

Core Proposition 4: Teaching and Learning

Standard Indicator 4.1: Instructional Focus

The leader ensures teaching and learning are the primary focus of the organization.

Accomplished principals build a culture of high expectations for student learning and adult practice. They skillfully shepherd and intentionally navigate all elements of the learning community to develop a collective sense of high expectations, resulting in a high-performing organization in which all students learn. These principals lead the creation of a culture that generates excitement, encourages innovation and experimentation, and develops commitment—making continuous improvement and maximum effort the norm. Accomplished principals safeguard a culture that values individuals, strives for maximum learning for students and adults, and structures a productive and orderly environment.

Accomplished principals ensure that teaching and learning are the primary focus of the organization. They protect teachers' and other staff members' work and learning from disruption. They design and implement job-embedded and other opportunities for professional learning collaboratively with faculty and staff. Accomplished principals prioritize supporting instructional practice and develop systems in order to maintain this focus. These principals provide teachers with professional learning that is aligned with the vision, goals, and objectives of the organization. They continually evaluate the learning opportunities provided to staff members and listen to staff members to ensure that professional learning meets individual needs and improves student learning. They design structures so teachers can systematically and regularly observe each other's work and share effective practices.

Adapted from NBCEL, *Accomplished Principal Standards*, 1st ed. (2010, pp. 34, 45), and NPBEA, *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders* (2015, pp. 15, 17).

Key Elements of Leader Practice and Questions for Reflection and Planning Related to Standard Indicator 4.1

- Communicating the belief that all students can learn and accomplish challenging learning goals to students, staff, and community members and encouraging engagement of all in promoting this common interest
 - *Am I leading staff to a clear and common understanding of what constitutes “high and attainable expectations” for student learning? Am I focused and consistent in communicating this message to all stakeholders? How do I address the behaviors and dispositions of individuals within the organization or out in the community that are not consistent with this common interest?*
- Prioritizing my time to focus on instruction rather than managerial tasks
 - *What percentage of my time when teachers and students are present is allocated to managerial tasks unrelated to teaching and learning? What structures and strategies can I use to support my ability to spend as much time as possible in the classrooms learning about and supporting teaching and learning in my school?*

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- Creating structures and using personnel efficiently to address and communicate about noninstructional priorities such as building management, scheduling, and student discipline to maintain the instructional time of teachers and allow the leader to be visible in classrooms
 - *Are the processes and procedures for dealing with specific issues that come up in the course of a school day, as well as the individuals assigned to assist with these issues, clear to all staff members? How consistently are all individuals within the building following these processes and procedures? Am I assuming responsibility for issues and concerns that can be addressed by other individuals?*
 - *How are the roles and related responsibilities for the principal, teachers and other staff defined in the student discipline plan for the building? How consistently is this plan being followed? Am I assuming responsibility for issues in ways that go beyond the defined plan? What support do teachers need to address student issues within the classroom to preserve the learning time of all students and my time as an instructional leader?*
 - *How well does the current schedule and allocation of time for particular content areas support a focus on uninterrupted teaching and learning? How can I be sure that the adjustments I make in one area of the schedule do not have unintended consequences in another?*
 - *Do I have systems in place to monitor how the time that students are in class is being used? How am I ensuring that high-quality instruction is being provided, with a minimum amount of downtime in each classroom?*
- Protecting and maximizing time for professional development and collaborative conversations related to teaching and learning
 - *In what ways are we using professional development and other meeting time to focus on teaching and learning? Is there enough opportunity for teachers to collaborate on these priorities? How can I create more time and opportunities for teachers to collaborate in the interest of continuous improvement of teaching and learning?*
- ***What concrete sources of evidence will I need to gather to demonstrate effective practice related to these Key Elements?***

Professional Learning to Advance This Leadership Practice

- Consulting resources such as books and articles and seeking coaching and feedback from colleagues in how to manage noninstructional priorities in ways that preserve time during the school day for a focus on the teaching and learning that is occurring in classrooms
- Researching, selecting, and applying strategies for monitoring how instructional time is being used in each classroom and ways in which these data can be analyzed collaboratively with individuals and groups to address gaps and areas for improvement
- Working with peers and other colleagues to reflect upon and improve strategies for communicating about, and engaging others in, the
- common interest of prioritizing teaching and learning

