OHIO'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

OLAC

Ohio Leadership Advisory Council

3RD EDITION

2022

*A Report on the Work of the **Ohio Leadership Advisory Council** from 2007 to 2022: Identifying and Implementing Essential Leadership Practices Needed by Superintendents, District Leadership Teams, Building Leadership Teams, and Teacher-based Teams to Make and Sustain Improvements in District-wide Instructional Practice and Student Learning*

A Partnership of the Buckeye Association of School Administrators *and the* Ohio Department of Education

Council Leadership and Membership

OLAC was established as a 50-member advisory and study group comprising representatives of key professional associations, business and school board representatives, practitioners in leadership roles, higher education representatives, and personnel from the state education agency and regional technical assistance providers. Today, OLAC development efforts continue to be informed by broad-based stakeholder representation from practicing superintendents, central office personnel, principals, and teachers from Ohio school districts; institutions of higher education; and the partner associations shown to the right.

OLAC: 15 Years Strong and Continually Improving!

The Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC) is a stakeholder-informed, statewide endeavor with a 15-year record of service to Ohio. Its longevity is a testament to the quality of the resources and support that OLAC continues to provide statewide to educators at the local, regional, and state level. Established by the Ohio Department of Education in collaboration with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA) in 2007, OLAC was charged with addressing four critical questions:

1. *What are the 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 instructional practice and student performance?*

2. *What are the 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. *What tools, products, and/or services should the state 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?*

4. *What are the policy implications affecting the development of a cohesive statewide leadership system for Ohio, including key components and leverage points for strengthening leadership in a coherent way?*

Over the ensuing 15 years, OLAC has redefined leadership for Ohio, established a foundation for continuous and sustainable improvement in instructional practice and student learning, and anchored the work of Ohio's statewide system of support. Central to this effort is the cohesive and coherent set of essential leadership practices for Ohio districts and their schools. The work of OLAC – represented in an ever-expanding array of high-quality resources and supports – continues to be directed by and facilitated through BASA in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Education.

From its inception forward, OLAC's work has been grounded in a strong belief in shared leadership. Two primary principles of shared leadership guide the development of OLAC tools and resources: (1) all educators have the capacity to lead and (2) essential leadership practices must be implemented at all levels to make and sustain improvements in student, adult, and organizational learning.

- *Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA)*
- *Ohio Association for Career and Technical Education (Ohio ACTE)*
- *Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (OAESA)*
- *Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators (OASSA)*
- *Ohio Council of Professors of Educational Administration (OCPEA)*
- *Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA)*
- *Ohio Education Association (OEA)*
- *Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT)*
- *Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA)*
- *Ohio School Psychologists Association (OSPA)*

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A Report on the Work of the *Ohio Leadership Advisory Council* from 2007 to 2022:

Identifying and Implementing Essential Leadership Practices Needed by Superintendents, District Leadership Teams, Building Leadership Teams, and Teacher-based Teams to Make and Sustain Improvements in Districtwide Instructional Practice and Student Learning

OLAC TENETS

1. **Leadership is a shared responsibility** and needs to be viewed not as a role, but as a set of essential practices directed toward the improvement of instruction with the ultimate aim of increasing students' learning.

2. **Leadership is a process distributed across an entire school system** – its central office and all of its buildings – involving shared responsibility for and concerted action on behalf of improved instructional practice and school performance.

3. **Accountability for school improvement requires leadership structures** (that is, district leadership teams, building leadership teams, and teacher-based teams) through which personnel take responsibility and hold one another accountable for organizing, implementing, monitoring, and learning from improvement processes.

4. **A collective focus on full and sustained implementation** – and monitoring of the degree of implementation – of a few potent yet flexible strategies provides the conditions necessary for school improvement.

5. **The Ohio Improvement Process (OIP)** – a structured process based on the use of a connected set of tools for reviewing, analyzing, and basing decisions on relevant data – provides a vehicle for initiating Ohio's Leadership Development Framework in ways that are responsive to stakeholders' insights about local commitments, needs, and assets.

6. **All learning, including teachers' learning of instructional practices, depends on changes in behavior** that respond to precise and relevant feedback. Procedures (e.g., routine classroom monitoring) that provide teachers with feedback and support constitute the most powerful way to enable teachers to improve their instructional performance. For professional learning to occur teachers must be deeply engaged in understanding and responding to such feedback and support, not simply trying to comply with external requirements.

FOREWORD

The Ohio Leadership Advisory Council's mission is to provide educators with the structures and resources necessary to develop and support effective leadership at every level. From its initial meeting on March 19, 2007, the Council recognized that its charge had to be addressed from a systems perspective. It also recognized that the hard work of supporting systemwide implementation of practices necessary to make real improvements on behalf of all students required a rethinking of what was meant by leadership.

Throughout the Council's early debates and discussions, members remained steadfast in their belief that traditional models of leadership, which most often conceptualized leadership as something residing in a person or persons, must be replaced with shared leadership models that acknowledged the collective contributions of many individuals working at various levels across the education system.

As the Council's work took shape, the Ohio Department of Education initiated work to develop the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP). The OIP – a structured five-step improvement process – was designed for use by all districts and schools, regardless of improvement status. OLAC established the essential leadership practices, and the OIP provided a vehicle for districts to use in establishing the scope of (and setting boundaries for) focused and collective conversations about how to use those practices to improve learning outcomes for all children.

Ohio has experienced much change over the past 15 years. But the principles underlying the work of OLAC are as relevant today as they were in 2007. Applied by OIP teams at the district, school, and teacher team levels, these principles guide improvement efforts, offer standards against which new opportunities for educational improvement and innovation can be assessed, and help districts and schools remain true to the core work of teaching and learning.

Each Child Our Future, Ohio's Strategic Plan for Education (2019-2024), communicates a critical vision for the future of the state's education system: Each of Ohio's 1.7 million schoolchildren will be challenged to discover and learn, prepared to pursue a fulfilling post-high school path, and empowered to become a resilient, lifelong learner who contributes to society (Ohio Department of Education, 2018, p. 9). Realizing this vision for the state's P12 education system requires adults *at all levels* of the education enterprise to work together to provide equitable opportunities to learn, and promote deeper levels of learning, for each child. Companion documents – such as *Each Child Means Each Child* and *Ohio's Plan to Raise Literacy Achievement* – provide additional guidance and direction on fulfilling the promise of the state strategic plan for all of Ohio's children.

Arguably, the challenges experienced by Ohio districts and their schools – as well as the regional technical assistance providers, higher education institutions, and professional associations that support them – have never been greater. A global pandemic, an increasingly politicized and polarized education landscape, and an increasingly diverse student population are some of the significant challenges that now confront educational decision-makers.

Despite these and other challenges, we applaud the teachers, administrators, related services personnel, and other educators across Ohio who act on their professional and moral obligation to improve learning opportunities and outcomes for every child every day. We encourage them to use OLAC resources and OIP leadership team structures to focus and align their efforts across the system in order to make continual improvements in the quality of instruction that is provided to each child.

Implementing and Sustaining a Cohesive Leadership Development System: 15 Years Later

The Role of Leadership as a Critical Component of the Ohio Improvement Process

The leadership development framework presented in this report 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. The Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) provides a means of aligning processes, structures, tools, and people to significantly improve instructional practice and student performance.

This framework delineates leadership roles and responsibilities of leadership teams at the superintendent, district, school, and teacher-team level that can be used to:

- **Prioritize Improvement in Teaching and Learning** – *by developing a clear vision of what constitutes effective pedagogy and making it the core work of the district; and developing system coherence around the shared vision and goals for teaching and learning.*

- **Build Capacity through Support and Accountability** – *by attracting, supporting, and retaining qualified personnel at all levels; and developing cultures of inquiry to support the collective examination of teaching practices and their effect on student learning.*

- **Sustain an Open and Collaborative Culture** – *by sharing leadership as a collaborative responsibility between central office and schools; maintaining open two-way communication among the district, school, and classroom levels; and promoting professional collaboration within, between, and across schools in the district.*

- **Promote Systemwide Learning** – *by using data as feedback to the system on its effectiveness in meeting the instructional needs of all groups of students; modeling effective teaching practices; refining a theory of action that intentionally links strategic actions of the central office with intended results; and that uses evidence of student learning, teaching, learning conditions, and leadership practice to hold both schools and the district reciprocally accountable for their part or contribution to improvement.*

The third edition of *Ohio's Leadership Development Framework* promotes the use of the most essential practices for superintendents, district leadership teams, building leadership teams, and teacher-based teams within the context of the four major leadership domains noted above. Evidence suggests that the use of these practices when implemented deeply on a districtwide basis, will lead to better results for all learners.

The Work of the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council

The Ohio Leadership Advisory Council was formed to facilitate the development of a leadership system for educators that would reach from top to bottom and across all levels. This system, which includes superintendents, principals, teachers, and other personnel, would affect every level of Ohio's education enterprise – from the state, to all regions, to the district, to the school building, and to the classroom.

