
Ohio Leadership Advisory Council

**Leadership Development
Framework**

January 2008

Overview

Leadership matters, but what is leadership? A fundamental assumption underlying Ohio's work to create a coherent and cohesive leadership development system is that the purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role (Elmore, 2006). This foundational principle, supported by recent meta-analytical studies on the impact of district and school leadership on student achievement, lends support for the creation of new leadership models that can be used to distribute key leadership functions, and align and focus work across the system to improve instructional practice and student performance.

The *Leadership Development Framework* presented in this document represents the work of the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC), and identifies essential leadership practices needed by superintendents and leadership teams at the district and building level to improve instructional practice and student performance. A partnership effort sponsored by the Ohio Department of Education and the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA), OLAC was established to identify

1. Essential practices against which current and proposed leadership development initiatives could be assessed by school boards, superintendents, central office personnel, principals, and teacher leaders interested in improving leadership for the purpose of improving instructional practice and student performance;
2. Critical elements of a comprehensive system of development for superintendents and leadership teams, including core content and a roll-out strategy that relies on multiple effective delivery methods for reaching all districts;
3. Tools, products, and services the state should provide in partnership with districts, institutions of higher education, professional associations, and others to assist superintendents and leadership teams in improving instructional practice and student performance; and
4. Policy implications affecting the development of a cohesive statewide leadership system for Ohio, including key components/leverage points of strengthening leadership in Ohio in a coherent way.

Underlying the work of the Council is the belief that

- Leadership in our schools and districts is extremely important in improving student achievement, and effective school leaders are essential to implementing and sustaining meaningful school improvement efforts;
- There is an urgent need for effective leadership and a statewide response for effectively addressing that need must be developed now;
- Ohio's leadership system must be anchored in teaching and learning, focused on building community, and directed to ensuring the success of all children;
- A body of research-based evidence exists to support the kind of leadership behaviors needed to improve student achievement; and
- Effective leadership must be exercised at all levels of the school enterprise for meaningful and sustainable district-wide improvements in student achievement to be realized.

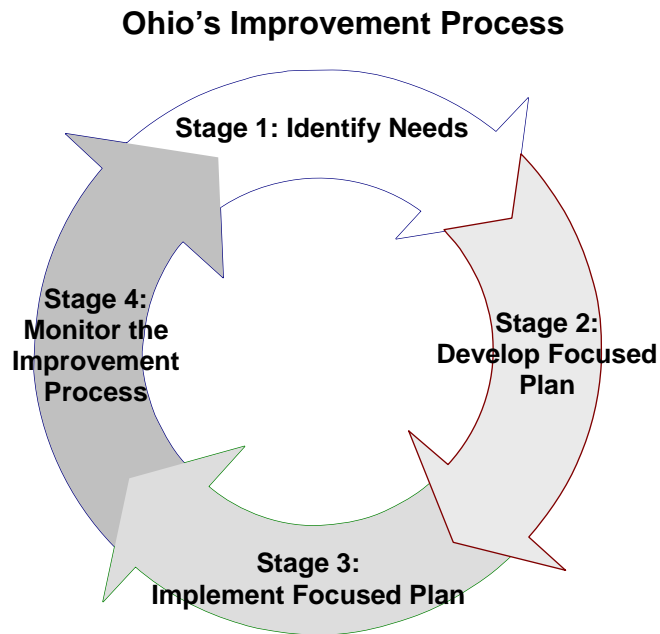
Exercising effective leadership at all levels of the district/school enterprise means acknowledging the critical role that local boards of education play in making student achievement the top priority and in ensuring that district goals for achievement and instruction remain the primary focus of the district's work. It requires superintendents to focus their efforts on creating goal-oriented districts by engaging in collaborative goal setting, and working with the board to set and monitor progress and align resources toward meeting non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction. And, it requires effective leadership team structures at the district and school level to implement strategies and actions in an aligned and focused way to reach district goals.

It also requires the intentional shift *away from* the traditional notion of leader as manager and leadership as an administrative position/role *to* leadership as a set of practices that must be exercised across the system to address the increasing challenges and expectations – both internal and external – faced by public education today.

These challenges, described in recent national and state reports, call for changing the system in a big way. For example, in *Tough Choices or Tough Times* (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2007), the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce describes a fundamental redesign of the “whole education system” as the only alternative for radically increasing student performance. All students must be proficient at significantly higher levels of knowledge and skill to ensure that they are prepared to live and work in an increasingly competitive and global economy. Universal access to quality education for all students, coupled with strong support for students who need it most, are cornerstones of the Commission report and are reflected in Ohio’s commitment to ensure that leadership development is anchored in teaching and learning, focused on building community, and directed to ensure the success of all children.

