specific leadership practices make a real impact on teaching and learning? How should instructional leaders begin the complex and nebulous task of engendering school improvement? *Leading for Change: A Practical Guide to Instructional Leadership* provides answers to these and other questions facing school leaders today. Based on current research and theory, this guide provides a practical framework (*The Six Goals of Instructional Leadership*) for thinking about key issues that impact school leaders and overcoming the obstacles that often get in the way.

This guide includes:

- ✔ Six specific leadership goals that every instructional leader should be paying attention to.
- ✔ A comprehensive *Action Planning Guide* that will assess your school's readiness for sustained improvement.
- ✔ Case studies and reflection activities designed for application to your school's *individual* context.
- ✔ A *robust* set of instructional leadership processes, aligned to the Six Goals of Instructional Leadership, that your team can use to promote school growth.

Distilling rigorous research into practical and actionable steps, *Leading for Change* gives instructional leaders the tools they need to provide effective leadership for stronger and better schools.



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