At the inception of the Council's work, its goals were to (1) identify the essential skills or practices that superintendents and leadership teams at the district and school level must demonstrate to improve instructional practice and student performance; (2) identify the types of professional development and support needed to assist leaders in acquiring these skills, and how it can be deployed in such a way to allow for universal access, as well as more targeted or intensive support for districts that need it; (3) identify the tools or products needed to facilitate their development; and (4) identify the policy implications that must be considered in developing a coordinated and coherent leadership development system.

Today, OLAC's work focuses on developing aligned resources for assisting districts to effectively support the use of these practices in all classrooms within all schools across the district. At the same time, OLAC supports the development and use of aligned resources by higher education faculty, regional technical assistance providers, professional association representatives, and state education agency personnel across Ohio.

OLAC specifies essential leadership practices in the following six core areas, outlining what superintendents, district leadership teams (DLTs), building leadership teams (BLTs), and teacher-based teams (TBTs) need to do to improve instructional practice and student performance.

AREA 1: DATA AND THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

This area recognizes that improvement cannot be random and reinforces the need to create and use one integrated plan with a limited number of focused goals based on data and directly aligned to identified needs.

AREA 2: FOCUSED GOAL SETTING PROCESS

This area focuses on (1) using data to gain clarity around the biggest problems to be addressed and (2) creating a system that provides feedback and continuous use of data to monitor school practices and their impact on student achievement.

AREA 3: INSTRUCTION AND THE LEARNING PROCESS

This area emphasizes the importance of clarity of learning outcomes, full access to challenging curriculum for all students, the integration of core subject matter competence with a focus on critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and the creation of collaborative structures to improve the collective use of evidence-based practices to support high-quality teaching and learning.

AREA 4: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

This area focuses on the importance of involving stakeholders to assist the superintendent and board in the establishment of district goals around instruction and achievement and of gaining support for sustaining the focus on improving instructional practice and student performance.

AREA 5: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

This area focuses on broadening how we think about resources to include not only money but personnel, programmatic resources, time, and data and ensuring that all resources are used in an intentional way to support district goals for instruction and achievement.

AREA 6: BOARD RELATIONS AND GOVERNANCE PROCESS

[Building Governance Process – at the School Level; Team Governance Process – at the Teacher-team Level]

This area focuses on the critical role of the board in developing and supporting district goals for instruction and achievement and ensuring that these goals remain the primary focus of district work.

OHIO'S LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

"I believe leadership is giving those you serve the opportunity for success and leading by example, always willing to do what you expect others to do."

Krista Maxson, PhD
Associate Vice Chancellor, P-16 Initiatives

Ohio Department of Higher Education

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 an increasing number of studies on the impact of district and school leadership on student achievement, lends support for the use of shared leadership approaches that can be used to distribute key leadership functions, and align and focus work across the system to improve instructional practice and student learning.

Transitioning *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 is reflected in *Ohio's Leadership Development Framework*.

Exercising effective leadership at all levels of the education enterprise acknowledges 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. Such leadership acknowledges the critical role that superintendents play in focusing efforts across the system on ensuring equitable opportunities to learn for each child and establishing non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction.

It also requires central office leadership and school-level leadership to work hand-in-hand to ensure the coherent use of evidence-based instructional practices for all children, no matter their school and classroom assignment (Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010). And it requires the aligned use of leadership team structures at the district, school, and teacher-team level to improve the capacity of districts to make and sustain improvements through collaborative dialogue and learning among all personnel.

Inherent in these requirements is the recognition that district culture must 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.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

What superintendents do matters! They set the stage for student learning on a *systemwide basis*. They set the stage not just for improving the performance of all students, but also for closing achievement gaps between groups of students.

What does setting the stage mean? First and foremost, it means establishing and sharing a worthwhile vision for the improvement of teaching and learning and using that vision to focus the core work of the district. This focus specifies the direction of the improvement effort and sets expectations for key improvement strategies, such as facilitating and monitoring adult implementation of agreed-on strategies and actions; monitoring student learning (both overall and among subgroups); providing time and structure for frequent collaborative conversations about teaching and learning; 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 adult and student learning across multiple dimensions. In effective districts and schools, this kind of improvement does not happen by chance.

In a 2006 analysis of 27 studies conducted since 1970, the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) found a statistically significant relationship between district-level leadership and student achievement. This research demonstrated that effective superintendents create goal-oriented districts focused on teaching and learning goals (i.e., goals that 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***.

> *"Poverty and illiteracy never take a break, and neither can we! I can turn to the OLAC website to find the resources, team, and motivation I need to combat the challenges our students, parents, and teachers face."*
>
> **John Larkin Maynard EdS**
> *Preschool Supervisor*
> *Darke County Educational Service Center*

In particular, McREL's study highlighted several superintendent actions that were positively correlated with improved student achievement. These actions included: (1) working with the School Board to involve relevant stakeholders in establishing goals for the district; (2) setting non-negotiable goals (i.e., goals that all staff members must act upon related to student achievement and classroom instruction); (3) setting specific achievement targets for schools and students; (4) ensuring the consistent use of research-based instructional strategies in all classrooms to reach established achievement targets; (5) continually monitoring district progress toward achieving instructional goals and ensuring that these goals remain the driving force behind the district's actions; (6) allocating the necessary resources (including time, money, personnel, and materials) to accomplish the district's goals; and (7) eliminating initiatives that are not aligned with district goals for achievement and instruction.

A Wallace Foundation-commissioned study conducted in 2010 also found that "district policies and practices focused on instruction are sufficiently powerful that they can be *felt* by teachers as an animating force behind strong, focused leadership by principals" (p. 203). The study highlighted the importance of developing the capacity for instructional leadership through the development of instructional teams, lending further support for a collective, collaborative approach to improving professional practice.

The importance of building the professional leadership capacity needed to provide equitable access to high-quality teaching for all children was again highlighted in a February 2021 synthesis of two decades of research on the critical role of principal leadership. The report, commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, called on districts to focus the "work of school principals toward educational equity and for school districts to prioritize the needs for increasingly diverse student backgrounds, both in hiring and retaining effective leaders for high-need schools and in ensuring that leaders from diverse backgrounds have equitable access to principal roles (Grissom, Egalite, & Lindsay, 2021, p. xvii).

Area 1: Data and the Decision-Making Process – Superintendent

Decisions about educational needs and actions require justification. Evidence (data) and logic (sound reasoning) foster good decisions.

- *A culture of trust and openness between educators and leaders sustains data use over time (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).*
- *Sustained use of data directs educators' attention to performance differences across student groups (Bertrand & Marsh, 2015; Datnow & Park, 2018; Telfer, 2012).*
- *Routine data use builds internal forms of accountability (Felner, Bolton, Seitsinger, Brand, & Burns, 2008; Fullan, 2011; Datnow & Park, 2018).*

Essential Practices

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, expectation, and implementation 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 district and building-level actions and the actions of teacher-based teams.

Area 2: Focused Goal Setting Process – Superintendent

Planning for improved teaching and learning requires focus. Focus notably includes selecting a limited number of goals and strategies.

- *Focus is strategic at the district level: it is the core of coherent improvement planning (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2020; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015; Jacobson, 2010).*
- *All levels of the system need focus to sponsor development of practices that work to support all teachers' teaching and all students' learning (Fullan & Pinchot, 2018; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015, Telfer, 2012).*
- *A limited portfolio of goals builds shared responsibility for the learning of all students and student groups (Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Hargreaves, Parsley, & Cox, 2015; Jacobson, 2010).*
- *Incoherent program adoptions block the systemic improvement of teaching and learning (Fullan, 2011, 2016; Fullan & Pinchot, 2018).*

Essential Practices

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, providing feedback and support, and making adjustments to implementation of the district improvement plan.

Area 3: Instruction and the Learning Process – Superintendent

Improvement of teaching and learning requires the collective adaptation of evidence-based practices. Leadership teams (DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs) do this work in Ohio.

- *Educators' collaborative work on teaching practices—guided by district leadership—drives improvement in teaching and learning (Datnow, 2011; Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010; Spillane & Louis, 2002).*
- *Locally relevant data efforts should guide collaborative decisions about changes to instructional practice (Datnow, 2011; Fullan & Levin, 2009; Hargreaves & Braun, 2012; Sutton, 2010).*
- *Teaching practices that need collaborative attention the most are those used with marginalized student groups (Hargreaves & Braun, 2012; Sharkey & Murnane, 2006; Telfer, 2012).*

Essential Practices

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 the district's 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, building leadership teams (BLTs), and teacher-based teams to take action to ensure the progress of each student toward meeting district goals.

> *"Leadership is a group endeavor, it is inclusive, it is a process, it ensures the hard questions are asked before decisions are made, it confronts inequity and champions high expectations and opportunities for ALL."*
>
> **Mike Trego**
> *Deputy Superintendent
> Educational Service Center of
> Central Ohio*

Area 4: Community Engagement Process – Superintendent

The improvement of teaching and learning requires the support of local communities. Meaningful relationships embed respect, shared participation, and shared responsibility.