Central to these calls for change is the recognition that district culture must require and support the use of evidence-based professional practices that lead to improved achievement, rejecting the notion that student achievement is pre-determined based on a student’s race, disability, or degree of wealth. Moving past opinion, preference, and popular practice to effective practice based on data and evidence requires clarity on learning outcomes, agreement on the “right” work, and a reframing of leadership as a set of practices that are implemented continuously and collectively across the system and for which the adults in the system are held accountable.

OLAC’s work frames the leadership development agenda for Ohio within the larger Ohio Improvement Process and offers a common core of essential practices around which systemic efforts to improve leadership -- at the state, regional, and local levels -- can be unified and advanced. Ohio’s four-stage improvement process provides a structure for aligning processes, structures, tools, and people to significantly improve instructional practice and student performance. The OLAC Leadership Development Framework clarifies leadership roles/responsibilities at the district and school level, validating leadership team structures needed to implement quality planning, implementation, and ongoing monitoring on a system-wide basis.



Superintendent

The role of the superintendent in today's increasingly complex, competitive, and global economy must be to set the stage for student learning on a system-wide basis, not only to close achievement gaps between groups of students, but also to raise performance expectations for all students through a focus on twenty-first century skills.

Setting the stage includes setting the direction and expectations for facilitating and monitoring student learning, engaging in regular conversations about student learning, focusing the core work of the district on the improvement of instructional practice and student performance, engaging staff and the community in improving the teaching and learning process, implementing Board policies, and creating the processes, structures, and culture to support continuous improvement in student learning across multiple dimensions.

Professor Mark H. Moore of the JFK School of Government at Harvard uses a strategic triangle to talk about the need for leaders to integrate three components when managing change associated with the implementation of complex improvement strategies: making strategic decisions based on the public value the organization is trying to create (i.e., moral purpose); managing the political environment so the organization obtains the resources and authority it needs to make improvement; and managing the operational capacity so that the organization can fulfill its organizational purpose and mission.

In effective districts and schools, this kind of improvement is not random. Rather, it is highly focused, beginning with an honest assessment of student data and the identification of academic weaknesses that must be addressed. It involves the development of leadership teams, targeted professional development, the alignment or realignment of resources to address identified weaknesses, and an internal accountability system for continuously monitoring whether instructional practices are having the desired effect on student performance.

These practices are reflected in findings released in September 2006 by the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) following a comprehensive analysis of 27 studies conducted since 1970 on the effect of district leadership on student achievement. This meta-analysis, which constitutes the largest ever quantitative examination of research on superintendents, found a statistically significant relationship between district-level leadership and student achievement, demonstrating that effective superintendents create goal-oriented districts focused on teaching and learning goals. These goals are centered on achievement and instruction, are collaboratively developed, are Board-adopted, and are stable and sustainable for an extended period of time. For purposes of the OLAC Leadership Development Framework, such goals are referred to as *district goals*.

Researchers identified the following five district-level responsibilities that were significantly positively correlated with improved student achievement.

1. Collaborative goal setting

Effective superintendents work with their Board to involve all relevant stakeholders in establishing goals for the district.

2. Non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction

Effective superintendents ensure that the collaborative goal setting process results in non-negotiable goals, defined as goals that all staff members must act upon, in at least two areas (i.e., student achievement and classroom instruction), set specific achievement targets for schools and students, and ensure the consistent use of research-based instructional strategies in all classrooms to reach those targets.

3. Board alignment and support of district goals

The local board of education is aligned with and supportive of the non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction in districts with higher levels of achievement. They ensure that these goals remain the driving force behind a district's actions.

4. Monitoring goals for achievement and instruction

Effective superintendents continually monitor district progress toward achievement and instructional goals to ensure that these goals remain the driving force behind a district's actions.

5. Use of resources to support achievement and instruction

Effective superintendents ensure that the necessary resources – including time, money, personnel, and materials – are allocated to accomplish the district's goals. Initiatives that are not aligned with district goals for achievement and instruction are reduced or eliminated.

Adapted from School District Leadership that Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement. A Working Paper. J. Timothy Waters, Ed.D. & Robert J. Marzano, Ph.D., McREL, September 2006.

