Examine your practice

Principals are required to lead in a variety of domains. Fortunately, several tools are available to use as self-assessments or in group learning situations.

Innovation configuration maps (ICs) are tools that describe specific behaviors clustered around desired outcomes. NSDC offers ICs for each of its 12 standards for staff development for principals and 10 other educator roles.

This IC delineates the principal's actions in working toward five desired outcomes for the Learning Communities standard. Levels 1-6 describe the variations of behaviors related to each outcome. Level 1 is the ideal variation, while Levels 4-6 are less acceptable variations.

DESIRED OUTCOME 1.1: Prepares teachers for skillful collaboration.

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
Ensures that the role of group facilitator becomes the responsibility of everyone and rotates as the skill level of group members increases. Provides training and support to develop faculty members to serve as skilled facilitators who provide support during whole school and learning team meetings.	Provides training and support to develop faculty members to serve as skilled facilitators who provide support during whole school and learning team meetings.	Provides opportunities for team leaders to learn about group process, group dynamics, the stages of group development, and group decision-making. Schedules multiple sessions throughout the year as well as coaching experiences.	Provides support to learning teams and/or whole school meetings throughout the stages of group development by supplying a skilled group facilitator.	Does not provide teachers professional development to build collaboration skills.	

DESIRED OUTCOME 1.2: Creates an organizational structure that supports collegial learning.

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
Persists with a regular schedule for collegial interaction in the face of resistance. Structures time for teacher reflection about their learning. Monitors to ensure the time is used well.	Structures the daily/weekly schedule for regular meeting times during the school day for collegial interaction. Monitors to ensure the time is used well.	Uses staff meetings for collegial interaction and sharing. Grade-level and content-area groups meet throughout the year with the goal of sharing ideas, resources, and curricula.	Does not adapt the structure of the school to accommodate collegial learning.		

More self-assessment tools

Newsletters. See the January and February 2007 issues of *The Learning Principal* for an extensive two-part self-assessment related to instructional leadership, reprinted from *What Every Principal Should Know About Instructional Leadership*, by Jeffrey Glanz (Corwin Press, 2006).

Web site. The National Association of Secondary School Principals features leadership skills assessment resources at www.principals.org.

Books and CD-ROMs. Purchase the complete set of NSDC's IC maps online at store.nsdc.org.

DESIRED OUTCOME 1.3: Understands and implements an incentive system that ensures collaborative work.

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
Works with teachers to create and implement an incentive system for learning teams. Recognizes and rewards joint work that results in student gains and accomplishes school goals.	Recognizes and rewards teams for working together to accomplish school goals and increase student learning.	Creates structures and processes to ensure there is mutual support among teachers while expecting each person to focus work on school goals and outcomes.	Requests that faculty members cooperate with each other.	Does not implement a support system for collaborative work.	

DESIRED OUTCOME 1.4: Creates and maintains a learning community to support teacher and student learning.

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
Builds a culture that respects risk-taking, encourages collegial exchange, identifies and resolves conflict, sustains trust, and engages the whole staff as a learning community to improve the learning of all students.	Works with faculty to create a variety of learning teams to attain different goals. Facilitates conflict resolution among group members. Supports learning teams by providing articles, videos, and other activities for use during team time.	Works with faculty to create learning teams with clear goals, outcomes, and results outlined in writing. Expects and reviews team logs each month in order to coordinate activities within and among the teams.	Creates ad hoc study teams without clear direction or accountability.	Does not create learning teams.	

DESIRED OUTCOME 1.5: Participates with other administrators in one or more learning communities.

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
Attends regular learning community meetings organized at the district, regional, state, and/or national level to identify and solve school challenges, as well as to learn together.	Meets regularly with a district learning team to solve school challenges and learn together.	Meets informally with administrative colleagues to discuss school challenges.	Provides support to learning teams and/or whole school meetings throughout the stages of group development by supplying a skilled group facilitator.	Does not participate in any learning community.	

Reprinted from *Moving NSDC's Staff Development Standards Into Practice: Innovation Configurations, Vol. 1.* NSDC, 2003.