- *Communities, families, and public schools need to work together to support the common good (Auerbach, 2012; Bellah & Tipton, 2006; Epstein, 2019).*
- *Authentic family engagement secures equity (Auerbach, 2012; Epstein, 2019; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).*
- *Too many educators remain reluctant to engage families and communities (Buchanan & Buchanan, 2017; Constantino, 2016; Epstein, 2019).*
- *Authentic family engagement improves student performance (Auerbach, 2010; Epstein, 2019; Sheridan, Smith, Kim, Bretetvas, & Park, 2019).*

Essential Practices

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.

Area 5: Resource Management Process – Superintendent

A focused improvement plan requires follow-through with resource allocation. Personnel, facilities, administrative attention, goods and services, and professional development must follow the focus of the improvement plan.

- *The way leadership teams allocate money and other resources matters for the improvement of teaching and learning (Balu, 2017; Baker, 2016; Hanushek & Woessman, 2017).*

- *Leadership should spend money and allocate resources deliberately, according to plan rather than according to tradition (Jackson, Fixsen, & Ward, 2018; Marzano & Waters, 2009; Newman, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001; Odden & Archibald, 2009).*

- *Resource allocation should support the goals and strategies identified to promote improved learning for all children (Roza, 2018; Sutton, 2010).*

- *The deliberate allocation of resources to address equity pushes against the barriers that structure inequity in school and society, but the barriers do not readily give way (Roza, 2018; Tye, 2000).*

Essential Practices

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.

Area 6: Board Development and Governance Process – Superintendent

The improvement of teaching and learning requires the support of the school board. Effective boards help districts sustain their focused improvement goals.

- *School boards set the tenor of district governance culture (Alsbury & Gore, 2015; Campbell & Fullan, 2019).*
- *District governance culture can support (or subvert) improved teaching and learning (Alsbury & Gore, 2015; Campbell & Fullan, 2019).*
- *Superintendents and DLTs are responsible for developing the governance mindset of school boards (Campbell & Fullan, 2019; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000).*

Essential Practices

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.

Cathy LaForme, Ohio

Essential Practices for District Leadership Teams (DLTs)

Elmore (2006) claimed that deromanticizing 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 positive effect on the quality of schools. That predicted outcome certainly seems to explain the experience of countless Ohio school districts that have used OIP leadership team structures to build the professional capital needed to improve teaching and learning for all students.

Distributing key leadership functions – all centered on improving practices in curriculum, instruction, and assessment – through the development and use of leadership teams – DLTs, BLTs, TBTs – shifts the focus of leadership from a single individual to a team of colleagues that can function as a purposeful community. Such a community "enhanc[es] 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 shared understanding and expectations for what constitutes high-quality instructional practice, holding all schools accountable for following through on the full implementation of agreed-on strategies and actions to meet district-identified goals, and providing the support that schools need to make progress are key functions of Ohio's district leadership teams (DLTs). DLTs are instrumental in facilitating the transition of central office personnel from performing traditional managerial functions to providing support that assists all school principals and building leadership teams in improving learning opportunities and outcomes for all children. This changing role means working together across traditional departmental structures and making more informed decisions with regard to hiring and allocating school personnel, allocating funding to schools, and providing a range of support services aligned with the core work of the district.

The leadership of the DLT includes such functions 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 systemwide 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.

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

Decisions about educational needs and actions require justification. Evidence (data) and logic (sound reasoning) foster good decisions.

- *A culture of trust and openness between educators and leaders sustains data use over time (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).*
- *Sustained use of data directs educators' attention to performance differences across student groups (Bertrand & Marsh, 2015; Datnow & Park, 2018; Telfer, 2012).*
- *Routine data use builds internal forms of accountability (Felner, Bolton, Seitsinger, Brand, & Burns, 2008; Fullan, 2011; Datnow & Park, 2018).*

Essential Practices

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 adult implementation and 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, expectation, and implementation 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 leadership teams and teacher-based teams.

Area 2: Focused Goal Setting Process – District Leadership Team

Planning for improved teaching and learning requires focus. Focus notably includes selecting a limited number of goals and strategies.

- *Focus is strategic at the district level: it is the core of coherent improvement planning (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2020; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015; Jacobson, 2010).*
- *All levels of the system need focus to sponsor development of practices that work to support all teachers' teaching and all students' learning (Fullan & Pinchot, 2018; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015, Telfer, 2012).*
- *A limited portfolio of goals builds shared responsibility for the learning of all students and student groups (Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Hargreaves, Parsley, & Cox, 2015; Jacobson, 2010).*
- *Incoherent program adoptions block the systemic improvement of teaching and learning (Fullan, 2011, 2016; Fullan & Pinchot, 2018).*

Essential Practices

1. Support the development and ongoing monitoring of a single district improvement plan 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.

Area 3: Instruction and the Learning Process – District Leadership Team

Improvement of teaching and learning requires the collective adaptation of evidence-based practices. Leadership teams (DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs) do this work in Ohio.

- *Educators' collaborative work on teaching practices—guided by district leadership—drives improvement in teaching and learning (Datnow, 2011; Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010; Spillane & Louis, 2002).*
- *Locally relevant data efforts should guide collaborative decisions about changes to instructional practice (Datnow, 2011; Fullan & Levin, 2009; Hargreaves & Braun, 2012; Sutton, 2010).*
- *Teaching practices that need collaborative attention the most are those used with marginalized student groups (Hargreaves & Braun, 2012; Sharkey & Murnane, 2006; Telfer, 2012).*

Essential Practices

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 the district's 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, building leadership teams (BLTs), and teacher-based teams (TBTs) to effectively monitor the progress of all students in their building toward meeting district goals.

Area 4: Community Engagement Process –
District Leadership Team

The improvement of teaching and learning requires the support of local communities. Meaningful relationships embed respect, shared participation, and shared responsibility.

- *Communities, families, and public schools need to work together to support the common good (Auerbach, 2012; Bellah & Tipton, 2006; Epstein, 2019).*
- *Authentic family engagement secures equity (Auerbach, 2012; Epstein, 2019; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).*
- *Too many educators remain reluctant to engage families and communities (Buchanan & Buchanan, 2017; Constantino, 2016; Epstein, 2019).*
- *Authentic family engagement improves student performance (Auerbach, 2010; Epstein, 2019; Sheridan, Smith, Kim, Bretetvas, & Park, 2019).*

Essential Practices

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.Provide training/support needed by internal and external community members to enable them to meaningfully participate in activities aligned with district goals.

> *"With an understanding of the current state and a focus on what's possible, school leaders must use inclusive communication skills that create trusting and inclusive environments. This important skill serves to build and maintain relationships so that individual team members effortlessly understand and align their pursuits so that the collective power of the team reaches and provides support to all students with fluidity and fidelity. To that end, Ohio's Leadership Development Framework offers a pathway to establishing shared leadership practices that facilitate collective, effective and efficient efforts to reach and support all students."*
>
> **Scott DiMauro**
> *President*
> *Ohio Education Association (OEA)*

Area 5: Resource Management Process – District Leadership Team

A focused improvement plan requires follow-through with resource allocation. Personnel, facilities, administrative attention, goods and services, and professional development must follow the focus of the improvement plan.

- *The way leadership teams allocate money and other resources matters for the improvement of teaching and learning (Balu, 2017; Baker, 2016; Hanushek & Woessman, 2017).*
- *Leadership should spend money and allocate resources deliberately, according to plan rather than according to tradition (Jackson, Fixsen, & Ward, 2018; Marzano & Waters, 2009; Newman, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001; Odden & Archibald, 2009).*
- *Resource allocation should support the goals and strategies identified to promote improved learning for all children (Roza, 2018; Sutton, 2010).*
- *The deliberate allocation of resources to address equity pushes against the barriers that structure inequity in school and society, but the barriers do not readily give way (Roza, 2018; Tye, 2000).*

Essential Practices

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.

Area 6: Board Development and Governance Process – District Leadership Team

The improvement of teaching and learning requires the support of the school board. Effective boards help districts sustain their focused improvement goals.

- *School boards set the tenor of district governance culture (Alsbury & Gore, 2015; Campbell & Fullan, 2019).*
- *District governance culture can support (or subvert) improved teaching and learning (Alsbury & Gore, 2015; Campbell & Fullan, 2019).*
- *Superintendents and DLTs are responsible for developing the governance mindset of school boards (Campbell & Fullan, 2019; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000).*

Essential Practices

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.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR BUILDING LEADERSHIP TEAMS (BLTS)

BLTs 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. They provide the link between what gets discussed and decided by the DLT and what happens in the classroom as a result of the work and continuous learning of each school's TBTs.

What makes a community purposeful? As early as 2005, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty described purposeful communities as those with the collective efficacy and capability to develop and use assets to accomplish goals that matter to all community members through agreed-upon processes. From their perspective (and that of many others who have studied school-level leadership), leading a school requires a "complex array of skills" not likely to reside within the skillset of a single individual (p. 99).