Area 1: Data & the Decision Making Process - Superintendent

- Importance of identifying, collecting, analyzing and effectively using relevant data to identify greatest problems to be addressed, and to create the kind of culture and expectation that supports effective data-based decision-making at all levels of the system.
- Importance of developing shared accountability by broadening the concept of accountability to include “internal” measures that hold all adults accountable for improved student performance, rather than only external accountability imposed from outside.
- Importance of using data to continuously monitor student progress against performance targets and district established goals.
- Importance of addressing achievement and growth, and in getting past opinion through the use of research-based practices.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do I need to do?*

1. Establish clear expectations for and require the effective use of data at all levels of the system to drive improvement in instructional practice, to assess its impact on student achievement, and to make decisions about teaching and learning.
2. Build a culture that supports the effective use of data to improve student performance by organizing and presenting data in ways that identify gaps and trends in student performance and requiring intentional decisions regarding curriculum and instruction, interventions, and professional development.
3. Require the use of current disaggregated student achievement data to establish focused goals and measurable strategies for instruction and achievement.
4. Use data to set performance targets for each building and grade level, planning for the success of all children and designed to close achievement and expectation gaps for every subgroup of the population.
5. Ensure the skillful and accurate use of data by providing ongoing training and support throughout the organization.
6. Expect district administrators and principals to model and monitor use of data to inform instructional decisions.
7. Establish as a part of the central office, services to regularly review and analyze building level data and to provide guidance for both district and building level actions.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can I go for help?*

***How does your school Measure Up?
Move Ahead***

Exemplars

Area 2: Focused Goal Setting Process - Superintendent

- Importance of identifying -- based on a review of data -- a limited number of goals, and a limited number of strategies for each goal, that allow for concentrated focus on the core work that needs to be done to improve student performance.
- The importance of aligning district work with district goals for instruction and achievement (i.e., defined as non-negotiable goals that are collaboratively developed, board adopted, and stable/sustainable over an extended period of time).
- Importance of reducing the number of initiatives to align improvement efforts on a district-wide basis around two or three focused goals directly related to identified needs.
- Importance of developing one plan, rather than multiple and often contradictory plans, aligned with the district goals.
- Importance of internal accountability, which holds all adults in the system accountable for implementing evidence-based practices to improve teaching and learning.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do I need to do?*

1. Commit, in conjunction with the board of education, the district and all schools to make continuous progress toward meeting district goals and performance targets for instruction and achievement.
2. Ensure the collaborative development and ongoing monitoring of a single district improvement plan that focuses on a limited number of district goals.
3. Implement the district improvement plan with a limited number of focused district goals that are based on current aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data.
4. Establish and convey the district's vision and mission for guiding the collaborative development and communication of district goals.
5. Ensure that schools have focused building improvement plans that are clearly aligned to and designed to meet district goals.
6. Develop and implement an internal accountability system that holds the adults at all levels accountable for results.
7. Implement a sustainable system for monitoring progress and making adjustments to implementation of the district improvement plan.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can I go for help?*

Ohio Improvement Process /Stage 2: Develop Focused Plan

Exemplars

Area 3: Instruction & the Learning Process - Superintendent

- Importance of a focus on 21st century skills, ensuring that all children combine core subject mastery with other significant skills, including critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration skills; information and communication technology literacy; life skills (leadership, ethics, personal productivity, self-directed learning); and twenty-first century content (global awareness and business fundamentals and economic literacy).
- Importance of developing collaborative structures (e.g., district, department, building, grade-level teams) to facilitate communication, build trust and credibility, and stay focused on the collective and shared responsibility for improving student achievement.
- Importance of providing full access to challenging content aligned with rigorous standards for all students and student groups as part of closing the achievement and expectation gap.

Essential Skills & Practices: *What do I need to do?*

1. Require the district-wide use of an established curriculum aligned with district goals.
2. Ensure the development and implementation of high-quality standards-based instruction aligned with district goals.
3. Establish clear priorities among the district's instructional goals and strategies.
4. Require use of a process that accurately monitors implementation of the district's instructional program.
5. Ensure that the district curriculum and instructional program are designed to provide full access and opportunity to all students/student groups to meet district goals.
6. Require the systemic implementation and ongoing evaluation of prevention/intervention strategies as part of its instructional program to ensure that all students meet performance targets.
7. Require the frequent use of collaboratively developed common formative classroom assessments to gauge student progress and guide instructional planning toward meeting district goals.
8. Define and expect principals to fulfill instructional leader responsibilities.
9. Require administrators and building leadership teams (BLTs) to take action to ensure the progress of each student toward meeting district goals.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can I go for help?*

Exemplars

Area 4: Community Engagement Process - Superintendent

- Importance of meaningfully involving all relevant stakeholders to assist the superintendent and board in establishing district goals.
- Importance of gaining support for needed improvements and to sustain a focus on district goals.
- Importance of managing change needed to improve student achievement.
- Importance of assessing the effectiveness of the community engagement process.
- Importance of engaging both internal and external community members, defined as those individuals who affect or are affected by the success of the district [typical stakeholder groups include students, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, school administrators, students' immediate family members, school board members, community leaders, local business and industry representatives, and citizens who live in the community(ies)].