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4.1 Instructional Focus: The leader ensures teaching and learning are the primary focus of the organization.				
	Ineffective (1) At this level, the leader...	Developing (2) At this level, the leader...	Effective (3) At this level, the leader...	Distinguished (4) At this level, the leader does one or more of the following. The leader...
LEPG Rubric Performance-Level Descriptors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does not communicate high, yet realistic, expectations for students' achievement to students, teachers, other school staff, parents, caregivers, or the broader community. ▪ Does not have a system in place to monitor teachers' use of instructional learning time. ▪ Does not have professional development plans in place that are consistently focused on improving instructional practices and student learning. ▪ Does not prioritize use of own time to focus on supporting instructional practice and student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicates high, yet realistic, expectations for all students' achievement to students, teachers, and other school staff. ▪ Establishes or maintains a system for monitoring teachers' use of instructional learning time. ▪ Plans teacher professional development that is focused on improving instructional practices and student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicates high, yet realistic, expectations for all students' achievement to the school community, parents/caregivers, and the broader community. ▪ Monitors teachers' use of instructional learning and planning time and, with input from teachers, adjusts schedules and processes to protect this time. ▪ Engages others (e.g., school leadership team, chairpersons) in identifying and aligning professional development offerings with staff needs based on evaluation or other information. ▪ Plans use of own time to place a priority on supporting instructional practice and student learning. ▪ Monitors and adjusts use of own time to place a priority on supporting instructional practice and student learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fosters continuous improvement of individual and collective instructional capacity to achieve outcomes envisioned for each student. ▪ Empowers teachers, teacher leaders, assistant principals, and/or other school-level leaders to identify and apply strategies for aligning professional development offerings with staff needs based on evaluation or other data related to student growth. ▪ Contributes to district-level efforts to link evaluation results and improved professional development. ▪ Empowers teacher leaders, assistant principals, and/or other school-level leaders to identify and apply strategies for monitoring and improving teachers' use of instructional time. ▪ Acts strategically to ensure all programming supports the focus of the organization.
Possible Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The leader approves an SLO in which the teacher indicates the special education students in the class will not be able to show growth. ▪ The leader does not provide feedback or coaching to a teacher who regularly is observed beginning class 10 minutes late. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The leader requires two teachers whose targets for special education students in their SLO were not rigorous to meet with the special education teacher and revise the targets. ▪ The leader monitors bell-to-bell instruction by visiting classrooms daily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The leader's rationale for all student improvement gains are included in the school improvement plan and are based upon a reasonable analysis of student learning data. The leader prioritizes this expectation with staff before they write SLOs. ▪ The leader conducts collaborative meetings to hone expectations use of class time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The leader empowers teacher leaders and/or the assistant principal to do a first review SLOs (and assessments) to ensure high expectations. The leader tasks a teacher lead with leading a book study to improve use of instructional time. ▪ The leader tasks the leadership team with creating a survey to determine staff professional development needs and aligning the needs to the school's priorities.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leader does not have a clear professional development plan. Monthly faculty meetings focus on different topic each month—there is a focus on reading in September, science in October, using tablets in November, and writing in December. The leader rarely leaves the office to see what instruction looks like in the school. Professional development is not provided to meet staff needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the school year kickoff meeting, the leader describes how all professional development, PLC work, and classroom walk-throughs will focus on the school goal of project-based learning. The leader makes time to conduct walk-throughs each day. The leader provides professional development focused the needs of the overall staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The leader engages the leadership team in setting the priorities and schedule for the following year’s professional development plan. During the year, the leader collects feedback on the professional development provided, analyzes the implementation of the practices, and makes necessary adjustments when needed. The leader models walk-throughs daily with the assistant principal and provides feedback to the teachers based on the evidence in the classroom. The leader and with leadership team members review data and identify individual and grade-level instruction needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leadership team conducts instructional rounds together quarterly and debriefs after each observation, building the observational and coaching capacity of team members. The leader encourages individual teachers, grade levels, and departments to identify professional needs to address instructional practices and student needs. The leader and staff collaboratively identify resources to support this growth.