Fullan (2011) offered further support for the development of strong communities (e.g., BLTs) as essential to districtwide success. In his view, "whole system success requires the commitment that comes from intrinsic motivation and improved technical competencies of groups of educators working together purposefully and relentlessly" (p. 8). He pointed to four conditions that are necessary for whole system reform: intrinsic motivation, instructional improvement, teamwork, and 'allness.'

More recently, Grissom and associates (2021) discussed the importance of four interrelated domains of principal practice that are necessary for integrating instruction, people, and organizational skills in order to improve school performance and outcomes. These domains entail practices that (1) support instructionally focused interactions with teachers, (2) build a productive climate, (3) facilitate collaboration and professional learning communities, and (4) manage personnel and resources strategically. These leadership practices, which are aligned with *Ohio Standards for Principals*, support the use of collaborative leadership team structures like the BLT.

BLTs are charged with supporting improvement in instructional practice on a school-wide basis. BLT leadership functions include such tasks as establishing priorities for instruction and achievement aligned with district goals; supporting the effective and ongoing use of data to monitor adult follow-through and student progress; providing frequent and structured opportunities for teachers to learn from one another; monitoring the implementation of agreed-on practices at the teacher-team level; providing effective feedback to teacher-based teams on implementation of agreed-on strategies and their effect on student learning; supporting the development, implementation, and monitoring of focused building improvement strategies and action plans; and making recommendations for the management of resources, including time and personnel, to meet district and building goals.

CRUCIAL ELEMENTS FOR WHOLE SYSTEM REFORM

1. *Foster intrinsic motivation of teachers and students;*

2. *Engage educators and students in continuous improvement of instruction and learning;*

3. *Inspire collective or team work; and*

4. *Affect all teachers and students – 100%*

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

Decisions about educational needs and actions require justification. Evidence (data) and logic (sound reasoning) foster good decisions.

- *A culture of trust and openness between educators and leaders sustains data use over time (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).*
- *Sustained use of data directs educators' attention to performance differences across student groups (Bertrand & Marsh, 2015; Datnow & Park, 2018; Telfer, 2012).*
- *Routine data use builds internal forms of accountability (Felner, Bolton, Seitsinger, Brand, & Burns, 2008; Fullan, 2011; Datnow & Park, 2018).*

Essential Practices

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, expectation, and implementation 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 teacher-based teams and regularly review and analyze building-level data and to provide guidance for classroom-level and teacher team actions.

Area 2: Focused Goal Setting Process – Building Leadership Team

Planning for improved teaching and learning requires focus. Focus notably includes selecting a limited number of goals and strategies.

- *Focus is strategic at the district level: it is the core of coherent improvement planning (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2020; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015; Jacobson, 2010).*
- *All levels of the system need focus to sponsor development of practices that work to support all teachers' teaching and all students' learning (Fullan & Pinchot, 2018; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015, Telfer, 2012).*
- *A limited portfolio of goals builds shared responsibility for the learning of all students and student groups (Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Hargreaves, Parsley, & Cox, 2015; Jacobson, 2010).*
- *Incoherent program adoptions block the systemic improvement of teaching and learning (Fullan, 2011, 2016; Fullan & Pinchot, 2018).*

Essential Practices

1. Communicate to all staff how the district's vision and 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, provide feedback and support, and make necessary adjustments to the implementation of the SIP.

> *"The Ohio Leadership Advisory Council has had an incredible effect on the education community over the past two decades. The powerful resources by role provided by OLAC deliver a variety of tools for school teachers and administrators. The ability to utilize OLAC for growing educators, combined with the assessment tools, allow educators to improve every day with established practices."*
>
> **David E. Axner, EdD**
> *Executive Director*
> *Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA)*

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

Improvement of teaching and learning requires the collective adaptation of evidence-based practices. Leadership teams (DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs) do this work in Ohio.

- *Educators' collaborative work on teaching practices—guided by district leadership—drives improvement in teaching and learning (Datnow, 2011; Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010; Spillane & Louis, 2002).*
- *Locally relevant data efforts should guide collaborative decisions about changes to instructional practice (Datnow, 2011; Fullan & Levin, 2009; Hargreaves & Braun, 2012; Sutton, 2010).*
- *Teaching practices that need collaborative attention the most are those used with marginalized student groups (Hargreaves & Braun, 2012; Sharkey & Murnane, 2006; Telfer, 2012).*

Essential Practices

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 teacher-based teams' 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.

Area 4: Community Engagement Process – Building Leadership Team

The improvement of teaching and learning requires the support of local communities. Meaningful relationships embed respect, shared participation, and shared responsibility.

- *Communities, families, and public schools need to work together to support the common good (Auerbach, 2012; Bellah & Tipton, 2006; Epstein, 2019).*
- *Authentic family engagement secures equity (Auerbach, 2012; Epstein, 2019; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).*
- *Too many educators remain reluctant to engage families and communities (Buchanan & Buchanan, 2017; Constantino, 2016; Epstein, 2019).*
- *Authentic family engagement improves student performance (Auerbach, 2010; Epstein, 2019; Sheridan, Smith, Kim, Bretetvas, & Park, 2019).*

Essential Practices

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 instruction and achievement.

5. Develop collaborative partnerships aligned with building-level strategies/action steps for improving 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.

Area 5: Resource Management Process – Building Leadership Team

A focused improvement plan requires follow-through with resource allocation. Personnel, facilities, administrative attention, goods and services, and professional development must follow the focus of the improvement plan.

- *The way leadership teams allocate money and other resources matters for the improvement of teaching and learning (Balu, 2017; Baker, 2016; Hanushek & Woessman, 2017).*

- *Leadership should spend money and allocate resources deliberately, according to plan rather than according to tradition (Jackson, Fixsen, & Ward, 2018; Marzano & Waters, 2009; Newman, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001; Odden & Archibald, 2009).*

- *Resource allocation should support the goals and strategies identified to promote improved learning for all children (Roza, 2018; Sutton, 2010).*

- *The deliberate allocation of resources to address equity pushes against the barriers that structure inequity in school and society, but the barriers do not readily give way (Roza, 2018; Tye, 2000).*

Essential Practices

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 instruction and achievement.

4. Align staff performance reviews with building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.

5. Make recommendations for human resource development (including developing others as leaders) with building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.

6. Make recommendations for human resource deployment (teacher assignment, staffing patterns) with building-level strategies/action steps for improving 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 instruction and achievement.

9. Eliminate initiatives that are not aligned with or are ineffective in meeting building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.

Area 6: Building Governance Process – Building Leadership Team

The improvement of teaching and learning requires the support of the school board. Effective boards help districts sustain their focused improvement goals.

- *School boards set the tenor of district governance culture (Alsbury & Gore, 2015; Campbell & Fullan, 2019).*
- *District governance culture can support (or subvert) improved teaching and learning (Alsbury & Gore, 2015; Campbell & Fullan, 2019).*
- *Superintendents and DLTs are responsible for developing the governance mindset of school boards (Campbell & Fullan, 2019; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000).*

Essential Practices

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 teacher-based teams aligned with the building-level strategies/action steps for improving instruction and achievement.

ESSENTIAL PRACTICES FOR TEACHER-BASED TEAMS (TBTs)

McNulty and Besser (2011) emphasized the need to develop leadership capacity at every level of a school system through "shared inquiry grounded in data" (p. 65). Their work on data teams *(called teacher-based teams in Ohio)* encourages districts to establish collaborative teams that use a structured process coupled with data to support continuous learning and improvement. Reeves (2021) has long advocated for the use of data teams to support inquiry, implementation, and monitoring – all critical actions necessary for supporting continuous improvement efforts.
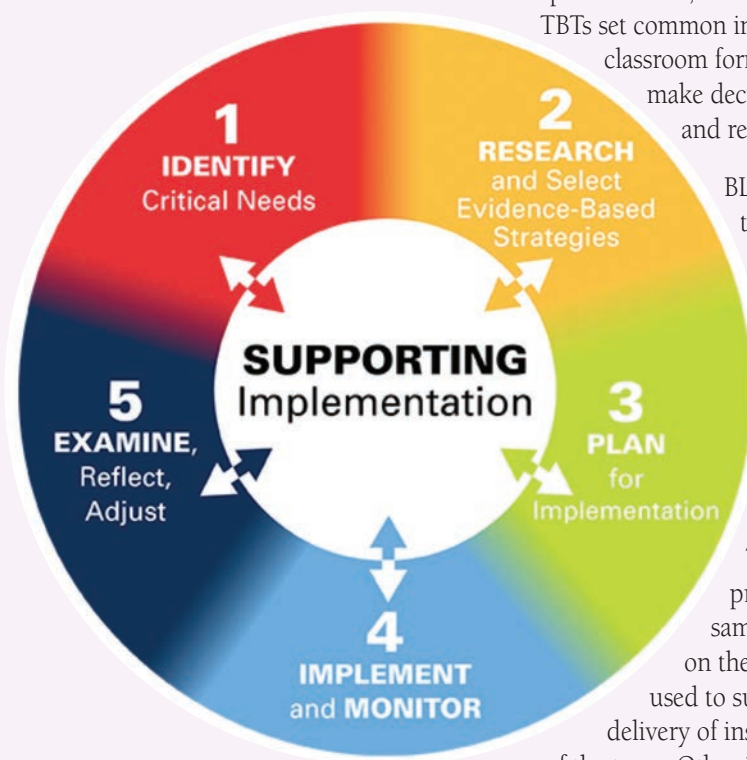
In Ohio, districts use the Ohio 5-step process to identify critical needs, research and select evidence-based strategies, plan for implementation of those strategies, monitor the degree of implementation, examine results and, based on those results, make needed adjustments. TBTs set common instructional targets, use collaboratively developed common classroom formative assessment to assess student progress against those targets, make decisions about and adapt instruction based on what is/is not working, and report progress to BLTs.