Essential Skills & Practices *What do I need to do?*

1. Collaborate effectively with internal and external community members in the development and support of district goals.
2. Communicate clear expectations with regard to district goals.
3. Offer opportunities for meaningful input and feedback from internal and external community members with regard to district goals.
4. Ensure that partnership activities are focused on district goals.
5. Provide for training/support as needed by internal and external community members to enable them to meaningfully participate in activities aligned with district goals.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can I go for help?*

Exemplars

Area 5: Resource Management Process - Superintendent

- Importance of broadening the definition of resource management to include the management of time, money, staff, and programmatic resources, emphasizing the importance of directing effort toward student achievement.
- Importance of including the district business manager/director of business operations/treasurer as an integral member of the district leadership team.
- Importance of maintaining shared central office and school authority over major resource decisions, focusing district and building meetings on learning and instruction, using performance data to guide program decisions, investing in targeted professional development aligned with identified needs, and investing in academic support programs to narrow or close achievement gaps.
- Importance of making “proactive, highly intentional decisions” about the equitable (as compared to equal) allocation of resources to achieve the district’s non-negotiable goals.
- Importance of advocating for the generation of additional funding **aligned with meeting district goals**.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do I need to do?*

1. Focus the use of district resources, including time as well as staff, programmatic, and monetary resources to support district goals.
2. Use data to inform the budget process and ensure that appropriate resources are allocated to support the district’s continuous improvement plan (CIP).
3. Support the effective use of data to improve focused planning and instruction on a district-wide basis.
4. Support and equitably allocate resources to principals and their schools to meet the district’s CIP and school improvement plan (SIP).
5. Establish procedures to screen, interview and select staff based on district goals.
6. Develop and implement a system for staff performance reviews aligned with district goals.
7. Provide for extensive job-embedded professional development for all staff aligned with district goals.
8. Eliminate initiatives that are not aligned with district goals, or are ineffective in meeting district goals.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can I go for help?*

Exemplars

Area 6: Board Development & Governance Process - Superintendent

- Importance of the board's involvement in the development and approval of district goals, as well as the board's support for the district's goals for achievement and instruction, ensuring that these goals remain the primary focus of district efforts.
- Importance of the relationship of superintendent continuity to increases in student performance.
- Importance of engaging multiple constituencies to gain support for needed improvements and to sustain a focus on district goals.
- Importance of the moral imperative of maintaining a student-centered focus and ensuring that improvement efforts are designed to ensure the success of every child.
- Importance of shared understanding of the roles of the superintendent and board members.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do I need to do?*

1. Keep the purpose of ensuring the success of every student central to all decisions.
2. Work in partnership with board members to adopt and review all policies in meeting the district goals.
3. Report student achievement data and progress on district goals to the board on a regular and frequent basis.
4. Maintain high expectations for district and school performance.
5. Continually promote high expectations so that all internal and external stakeholders can articulate district goals.
6. Provide opportunities for and encourage board member participation in professional development aligned with district priorities.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can I go for help?*

Exemplars

District Leadership Team

Richard Elmore, Gregory Anrig Professor of Educational Leadership at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a senior research fellow at the Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), describes the purpose of leadership as one of improving instructional practice and performance, regardless of role. He asserts that the deromanticizing of leadership in American education – anchoring leadership in the focused work of instructional practice rather than in the character traits and actions of individual leaders - - would have a very positive effect on the quality of schools.

Distributing key leadership functions – all centered on improving practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment -- through the development and use of leadership teams shifts the focus of leadership from a single individual to a team of individuals that can function as purposeful communities, “enhancing the skills and knowledge of the people in the organization, creating a common culture of expectations around the use of those skills and knowledge, holding the various pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship with each other, and holding individuals accountable for their contributions to the collective result.” (Elmore, 2006, p. 59).

Promoting a culture of common expectations or commitment to district and school improvement by maintaining a district-wide focus on high achievement for all students is the primary function of the district leadership team (DLT). Consistent with recommendations provided by Achieve, Inc. in its 2006 report *Creating a World-Class Education System in Ohio*, the DLT could facilitate the called-for transition to a new role for central office – one that is much more student-focused and geared toward increasing principals’ effectiveness in improving outcomes and results for all children. This changing role means making more informed decisions with regard to hiring and allocating school personnel, allocating funding to schools, and providing a range of support services, as well as providing strategic management and support to schools and aligning school principals around a strategy for delivering against state standards.

Leadership functions of the DLT would include such tasks as setting performance targets aligned with Board-adopted district goals; monitoring performance against the targets; building a foundation for data-driven decision making on a system-wide basis; designing system planning and focused improvement strategies, structures, and processes; facilitating the development and use of collaborative structures; brokering or facilitating high-quality professional development consistent with district goals for instruction and achievement; and allocating system resources toward instructional improvement.

Elmore, R.F. (2006). School Reform from the Inside Out: Policy, Practice, and Performance. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard Educational Press.

