Tools for Instructional Teams and Teachers

Shared Leadership Self-Assessment

Shared Leadership

Shared leadership requires the appropriate distribution of decision-making among the constituencies of the school community; attention to the human element; the internalization of values, purpose, and practice within a distinct school culture; and business-like proceedings of the various teams. When leadership is shared, the leadership capacity of all the participants must be nurtured. Time for decision-making is essential. While organizing teams and distributing decision-making among them is a structural first step, the principal retains a central role in coordinating the teams' activities, maintaining focus on the school's goals, and fostering a culture in which values, purpose, and practices are embedded and not dependent upon the particular players who occupy roles in the school community.

Making good decisions depends upon access to timely and pertinent information—data and research. The principal serves as the keeper of a system of data collection, organization, and presentation, with each team playing its part in the process. Data fall into two categories—student learning data and operational data. Research is tied to identified directions and problems which are often expressed in the school improvement plan.

The forms on the following pages may be used to assess the current status of key elements of a decision-making system. A Leadership Team can work through these forms to self-assess where they believe they excel or need to improve. For items checked "No" on the assessment of the current situation, the leadership team can plan for how they might improve in this area by creating step-by-step tasks, assigning a person to have primary responsibility, and choose an expected date for completion of each task.

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A. Shared Leadership	Assessing the Current Situation	
The District	Yes	No
1. District policies and procedures support site-based decision-making.		
2. District and school decision-makers are connected by frequent interaction, two-way communication, problem solving, mutual coordination, and reciprocal influence.		
3. The district has provided the school with a "letter of understanding" about the school's continuous improvement system and the district's support for it.		
4. The district has assigned a contact person for the school to serve as a liaison between the central office and the school to advance the school's continuous improvement.		
Teams and Time		
1. A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan and school governance policy.		
2. A Leadership Team including the principal and teacher leaders from each Instructional Team is in place.		
3. The Leadership Team meets regularly (twice a month or more).		
4. The Leadership Team seeks the input of others not on the team, in order to represent all faculty/staff.		
5. The Leadership Team serves as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff.		
6. The Leadership Team shares in decisions of real substance pertaining to curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development.		
7. The Leadership Team regularly looks at school performance data and uses that data to make decisions about school improvement needs.		
8. Teachers are organized into grade-level, grade-level cluster, or subject-area Instructional Teams.		
9. Instructional Teams meet regularly (twice a month or more) to conduct business.		
10. Instructional Teams meet for blocks of time sufficient to develop and refine units of instruction and review student learning data.		
11. A School Community Council including the principal, teacher representative(s), counselor, parent liaison, and parents is in place.		

Teams and Time	Yes	No
12. A majority of the members of the SCC are parents of currently enrolled students who are not also employees of the school.		
13. The SCC meets regularly (twice a month or more).		
14. The SCC is organized with a constitution and by-laws.		
15. All teams prepare agendas for their meetings.		
16. All teams maintain official minutes of their meetings.		
17. The principal maintains a file of the agendas, work products, and minutes of all teams.		
The Principal		
1. Principal makes sure everyone understands the school's mission, clear goals, and their roles in meeting the goals.		
2. Principal leads and participates actively with the Leadership Team.		
3. Principal participates actively with the SCC and shows support for its significance.		
4. Principal monitors the work of the Instructional Teams and helps to keep them focused on instructional improvement.		
5. Principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction regularly.		
6. Principal helps poorly performing teachers to improve.		
7. Principal spends at least 50% of his/her time working directly with teachers to improve instruction.		

B. Data and Research	Assessing the Current Situation	
Student Learning Data	Yes	No
1. The school tests every student annually with the same achievement test in basic subject areas so that each student's year-to-year progress can be tracked.		

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B. Data and Research	Assessing the Current Situation	
2. The school tests each student at least 3 times each year to determine progress toward standards-based objectives.		
3. Teachers receive timely reports of results from periodic, standards-aligned tests.		
4. The school maintains a central database that includes each student's test scores, placement information, demographic information, attendance, behavior indicators, and other variables useful to teachers.		
5. Teams and teachers receive timely reports from the central database to assist in making decisions about each student's placement and instruction.		
6. Yearly learning goals are set for the school by the Leadership Team, utilizing student learning data.		
7. The Leadership Team monitors school-level student learning data.		
8. Instructional Teams use student learning data to assess strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum.		
9. Instructional Teams use student learning data to plan instruction.		
10. Instructional Teams use student learning data to identify students in need of instructional support or enhancement.		
11. Instructional Teams review the results of unit pre-/post-tests to make decisions about the curriculum and instructional plans.		
Operational Data		
1. The Leadership Team maintains an accessible file of key documents including the school improvement plan, policies and procedures, schedules, and program sescriptions.		
2. The Leadership Team maintains an accessible file of evaluations of the school's programs.		
3. The principal compiles reports from classroom observations, showing aggregate areas of strength and areas that need improvement without revealing the identity of individual teachers.		
4. The Leadership Team reviews the principal's summary reports of classroom observations and takes them into account in planning professional development.		
Operational Data	Yes	No

B. Data and Research	Assessing the Current Situation	
5. The school routinely (at least every 2 years) surveys parents, teachers, and students (middle and high school) to determine perceptions about the school and their connection to it.		
6. The Leadership Team maintains an accessible file of the agendas, minutes, and work products of the Leadership Team, Instructional Teams, and SCC.		
7. The school improvement plan's objectives are linked to action statements with follow-up monitoring of progress.		
Research		
1. The Leadership Team maintains an accessible file of research on topics tied to the school improvement plan.		
2. Teachers report on what they have learned at conferences and submit relevant information for inclusion in the research file.		
3. Representatives from the school visit other schools to see programs of interest, report their findings, and include the report in the research file.		
4. Instructional Teams investigate topics of particular interest and report their findings, including reports filed in the research file.		
5. Teams and individual teachers use the research files to inform their decisions.		

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