BLTs, in turn, monitor TBT implementation, use the data provided to make decisions about the kind of professional development and supports needed by schools and teacher teams, and report building data to the DLT. The DLT monitors implementation across all schools within the district and determines the level of districtwide and building-level supports needed to ensure that goals are being met. This ongoing culture of inquiry, based on the flow of information across the district, is the hallmark of a learning organization.

Every teacher should be a member of one or more TBTs. While TBTs are most often composed of teachers and other education professionals who teach students at the same grade level or in the same content area, there are variations in TBT membership depending on the level and size of the school. Regardless of the particular structure used to support TBTs, intervention specialists assigned to support the delivery of instruction to students with disabilities should be regular members of the team. Other individuals (e.g., Title I instructions; teachers of English Learners; school counselors; related services specialists; art, music, and physical education teachers to name a few) are often TBT members as well.

Most schools include a variety of teams, and team time is often used for an array of activities, not just for school improvement (e.g., planning events; discussing administrative issues, policies, or procedures; arranging schedules or calendars). Nevertheless, for TBT members to learn from one another in ways that improve the collective instructional capacity of the group, a singular focus on improving teaching and learning must guide their work. TBTs are not ordinary professional learning communities (PLCs). Rather, they are PLCs with a singular focus on teaching and learning.

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For more information, go to
https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/District-and-School-Continuous-Improvement/Ohio-Improvement-Process.

Area 1: Data and the Decision-Making Process – Teacher-based Team

Decisions about educational needs and actions require justification. Evidence (data) and logic (sound reasoning) foster good decisions.

- *A culture of trust and openness between educators and leaders sustains data use over time (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2017; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).*
- *Sustained use of data directs educators' attention to performance differences across student groups (Bertrand & Marsh, 2015; Datnow & Park, 2018; Telfer, 2012).*
- *Routine data use builds internal forms of accountability (Felner, Bolton, Seitsinger, Brand, & Burns, 2008; Fullan, 2011; Datnow & Park, 2018).*

Essential Practices

1. Engage all instructional personnel as members of one or more teacher-based teams *[Note: TBT instructional personnel include all personnel who have responsibility for making decisions about teaching and learning for an assigned group of students, including but not limited to general education teachers, intervention specialists, related services personnel, gifted/talented instructors, ELL instructors].*

2. Follow established conditions (e.g., norms, expectations, roles, responsibilities, schedules) necessary for effective team functioning.

3. Collect, chart, and analyze pre- and post-aggregated and disaggregated student data (including data by subgroups) related to the common student learning/plan indicators that are being addressed by the team for the purpose of identifying student strengths and needs, and assessing student mastery of identified standards-based concepts and skills.

4. Use student data, as a team, to determine the level of student progress and make instructional decisions related to meeting the differentiated learning needs of the assigned group of students.

5. Monitor, as a team, the effectiveness of the TBT and the degree of classroom implementation of agreed-on instructional strategies.

6. Serve as a vehicle for continuous feedback and support among team members and shared professional learning by regularly reviewing and analyzing student performance data and data related to team member implementation of agreed-on instructional strategies.

7. Report TBT student achievement and adult implementation data results to the BLT on a regular basis.

Area 2: Focused Goal Setting Process – Teacher-based Team

Planning for improved teaching and learning requires focus. Focus notably includes selecting a limited number of goals and strategies.

- *Focus is strategic at the district level: it is the core of coherent improvement planning (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2020; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015; Jacobson, 2010).*

- *All levels of the system need focus to sponsor development of practices that work to support all teachers' teaching and all students' learning (Fullan & Pinchot, 2018; Hargreaves & Harris, 2015, Telfer, 2012).*

- *A limited portfolio of goals builds shared responsibility for the learning of all students and student groups (Fullan & Quinn, 2015; Hargreaves, Parsley, & Cox, 2015; Jacobson, 2010).*

- *Incoherent program adoptions block the systemic improvement of teaching and learning (Fullan, 2011, 2016; Fullan & Pinchot, 2018).*

Essential Practices

1. Establish clear learning objectives for what all students should learn and be able to do aligned with the district and school focused goals, strategies, and actions for instruction and achievement.

2. Implement focused strategies and actions in accordance with adult implementation indicators as outlined in the district and school improvement plans.

3. Monitor frequently, as a team, the degree of implementation of selected strategies and actions, and make necessary adjustments to ensure alignment with the district and school focused goals, strategies, and actions for instruction and achievement.

4. Monitor frequently, as a team, the progress of students in response to focused strategies and actions implemented by the team and make necessary adjustments based on measured levels of student learning.

Area 3: Instruction and the Learning Process – Teacher-based Team

Improvement of teaching and learning requires the collective adaptation of evidence-based practices. Leadership teams (DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs) do this work in Ohio.

- *Educators' collaborative work on teaching practices—guided by district leadership—drives improvement in teaching and learning (Datnow, 2011; Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010; Spillane & Louis, 2002).*
- *Locally relevant data efforts should guide collaborative decisions about changes to instructional practice (Datnow, 2011; Fullan & Levin, 2009; Hargreaves & Braun, 2012; Sutton, 2010).*
- *Teaching practices that need collaborative attention the most are those used with marginalized student groups (Hargreaves & Braun, 2012; Sharkey & Murnane, 2006; Telfer, 2012).*

Essential Practices

1. Use the established district curriculum as the framework for TBT work and ensure instruction is aligned with the big ideas and essential questions embedded in the curriculum.

2. Provide full access to core instruction – aligned with the district's established curriculum and priorities for instruction and achievement – for all students, regardless of label.

3. Establish priorities for differentiated instruction based on TBT student data and aligned with district and building focused goals, strategies, and actions.

4. Develop and use, through focused collaborative discussion, specific instructional strategies that address student learning needs and meet the district's/school's priorities for instruction and achievement.

5. Increase the quality of teacher instructional discourse to improve student outcomes.

6. Use collaboratively developed common formative classroom assessments to gauge student progress toward meeting the district and school focused goals, strategies, and actions.

7. Monitor individual student achievement and growth to ensure that each student is making adequate progress toward achieving district and building learning goals for all students.

Area 4: Community Engagement Process – Teacher-based Team

The improvement of teaching and learning requires the support of local communities. Meaningful relationships embed respect, shared participation, and shared responsibility.

- *Communities, families, and public schools need to work together to support the common good (Auerbach, 2012; Bellah & Tipton, 2006; Epstein, 2019).*
- *Authentic family engagement secures equity (Auerbach, 2012; Epstein, 2019; Tschannen-Moran, 2014).*
- *Too many educators remain reluctant to engage families and communities (Buchanan & Buchanan, 2017; Constantino, 2016; Epstein, 2019).*
- *Authentic family engagement improves student performance (Auerbach, 2010; Epstein, 2019; Sheridan, Smith, Kim, Bretetvas, & Park, 2019).*

Essential Practices

1. Ensure that TBT priorities are aligned with building and district focused goals, strategies, and actions.

2. Communicate clear expectations to internal and external community members in relation to the purpose and value of TBTs in improving the quality of instruction provided by the district.

3. Communicate clear learning expectations to parents and families with regard to individual student achievement and growth.

4. Integrate the support provided through BLT-developed collaborative partnerships, community activities, and parental feedback to improve and enhance the work of TBTs across the district.

Area 5: Resource Management Process – Teacher-based Team

A focused improvement plan requires follow-through with resource allocation. Personnel, facilities, administrative attention, goods and services, and professional development must follow the focus of the improvement plan.

- *The way leadership teams allocate money and other resources matters for the improvement of teaching and learning (Balu, 2017; Baker, 2016; Hanushek & Woessman, 2017).*

- *Leadership should spend money and allocate resources deliberately, according to plan rather than according to tradition (Jackson, Fixsen, & Ward, 2018; Marzano & Waters, 2009; Newman, Smith, Allensworth, & Bryk, 2001; Odden & Archibald, 2009).*

- *Resource allocation should support the goals and strategies identified to promote improved learning for all children (Roza, 2018; Sutton, 2010).*

- *The deliberate allocation of resources to address equity pushes against the barriers that structure inequity in school and society, but the barriers do not readily give way (Roza, 2018; Tye, 2000).*

Essential Practices

1. Use team time to focus on constructive discourse and reflection about effective instructional practice.

2. Utilize the district- and building-established data reporting system.

3. Identify, based on data, the level and type of support needed from the BLT and DLT to support TBT members to learn and improve.