Creating a World-Class Education System in Ohio (2007). Washington, DC: Achieve, Inc.

Related Resources

- Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession
- Ohio Standards for Principals
- Ohio Standards for Professional Development

Area 1: Data & the Decision Making Process - District Leadership Team

- Importance of identifying, collecting, analyzing and effectively using relevant data to identify greatest problems to be addressed, and to create the kind of culture and expectation that supports effective data-based decision-making at all levels of the system.
- Importance of developing shared accountability by broadening the concept of accountability to include “internal” measures that hold all adults accountable for improved student performance, rather than only external accountability imposed from outside.
- Importance of using data to continuously monitor student progress against performance targets and district established goals.
- Importance of addressing achievement and growth, and in getting past opinion through the use of data and research-based practices.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Establish and implement procedures and norms requiring the effective use of data at all levels of the system to drive improvement in instructional practice, to assess the impact on student achievement, and to make decisions about teaching and learning.
2. Model the effective use of data as an ongoing strategy to improve student performance.
3. Require the use of current aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data to establish district goals and measurable strategies for instruction and achievement.
4. Based on data analysis and interpretation, set performance targets for each building and grade level, planning for the success of all children and designed to close achievement and expectation gaps for every subgroup of the population.
5. Assist administrators in monitoring staff use of data to inform instructional decisions.
6. Provide training, support, and guidance in the effective use of data for building level teams.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

[How does your school Measure Up? Move Ahead](#)

Exemplars

Area 2: Focused Goal Setting Process - District Leadership Team

- Importance of identifying -- based on a review of data -- a limited number of goals, and a limited number of strategies for each goal, that allow for concentrated focus on the core work that needs to be done to improve student performance.
- The importance of aligning district work with district goals for instruction and achievement (i.e., defined as non-negotiable goals that are collaboratively developed, board adopted, and stable/sustainable over an extended period of time).
- Importance of reducing the number of initiatives to align improvement efforts on a district-wide basis around two or three focused goals and a limited number of strategies directly related to identified needs.
- Importance of developing one plan, rather than multiple and often contradictory plans, aligned with district goals.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Support the development and ongoing monitoring of a single district improvement plan (CIP) that focuses on a limited number of district goals.
2. Facilitate the implementation of the district improvement plan with a limited number of district goals that are based on current aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data.
3. Commit to continuous improvement toward meeting district goals.
4. Convey to all schools the district's vision and mission for guiding the collaborative development of district goals, and communicate performance targets to all buildings.
5. Ensure that schools have a focused school improvement plan (SIP) clearly aligned to and designed to meet the district's CIP.
6. Implement an internal accountability system that holds the adults at all levels accountable for results.
7. Monitor the progress of the district improvement plan and, based on current data, make necessary adjustments.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

: Process/Stage 2: Develop Focused Plan

Exemplars

Area 3: Instruction & the Learning Process - District Leadership Team

- Importance of a focus on 21st century skills, ensuring that all children combine core subject mastery with other significant skills, including critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration skills; information and communication technology literacy; life skills (leadership, ethics, personal productivity, self-directed learning); and twenty-first century content (global awareness and business fundamentals and economic literacy).
- Importance of developing collaborative structures (e.g., district, department, building, grade-level teams) to facilitate communication, build trust and credibility, and stay focused on the collective and shared responsibility for improving student achievement.
- Importance of providing full access to challenging content aligned with rigorous standards for all students and student groups as part of closing the achievement and expectation gap.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Support the implementation of high-quality standards-based instruction aligned with the district's curriculum and goals for instruction and achievement on a district-wide basis.
2. Assure that the district curriculum is the curriculum used in all schools.
3. Convey clear priorities among the district's instructional goals and strategies.
4. Ensure the delivery of high-quality instruction on a district-wide basis that is based on research-based practices, engages students, incorporates culturally responsive practices, and relies on ongoing assessment and progress monitoring to inform instruction.
5. Implement the process that accurately monitors the district's instructional program.
6. Monitor student achievement, ensuring that school instructional practices are designed to provide full access and opportunity to all students/student groups to meet district goals.
7. Ensure the systemic implementation and ongoing evaluation of prevention/intervention strategies as part of its instructional program to ensure that all students meet performance targets.
8. Require the frequent use of collaboratively developed common formative classroom assessments to gauge student progress and guide instructional planning toward meeting district goals.
9. Assist administrators in fulfilling instructional leader responsibilities.
10. Assist administrators and building leadership teams (BLTs) to effectively monitor the progress of all students in their building toward meeting district goals.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Exemplars

Area 4: Community Engagement Process - District Leadership Team

- Importance of meaningfully involving all relevant stakeholders to assist the superintendent and board members in establishing district goals.
- Importance of engaging multiple constituencies to gain support for needed improvements and to sustain a focus on district goals.
- Importance of managing change needed to improve student achievement.
- Importance of engaging both internal and external community members, defined as those individuals who affect or are affected by the success of the district [typical stakeholder groups include students, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, school administrators, students' immediate family members, school board members, community leaders, local business and industry representatives, and citizens who live in the community(ies)].