4. Participate in targeted professional development based on identified team needs.

5. Support and implement the replication of effective instructional practices identified on a district- and building-wide basis.

Area 6: Team Governance Process – Teacher-based Team

The improvement of teaching and learning requires the support of the school board. Effective boards help districts sustain their focused improvement goals.

- *School boards set the tenor of district governance culture (Alsbury & Gore, 2015; Campbell & Fullan, 2019).*
- *District governance culture can support (or subvert) improved teaching and learning (Alsbury & Gore, 2015; Campbell & Fullan, 2019).*
- *Superintendents and DLTs are responsible for developing the governance mindset of school boards (Campbell & Fullan, 2019; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000).*

Essential Practices

1. Understand the purpose and function of TBTs and their relationship to the DLT and BLTs across the district.

2. Establish a calendar that outlines meeting dates and times, within the required district/building schedule.

3. Bring relevant formative data/information to team meetings.

4. Use established protocols to facilitate meaningful and efficient communication, problem solving, and learning.

5. Align the team's work with district- and building-developed strategies and indicators.

6. Provide written documentation of decisions made by the team, including task assignments and associated time lines for following up on decisions made.

7. Evaluate continuously the effects of the implementation of shared work on student performance.
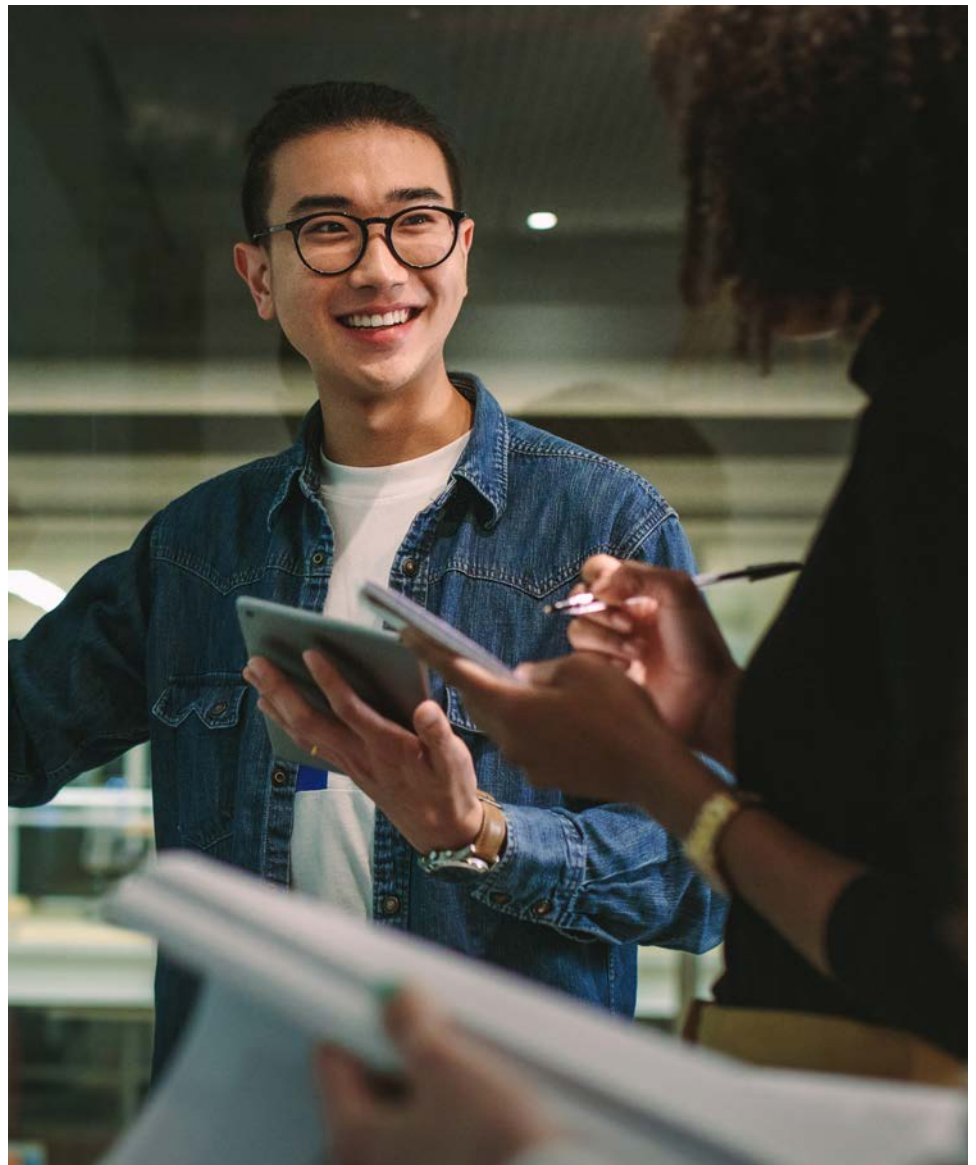
Moving Forward: A Foundation for Sustainable and Scalable Improvement

OLAC continues to play a vital role in supporting leaders at all levels of the education system – the state, regions, districts, community schools, schools, and classrooms. OLAC develops high-quality, relevant, and practitioner-based resources and makes them universally available at no cost to anyone interested in using them.

From its inception, the use of aligned collaborative leadership teams – as defined in *Ohio's Leadership Development Framework* – was meant to be used hand-in-hand with the OIP. Taken together, OLAC-OIP provide the foundation for a comprehensive professional learning and support system – one that can be used to reduce programmatic silos and support educators across the P20 continuum to work together to improve learning opportunities and outcomes for all children.

Fifteen years and going strong! We invite you, no matter what your role, to take advantage of the wealth of resources and supports available through OLAC.

APPENDICES

Appendix A:

HIGHLIGHTS OF OLAC EVALUATION FINDINGS

OLAC is committed to evidence-based continuous improvement and commissioned Indikus Evaluation and Planning, an external, third-party program evaluator, to gauge impact, learn about professional learner experiences with OLAC resources, and identify opportunities to improve OLAC resources.

A series of four theme-specific topics were addressed by evaluators using: (1) a comprehensive four-level evaluation, (2) a qualitative comparison study of rural, urban, and suburban educators' experiences and use of OLAC resources, (3) a study of higher education faculty utilization of OLAC resources, and (4) an evaluation of OLAC's cultural responsiveness. The program evaluations, which are summarized below, were designed to be timely and actionable by adhering to the tenets of Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2016). Indikus evaluators selected appropriate methodological frameworks and evaluation models, such as the Kirkpatrick Model for evaluating professional learning delivery and impact.

Program Evaluation Project 1: Comprehensive Program Evaluation (2015-2017)

EVALUATION STRATEGY AND DESIGN

Based on OLAC co-directors' information needs, Indikus conducted a two-year program evaluation that was designed to gauge OLAC's use, reach, professional learning, capacity-building, and contributions to school improvement. The evaluation was designed to inform stakeholders about the extent to which professional learners who utilized OLAC resources were able to successfully implement new skills and behaviors in their workplaces and, among those who were successful, whether they were able to achieve desired school improvements. The evaluation was organized by Kirkpatrick's (1996) four levels for evaluating professional learning systems and was carried out over three phases:

1. An exploratory study entailed collecting module pre-test and post-test data and interviews with a sample of OLAC professional learners. Analyses explored user experiences and reactions to the four levels.

2. An assessment of the extent to which participants who completed OLAC modules were satisfied with all elements of the modules and whether they showed learning gains combined pre-test and post-test data, surveys, and structured interviews.

3. An evaluation of the extent to which OLAC professional learners transferred learning to the workplace and, if so, whether the behaviors impacted schools involved (1) a case study analysis of four school districts and (2) an analysis of five target modules.

PROJECT 1 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What barriers do participants describe?

2. What do participants suggest to reduce barriers?

3. What recommendations do participants have for improving OLAC's website, modules, materials, and support?

4. To what extent are participants satisfied with OLAC modules and materials?

5. Do users learn from the modules?

6. Do users successfully transfer knowledge to work?

7. What impacts do OLAC users report?

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The evaluation findings are organized according to the Kirkpatrick Model for evaluating the four levels of professional learning programs. Key findings are presented by Level, followed by the case study.

LEVEL 1 (REACTION) FINDINGS.

Evaluators gauged professional learners' engagement with OLAC target modules and perceived value of the modules. Using surveys embedded in the OLAC module pre-tests, evaluator found that

- Professional learners expressed having mostly positive reactions to the OLAC professional learning resources.

- Most respondents from all sub-groups indicated that they felt engaged when using the OLAC resources

- Most professional learners indicated that they perceived a value in applying what they learned from the modules to their work.

LEVEL 2 (LEARNING) FINDINGS.

Assessing adult professional learning involves gauging knowledge gain, skill building, and changed attitudes. The evaluation used OLAC pre-test post-test assessments by adding self-assessment ratings. The analysis revealed that:

- Most OLAC professional learners indicated having an increased understanding of the topic after completing the module.