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Collaborate effectively with internal and external community members in the development and support of district goals.
2. Communicate clear expectations with regard to district goals.
3. Offer opportunities for meaningful input and feedback from internal and external community members with regard to district goals.
4. Develop partnerships focused on district goals.
5. Provide training/support needed by internal and external community members to enable them to meaningfully participate in activities aligned with district goals.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Exemplars

Area 5: Resource Management Process - District Leadership Team

- Importance of broadening the definition of resource management to include the management of time, money, staff, and programmatic resources, emphasizing the importance of directing effort toward student achievement.
- Importance of including the district business manager/director of business operations/treasurer as an integral member of the district leadership team.
- Importance of maintaining shared central office and school authority over major resource decisions.
- Importance of focusing district and building meetings on learning and instruction.
- Importance of using performance data to guide program decisions, investing in targeted professional development aligned with identified needs, and investing in academic support programs to narrow or close achievement gaps.
- Importance of forecasting resources needed to meet district goals.
- Importance of making “proactive, highly intentional decisions” about the equitable (as compared to equal) allocation of resources to achieve district goals.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Assess and make recommendations to the superintendent regarding financial and capital management aligned to district goals for instruction and achievement.
2. Use data to inform the budget process and allocate district resources to support district goals.
3. Allocate equitable and appropriate time, training, and resources to support the effective use of data to improve focused planning and instruction on a district-wide basis.
4. Assess and make recommendations to the superintendent regarding human resource development (including developing others as leaders) aligned to district goals.
5. Assess and make recommendations to the superintendent regarding scheduling aligned to district goals.
6. Support and allocate resources to schools to meet district goals.
7. Screen, interview and select staff based on district goals.
8. Establish and implement supervisory systems that ensure progress toward meeting district goals.
9. Provide for extensive job-embedded professional development aligned with district goals.
10. Identify initiatives not aligned with or ineffective in meeting district goals that should be eliminated.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Five-year forecasting

Exemplars

Area 6: Board Development & Governance Process - District Leadership Team

- Importance of the board's involvement in the development and approval of district goals, as well as the board's support for district goals for achievement and instruction, ensuring that these goals remain the primary focus of district efforts.
- Importance of the relationship of superintendent tenure to increases in student performance.
- Importance of engaging multiple constituencies to gain support for needed improvements and to sustain a focus on district goals around instruction and achievement.
- Importance of the moral imperative of maintaining a student-centered focus and ensuring that improvement efforts are designed to ensure the success of every child.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Keep the purpose of ensuring the success of every student central to all decisions.
2. Support the superintendent's work in partnership with board members to adopt and continually review progress toward meeting district goals.
3. Provide data and reports to the superintendent to inform the board as part of policy governance.
4. Maintain high expectations for district and school performance.
5. Continually promote high expectations so that all internal and external community members can articulate district goals.
6. Support the provision of professional development aligned with district priorities for board members.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Exemplars

Building Leadership Team

Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) describe the development of a strong building leadership team (BLT) and the distribution -- throughout the team -- of some of the 21 practices that characterize the job of an effective principal as key steps in enhancing student achievement (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). Such practices, identified through McREL's meta-analysis of 35 years of research on school-level leadership, suggests that leading a building requires a "complex array of skills" not likely to be found in a single individual and support the need for a strong leadership team. Selecting the right work (i.e., work that has a high probability of improving student achievement), identifying the order of magnitude implied by the selected work, and matching strengths of leadership team members to the kind of changes needed (first-order or second-order) for significantly improving student achievement are other key components of developing a plan for effective leadership. These leadership functions are reflected in the *Ohio Standards for Principals*.

Selecting the right work based on data-based decision making and focused planning, as well as developing the collective know-how to do the right work often require the implementation of new collaborative structures and processes for aligning shared responsibility, expectations, and accountability across the school. Michael Fullan, professor of policy studies at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto and recognized expert in educational reform and organizational turnaround, encourages districts and schools to understand that all successful improvement strategies are socially based and action oriented. In other words, all successful turnarounds develop collaboration where there was none before, highlighting the need to improve relationships as a core strategy of effective improvement.