- Professional learners who indicated that they were familiar with the module topic before completing the module reported understanding the topic much better after completing the module.

- All target modules showed statistically significant learning gains from pre-test to post-test assessments.

- Newer modules, including Developing Shared Accountability, Learning Supports, and The Collaborative Process, had relatively high gains from pre-test to post-test scores; existing modules showed somewhat higher learning gains.

LEVEL 3 (BEHAVIORS) FINDINGS.

Level 3, Behaviors, gauges what happens after learners leave the virtual classroom and return to their places of work. Survey questions explored whether professional learners were able to successfully transfer what they had learned in the OLAC modules to their places of work. The analysis revealed that:

- OLAC module users successfully transferred theory to practice and, to varying extents, adopted new professional practices.

- In systems (district-level or school-level) wherein clear expectations for or policies regarding module use were present, educators described reaching a critical mass and, thus, were less likely to experience barriers to using the new professional behaviors.

- Respondents and interview participants described the importance of follow up supports to guide or refine practice, especially in the forms of coaching, modeling, and reference resource forms of support.

- Barriers aside, the clear majority of respondents agreed that they were afforded ample opportunity to translate what they learned into practice, utilize the new skills to solve real world problems, and, moreover, had enhanced professional practices as a result of learning from OLAC modules.

- A follow up analysis found a strong association between professional learning and translating behaviors into practice (t (254)=84.82, p =.000), providing compelling evidence that the translation of behaviors into practice was associated with OLAC professional learning.

Level 4 (Results) Findings.

Level 4, Results, gauges the extent to which desirable outcomes are attributable to the professional learning. Survey questions explored whether the skills gained through the OLAC modules continued to be put into practice and, if so, whether respondents perceived results in their workplace (i.e., schools and school districts). The analysis revealed that:

- Across modules, most learners (93%) agreed that their improved practices made a difference in the workplace, indicating that practicing the material learned in OLAC modules was useful in creating results and outcomes.

- While the obstacles that learners may have faced were external to the OLAC module, it should be noted that almost one-tenth (8%) faced obstacles that prevented them from implementing new skills and processes they learned through the modules.

- Results of a bivariate correlation suggest that facing obstacles was correlated with lower confidence that improved practices made a difference and less confidence that improved practices improved the school situation, and less opportunities to apply new knowledge to their work.

- Despite obstacles, most professional learners agreed that by employing newly-acquired professional behaviors from OLAC modules, positive outcomes for the school or district resulted.

- A follow up analysis confirmed a relationship between translating professional behaviors acquired by using the OLAC modules into practice and perceived outcomes (t (162) =2.22, p= .028), providing compelling evidence that the perceived outcomes are associated with the adoption of new professional behaviors.

Case Study Findings.

Beginning during the autumn of 2016 and continuing for the duration of the OLAC program evaluation, evaluators developed case studies of four school districts that had utilized and adopted strategies from OLAC in ways that suited the unique needs of the districts. The case study analysis provided some crosscutting patterns which included the following:

- Participants across cases described the OLAC resources as particularly useful to districts as part of the OIP process launch. Moreover, some of the key learnings become routinized in districts.

- Principals described taking ownership of the resources embedded in OLAC modules and using several approaches to the integration of the OLAC resources at their schools.

- The participating districts used OLAC resources, especially the OIP process, to discover where weaknesses existed and to make informed decisions when planning district initiatives.

- Teachers in participating districts described individual experiences in using OLAC resources.

Program Evaluation Project 2: A Qualitative Comparison of Module Experiences for Rural, Suburban, and Urban Professional Learners (2017-2018)

PROGRAM EVALUATION STRATEGY & DESIGN

Using an ethnographic style of inquiry combined with the Kirkpatrick Model, evaluators conducted a series of three professional learner interviews for each of two target modules, Assessment and The Collaborative Process. The interviews explored participants' initial reactions to the module, gauged retention of information and opportunities to translate new skills and knowledge to practice, and explored opportunities and barriers to using learning and new skills.

The participants provided ongoing professional learner experience feedback and suggestions for improvement. Throughout the study, data collection and analysis activities overlapped for both logistical reasons and to provide analysts with an opportunity to continuously refine the thematic analysis. Data collection for each participant involved the following four steps.

1. **SCREENING AND RECRUITMENT.**
    Evaluators used a short survey embedded in select modules' pre-tests to screen potential participants for the evaluation. The screener ensured adequate representation from rural, urban, and suburban districts, each select module, role groups (e.g., teacher, administrator), and other identified variables of interest. From this activity, the team produced a descriptive analysis.

2. **INITIAL EXPERIENCE INTERVIEW.**
    Evaluators explored learners' motivations for using the module, initial reactions to the module, impressions of their own learning, plans for using what they learned, and the challenges they believed may impede their application of the new skills and knowledge. The interview also invited participants to offer suggestions for improving OLAC. From this activity, the evaluation team produced a descriptive analysis and categories that were used to refine the data collection strategy for the next data collection activity.

3. **POST EXPERIENCE INTERVIEW.**
    A month after learners completed a module, interviews gauged retention (using a version of the post-test), opportunities to translate the new skills and knowledge to practice, challenges experienced, and plans to continue using the skills. Learners were also asked to describe suggestions for overcoming any barriers. Evaluators used data accumulated through this activity to produce a descriptive analysis and update the categories and their associations with other categories.

4. **LONGER-TERM USE AND OUTCOME INTERVIEW.**
    Evaluators studied the extent to which learners were able to use new skills in the workplaces and, if so, whether the learning had a discernible outcome. The interview, which occurred three months after module completion, explored opportunities and barriers to using the learning and new skills, development of new professional behaviors, interactions with others (e.g., provision of support), and perceived outcomes. The interview also asked learners to provide feedback on how OLAC may better support professional learners.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The evaluation findings are organized according to the Kirkpatrick Model for evaluating the four levels of professional learning programs. Key findings are presented by Level, followed by a description of barriers to use.

LEVEL 1 (REACTION) FINDINGS.

Drawing on findings from initial experience interviews, evaluators gauged professional learners' engagement with the OLAC target modules and perceived value of the modules. Findings suggest that professional learners had overall positive experiences with the OLAC module.

- Professional learners described relatively high levels of engagement as they worked through the module, which was maintained by the various modes of content delivery, module length, and examples provided throughout the module.

- Professional learners anticipated using new skills and knowledge gained from the module to translate data into action, increase collaboration, and provide support to others.

- Professional learners also anticipated challenges that may interfere with carrying out their plans of use, including a lack of time, limited staff buy-in, and the need for additional material resources.

LEVEL 2 (LEARNING) FINDINGS.

To gauge professional learners' knowledge gain and skill improvement over time, evaluators conducted interviews with participants approximately one month after the initial experience interview.

- Across both modules, participants stated that the module was either moderately or extremely useful to their work, with participants with limited familiarity of the module's content prior to completing the module often describing higher levels of usefulness than their counterparts.

- Professional learners most often used what they had learned in the module during their work with teacher teams.

- While newer leaders translated their knowledge into practice while working with teacher teams and in translating data into action, more established administrators tended to use what they had learned in the module to lead meetings.

LEVEL 3 (BEHAVIORS) FINDINGS.

Level 3, Behaviors, gauges what happens after learners leave the virtual classroom and return to their places of work. Approximately three months after completing the module, evaluators asked a series of questions during interviews that explored new behaviors professional learners had adopted as a result of the module.

- While all participants described new behaviors that occurred as a result of the module, there was variation between both modules and participant roles.

- Assessment module users stated that their understanding of both the types of assessments and when to effectively use each type had increased.

- In contrast, Collaborative Process module users stated that they had not only used the module to guide their own work, but they had also presented the content in the module to others during meetings and in informal settings.

- Established administrators more often stated that they had shifted how they provide support to teachers.

LEVEL 4 (RESULTS) FINDINGS.

In the final interview, evaluators asked participants a series of questions to gauge the extent to which positive school-level outcomes and results occurred as a result of the professional learning delivered.

- Across all interviews, findings suggest that professional learners' use of the module had resulted in an increased focus for both themselves and teacher teams at their school (e.g., the purpose of TBTs had become clearer and produced more meaningful conversations and collaboration among teachers).

- More established administrators described increased alignment to building-level goals, including improved test scores and student learning.

- Several participants said that building-level collaboration both occurred more frequently and with a higher quality of results.

BARRIERS.

Participants described challenges that they either expected to (or that did) impede their use of what they had learned in the module.

- Some participants stated that a lack of time, along with the effort required, posed a barrier to carrying out what they had learned.

- Some participants faced pushback from teachers, administrators, and higher-level leadership that impeded their ability to carry out what they had learned.