BLTs can play a pivotal role in fostering shared leadership and responsibility for the success of every child through the creation of purposeful communities at the school level. Marzano, Waters, & McNulty (2005) define a purposeful community as one with the collective efficacy and capability to develop and use assets to accomplish goals that matter to all community members through agreed-upon processes. In Ohio's schools of promise/schools of distinction, it is this sense of collective efficacy -- or the shared belief on the part of staff that they can make a difference in children's lives -- that is integral to improving student performance on a school-wide basis.

Shared leadership structures through high-performing BLTs also provide greater opportunities for teacher leadership inside and outside of the classroom where teacher leaders take on a variety of differentiated roles and responsibilities, such as learning facilitators, instructional specialists, curriculum specialists, data coaches, learner, mentor, and catalyst for change (Harrison, C., & Killion, K., 2007).

In addition to supporting improvement in instructional practice on a school-wide basis through teacher leadership, the leadership functions of the BLT would include such tasks as building a school culture that supports effective data-driven decision-making; establishing priorities for instruction and achievement aligned with district goals; providing opportunities for teachers to learn from each other; monitoring and providing effective feedback on student progress; supporting the development, implementation, and monitoring of focused building improvement strategies/plans; and making recommendations for the management of resources, including time and personnel, to meet district and building goals.

Fullan, M. (2006) Turnaround Leadership. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Harrison, C., & Killion, K. (2007). Ten roles for teacher leaders. Educational Leadership, Sept., Vol. 65, No. 1.

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Related Resources

- Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession
- Ohio Standards for Principals
- Ohio Standards for Professional Development

Area 1: Data & the Decision Making Process - Building Leadership Team

- Importance of identifying, collecting, analyzing and effectively using relevant data to identify greatest problems to be addressed, and to create the kind of culture and expectation that supports effective data-based decision-making at all levels of the system.
- Importance of the need to disaggregate data by subgroup to understand and address gaps between students based on race, poverty, English proficiency, and identified disability.
- Importance of developing shared accountability by broadening the concept of accountability to include “internal” measures that hold all adults accountable for improved student performance, rather than only external accountability imposed from outside.
- Importance of using data to continuously monitor student progress against performance targets and district established goals.
- Importance of addressing achievement and growth, and in getting past opinion through use of data and research-based practices.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Establish data teams (including course, grade level, grade band or vertical team, department) and implement procedures for the effective use of data to assess the impact on student learning, and to make decisions about teaching and learning.
2. Create a school culture that supports the effective use of data to improve student performance by organizing and presenting data in ways that identify gaps and trends in student performance and requiring intentional decisions regarding curriculum and instruction, interventions, and professional development.
3. Support the use of current aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data to establish measurable strategies aligned with district goals for instruction and achievement.
4. Ensure data teams use building, course, and classroom data to constantly monitor progress in meeting performance targets for the building and at each grade level, planning for the success of all children and designed to close achievement and expectation gaps.
5. Ensure the skillful and accurate use of data by providing ongoing training and support throughout the building.
6. Monitor staff use of data to inform instructional decisions and organization for learning (e.g., schedules, grading, grade-level configurations, interventions, etc.).
7. Provide support to all building-level data teams and regularly review and analyze building level data and provide guidance for classroom level actions.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

[How does your school Measure Up?
Move Ahead](#)
Ohio Data Primer

Exemplars

Area 2: Focused Goal Setting Process - Building Leadership Team

- Importance of identifying, based on a review of data, a limited number of strategies for addressing district goals, which allow for concentrated focus on the core work that needs to be done to improve student performance.
- Importance of reducing the number of initiatives to align improvement efforts on a district-wide basis around two or three focused goals directly related to identified needs.
- Importance of developing one plan, rather than multiple and often contradictory plans, aligned with district goals.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Communicate to all staff how the district's vision, mission, and focused goals relate to the school improvement plan (SIP).
2. Commit to the development, implementation and ongoing monitoring of the SIP (based on current aggregated and disaggregated student achievement data) aligned to the district's CIP.
3. Develop and implement internal accountability indicators for research-based/effective practices and objective performance that hold staff accountable for results.
4. Use a sustainable data-based system to monitor progress and make necessary adjustments to the implementation of the SIP.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Ohio Improvement Process /Stage 2: Develop Focused Plan

Exemplars

Area 3: Instruction and the Learning Process - Building Leadership Team

- Importance of a focus on 21st century skills, ensuring that all children combine core subject mastery with other significant skills, including critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, communication, and collaboration skills; information and communication technology literacy; life skills (leadership, ethics, personal productivity, self-directed learning); and twenty-first century content (global awareness and business fundamentals and economic literacy).
- Importance of developing collaborative structures (e.g., district, department, building, grade-level teams) to facilitate communication, build trust and credibility, and stay focused on the collective and shared responsibility for improving student achievement.
- Importance of providing full access to challenging content aligned with rigorous standards for all students and student groups as part of closing the achievement and expectation gap.