Program Evaluation Project 3: Survey of Higher Education Faculty Use of OLAC Resources (2018-2020)

EVALUATION STRATEGY AND DESIGN

Program evaluators conducted a two-year study of the use of OLAC resources in IHEs and the use of those resources among new teachers and administrators transitioning from higher education to the workplace. During Year 1, evaluators conducted an exploratory, mixed methods pilot study that included:

1. Exploratory interviews with faculty members in IHEs across Ohio. The structured interviews were designed to gather information that informed survey categories and questions, as well as identify faculty that may participate in the larger survey study. Findings generated during this phase were used to develop the faculty survey.

2. Evaluators piloted the faculty survey at two purposively selected IHEs. The survey was administered to a subsample of ten faculty members at these IHEs who teach classes in teacher and administrator preparation programs. Evaluators used cognitive interviewing to gauge respondent understanding of the items. Data collected through the pilot surveys were used to ensure that survey items measured the intended constructs and to guide refinements.

3. Survey items were refined and finalized. Six IHEs were purposively selected to participate in the field test.

During Year 2, evaluators administered the survey (online) to faculty members who teach courses in teacher education departments across IHEs in Ohio.

1. The survey contained both close-ended items and open-ended items and asked respondents to describe their role, their use of OLAC resources, use of OLAC resources at their institution, barriers to OLAC resource use, and recommendations for improving

2. In total, 383 faculty members were invited to participate in the online survey. Of these, 105 faculty members from 32 IHEs completed the survey, yielding a response rate of 27%. On average, three faculty members from each IHE completed the faculty survey. A more detailed description of survey respondents is presented in the Findings section of this report.

In addition, the evaluators conducted a series of case studies exploring important patterns emerging from survey findings. Case studies involved several forms of data collection, including interviews with department leaders, interviews with faculty, interviews with students, and review of documents such as syllabi indicating use of OLAC resources.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Evaluation findings are organized by summaries of responses to each of the four evaluation questions: (1) a description of why faculty use OLAC resources, (2) a list of factors that may increase the likelihood the resources are used in IHEs, (3) a description of how faculty encourage students to access OLAC, and (4) suggestions for improving OLAC resources.

WHY FACULTY USE OLAC RESOURCES.

Evidence amassed throughout the evaluation suggests that the use of OLAC resources among IHE faculty is influenced by several factors. Of these, organizational-level awareness, support from leadership, and course type appear to have the largest influence on faculty's decision to use resources.

- Faculty teaching courses at institutions with higher levels of organizational-level awareness and increased support from department leaders were more likely to report using OLAC resources in the courses they teach; simultaneously, these faculty members

reported teaching courses at institutions where faculty regularly recommended resources to one another.

- Faculty members teaching graduate-level courses, especially those in leadership and higher education studies, reported using OLAC resources more often than did those teaching undergraduate courses.

INCREASING THE LIKELIHOOD OF FACULTY USE OF OLAC RESOURCES.
Data collected throughout the evaluation points to the importance of generating awareness of OLAC resources.

- Non-user faculty members reported that, if they were more aware of OLAC, they would be more likely to use their resources.

- To increase awareness, these participants suggested that OLAC leaders focus on identifying and sharing resources with leaders in pertinent programs and professional organizations rather than individual faculty members themselves.

- Both faculty and department leaders recommended providing in-person training and professional development at IHEs.

- Non-user faculty members participating in case studies added that they would be interested in learning more about OLAC resources that are aligned to the courses they teach, as well as examples of how resources have been implemented in online courses specifically.

WAYS FACULTY ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO USE OLAC RESOURCES.
Survey and interview responses suggest that faculty encourage students' use of OLAC resources in multiple ways.

- Several faculty members said they require students to use OLAC resources in the courses they teach and further said that they usually incorporate OLAC resources directly into students' assignments and fieldwork experiences.

- Some faculty commented that they recommend the use of OLAC resources in the courses they teach, further reporting that they use resources as supplemental materials for coursework and the application of knowledge and skills.

- Across all types of usage, students enrolled in courses where OLAC resources were used expressed overall positive impressions of the resources, perceiving them as straightforward, user-friendly, and increasing their understanding of course content.

WAYS OLAC RESOURCES CAN BE IMPROVED TO BETTER SERVE IHEs.
Faculty made several suggestions for improving the OLAC resources to better meet the needs of teacher education programs.

- Both faculty users and non-users would benefit from having clear explanations and examples of how OLAC resources can be used in their courses.

- Faculty members agreed that having access to more scenario-based and interactive resources (e.g., case studies, videos, etc.) would be especially helpful.

- Faculty users described how providing content that is up to date while ensuring access to its older resources would help serve the needs of faculty using OLAC's resources.

- Both faculty users and non-users suggested that, before OLAC resources can better serve the needs of teacher preparation programs, awareness for OLAC must be increased.

Program Evaluation Project 4: Cultural Responsiveness Survey (2020-2021)

EVALUATION STRATEGY AND DESIGN

Indikus conducted a Utilization-Focused Evaluation (Patton, 2016) to gather recommendations from educators for improvement of OLAC resources with an emphasis on OLAC's cultural responsiveness. The program evaluation was designed to be carried out in overlapping phases that consisted of a survey and interviews with purposively selected participants. Program evaluators first administered a survey to OLAC account holders in regions of Ohio that are ethnically diverse. In addition to the survey of educators, the evaluation team conducted interviews with purposively selected educators and coordinated an external review of select OLAC resources.

1. The evaluation team developed the OLAC Cultural Responsiveness Survey to gauge diverse Ohio educators' opinions about the cultural responsiveness of OLAC resources. The evaluation team deployed the survey to a pilot sample of educators who had created new OLAC accounts. Educators selected for inclusion included those whose accounts reflected zip codes of Ohio school districts with at least 4% African American or Latinx/Hispanic students. These counties included: Cuyahoga, Hamilton, Franklin, Montgomery, Lucas, Mahoning, Lorain, Sandusky, and Defiance (which included a total of 553 account holders).

2. Using findings from the Cultural Responsiveness Survey, the evaluation team identified themes for further exploration in interviews with Ohio educators. The interview participants, who were purposively selected for invitation to participate in the study, were also asked to describe their role and ethnicity. As noted above, the evaluation team attempted to oversample African American and Hispanic/Latino/a K-12 educators.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The evaluation findings are organized by summaries of responses to: (1) cultural responsiveness ratings, (2) descriptions of OLAC cultural responsiveness, and (3) suggestions for improving OLAC resource cultural responsiveness.

RATINGS OF OLAC RESOURCE CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS.

The survey included six rating scale items that asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements. Overall, responses to the statements showed agreement that OLAC's resources were perceived as culturally responsive.

- Most respondents (70%), regardless of their ethnicity or professional role, indicated that they agreed that *OLAC's resources use language that is meaningful to a wide range of cultural groups.*

- Of the two thirds of respondents indicating that they agreed that *OLAC resources use examples that resonate across cultural groups*, most in agreement were African American respondents and classroom educators.

- Similarly, of the two thirds (65%) of respondents indicating that they agreed that *Content presented in OLAC resources is appropriate to different cultural practices, attitudes, and beliefs*, most in agreement were African American respondents and classroom educators.

- Just over half of all respondents indicated that they agreed that OLAC resources have prepared them to work with students from different cultural backgrounds (56%) and that OLAC resources feel culturally appropriate (59%) with White and Latinx respondents being least likely to agree with the statements.

- Most (85%) respondents indicated that they agreed that they feel confident sharing OLAC resources with their peers regardless of their race or ethnicity.

CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS OF OLAC RESOURCES.
An open-ended survey item asked respondents to comment on the cultural responsiveness of OLAC's resources and an interview question further probed into this topic, asking participants to describe how well, and in what ways, OLAC resources are culturally appropriate for a wide range of educators.

- Most respondents, regardless of their ethnicity or professional role, said that OLAC's modules and other resources are sufficiently culturally appropriate as they are currently. Respondents provided statements such as:
    - *The OLAC resources and modules are very useful for schoolwide resources, and they apply to working with all my students (African American middle school teacher).*
    - *They [OLAC resources] have been very helpful to me as a Black elementary school teacher who has mostly Black students (African American elementary school teacher).*
    - *The [OLAC] materials go across diverse groups and can be used by various entities (Latinx elementary school administrator).*
- Several respondents commented that OLAC's cultural responsiveness could be improved by ensuring greater representation of diverse learners in imagery and examples.
    - *It would be nice to see more diversity (White middle school teacher).*
    - *I wish the [OLAC] videos of teachers included a more diverse representation. It appears most of the teachers in the videos are white and from suburban/rural schools (White consultant).*
    - *Most of the people shown are white (Latinx State Leader).*

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING OLAC CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS.
Throughout data collection activities, both surveys and interviews, study participants offered suggestions for improvement.

- Many survey respondents and several interview participants, especially those who indicated they are classroom educators, commented that OLAC resources could be improved by ensuring that images, videos, and other resources offer examples that include greater ethnic and racial diversity.
- Some survey respondents wrote that OLAC resources' cultural responsiveness could be improved by working with organizations that serve or represent culturally diverse populations in Ohio to develop marketing materials, language options, and targeted resources.
- Some interview participants suggested that OLAC, as an organization, strive to ensure that its leadership is diverse.

Appendix B:

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