Essential Skills & Practices: *What do we need to do?*

1. Ensure that the established district curriculum is the curriculum used by all teachers in the school, and ensure instruction is aligned with the big ideas and essential questions embedded in the curriculum.
2. Establish priorities for instruction and achievement based on data and aligned with district goals.
3. Monitor the implementation of the school instructional program and the follow through on the implementation of the data team's specific recommendations for instructional strategies.
4. Ensure the delivery of high-quality instruction on a school-wide basis that is based on research-based practices, engages students, incorporates culturally responsive practices, and relies on ongoing assessment and progress monitoring to inform instruction.
5. Require the systemic implementation and ongoing evaluation of prevention/intervention strategies as part of the building's instructional program to ensure that all students meet performance targets.
6. Require the frequent use of collaboratively developed common formative classroom assessments to gauge student progress toward meeting district goals.
7. Monitor student achievement, ensuring that each student has access to high quality instruction and is making progress toward meeting the district's CIP.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Exemplars

Area 4: Community Engagement Process - Building Leadership Team

- Importance of meaningfully involving all relevant stakeholders to assist the superintendent and board members in establishing district goals.
- Importance of engaging multiple constituencies to gain support for needed improvements and to sustain a focus on district goals around instruction and achievement.
- Importance of managing change needed to improve student achievement.
- Importance of engaging both internal and external community members, defined as those individuals who affect or are affected by the success of the district [typical stakeholder groups include students, teachers, paraprofessionals, support staff, school administrators, students' immediate family members, school board members, community leaders, local business and industry representatives, and citizens who live in the community(ies)].

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Ensure that building strategies/action steps for instruction and achievement are aligned with district goals.
2. Engage internal and external community members in establishing and supporting building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.
3. Communicate clear expectations with regard to building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement on an ongoing basis.
4. Offer opportunities for meaningful input and feedback from internal and external community members with regard to building-level strategies/action steps for improving for instruction and achievement.
5. Develop collaborative partnerships aligned with building-level strategies/action steps for improving for instruction and achievement.
6. Provide for training/support needed by internal and external community members to enable them to meaningfully participate in activities aligned with building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Exemplars

Area 5: Resource Management Process - Building Leadership Team

- Importance of broadening the definition of resource management to include the management of time, money, staff, and programmatic resources, emphasizing the importance of directing effort toward student achievement.
- Importance of maintaining shared central office and school authority over major resource decisions.
- Importance of focusing school meetings on learning and instruction.
- Importance of using performance data to guide program decisions, investing in targeted professional development aligned with identified needs, and investing in academic support programs to narrow or close achievement gaps.
- Importance of making “proactive, highly intentional decisions” about the equitable (as compared to equal) allocation of resources to implement the school’s strategies/action steps aligned with district goals.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Use data to inform the budget process and allocate building resources to support building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.
2. Use resources to provide training on the effective use of data for planning and instruction.
3. Screen, interview and select staff based on building-level strategies/action steps for improving for instruction and achievement.
4. Align staff performance reviews with building-level strategies/action steps for improving for instruction and achievement.
5. Make recommendations for human resource development (including developing others as leaders) with building-level strategies/action steps for improving for instruction and achievement.
6. Make recommendations for human resource deployment (teacher assignment, staffing patterns) with building-level strategies/action steps for improving for instruction and achievement.
7. Provide for extensive job-embedded professional development aligned with building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.
8. Make recommendations regarding scheduling and time management based on building-level strategies/action steps for improving for instruction and achievement.
9. Eliminate initiatives that are not aligned with or are ineffective in meeting building-level strategies/action steps for improving for instruction and achievement.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Exemplars

Area 6: Building Governance Process - Building Leadership Team

- Importance of the board's involvement in the development and approval of district goals, as well as the board's support for district goals for achievement and instruction, ensuring that these goals remain the primary focus of district and school efforts.
- Importance of principal leadership in improving student achievement.
- Importance of engaging multiple constituencies to gain support for needed improvements and to sustain a focus on district goals around instruction and achievement.
- Importance of the moral imperative of maintaining a student-centered focus and ensuring that improvement efforts are designed to ensure the success of every child.

Essential Skills & Practices *What do we need to do?*

1. Work in partnership with district leadership to continually review the school's progress toward meeting the building-level strategies/action steps aligned with district goals.
2. Keep the purpose of ensuring the success of every student central to all decisions.
3. Ensure that monitoring implementation of the building improvement plan is a standing agenda item of school staff meetings.
4. Continually communicate high expectations for school performance.
5. Continually promote high expectations so that all internal and external community members can articulate the building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.
6. Promote shared leadership through the effective use of professional learning communities and building-level data teams aligned with the building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.

Resources: Tools & Links *Where can we go for help?*

Exemplars