

TOPPENISH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Instructional Leadership Responsibilities for Large Scale Improvement

Definition of large scale improvement: Intends to reach all students in all classrooms and all schools through the daily work of teachers and administration.

Definition of improvement: Engagement in learning new practices that work based on external evidence and benchmarks of success, across multiple schools and classrooms, in a specific area of academic content and pedagogy, resulting in the sustainability of student performance over time.

1. Clear and Shared Focus

All stakeholders know the vision and mission. The vision is shared by all personnel involved and all understand their roles in achieving the vision. The vision is developed from common beliefs and values, creating a consistent focus.

Leadership Responsibility – Influence, establish, and sustain a school culture conducive to continuous improvement for students and staff.

Evidence

- Continual monitoring, updating and implementing of District/School Improvement Plan
- Data collected and analyzed to determine evidence of implementation and impact, including student/staff surveys, interviews, focus groups
- Progress on School Improvement Plan activities shared regularly with staff, students, parents, and the community
- Policy, budget, and resources support the vision and mission

Board Goal - Improving teaching and learning through instructional leadership, professional development, mentoring, and supervision; increasing parent engagement in student learning

2. High Standards and Expectations

Teachers and staff believe that all students can learn, and that they can teach all students. There is recognition of barriers for some students to overcome, but the barriers are not insurmountable. Students will become engaged in an ambitious, rigorous, and relevant course of study.

Leadership Responsibility – Communicating and partnering with school community members to promote student learning

Evidence

- Demonstration of rigorous courses of study and evidence of learning
- Data walls and student work is visible in classroom
- Students, staff and parents can identify and describe learning targets
- Students and staff set goals and reflect on progress towards goals on a regular basis

Board Goal - Improving teaching and learning through instructional leadership, professional development, mentoring, and supervision

3. Effective School Leadership

Effective leadership is required to implement change processes within the school. This leadership takes many forms. Principals often play this role, but so do teachers and other staff, including those in the district office. Effective leaders advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Leadership Responsibility – Managing human and fiscal resources to accomplish student achievement goals

Evidence

- Design system improvement strategies
- District/School Improvement Plan is reflected in how building resources (people, time, and money) are used
- Allocate systems resources toward instruction
- Budget documents/plans showing funding of identified teaching and learning priorities
- Hiring practices reflect student achievement goals and meet the standard of highly qualified teachers
- All district/school staff engaged in a professional collaborative learning culture focused on student learning and instructional growth
- Improved student achievement according to data

Board Goal - establishing and sustaining a culture of continuous improvement

4. High Levels of Collaboration and Communication

There is constant collaboration and communication between and among teachers of all grades. Everybody is involved and connected, including parents, students and members of the community to identify problems and create solutions.

Leadership Responsibility – Communicate, partner, and engage with school community members to promote student learning

Evidence

- Schedules and minutes of staff collaboration meetings
- On-going communication vehicles established and implemented
- District/School Improvement Plan demonstrates knowledge of specific growth objectives and the impact on learning
- Documentation of community involvement, e.g., number of volunteers attend grade/level on subject area meetings weekly, community members in the school, telephone conversations, and community presence at school activities
- Evidence of surveys/focus groups in the community

- Documents and artifacts of local, regional, and state networking to promote growth in professional development, parent engagement, and student learning

Board Goal - Providing continuous learning atmosphere where learning communities thrive (horizontal and vertical articulation)

5. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Aligned with Standards

Curriculum, instruction and assessment practices are aligned with the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EARLs/GLE's). Researched-based materials and teaching and learning strategies are implemented. There is a clear understanding of the assessment system, what is measured in various assessments, and how it is measured.

Leadership Responsibility – Assist instructional staff in aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state and local learning goals, EARL's and GLE's.

Evidence

- Schedules/meeting for staff planning and collaboration
- Regular informal observation (walk-throughs/learning walks)
- Embedded professional development for faculty, staff and administrators documentation
- Monthly professional development calendars
- Common formative assessments at grade level/subject areas
- Pre, mid, and post summative assessments
- Student achievement improvement according to data (all cells)
- Articulated assessment plan for all content areas

Board Goal - Using Learning Improvement Days, School Improvement Release Days, State In-Service Days, and other embedded professional development opportunities to close the teaching and learning gap

6. Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning are continually adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. A variety of assessment processes and procedures are used for reliability, validity, and continuity. The results of the assessment are used to improve student performances and also improve the instructional program.

Leadership Responsibility – Lead the development, implementation, and evaluation of the data-driven plan for improvement of student achievement

Evidence

- Documentation of classroom visits (10 hours per week minimum)
- District/School Improvement Plan, meeting agendas, and strategies support vision
- Review and adjust instruction and assessments according to data
- Effective employee evaluations and observations follow contractual and legal requirements and timelines

- Individual student achievement data regularly collected, reviewed, and used to improve learning
- Documentation of short-term/long-term data driven plans that inform instruction
- Improved student learning as a result of using data to drive instruction
- Instructional supervision for improved classroom practices

Board Goal - Supervising instruction and seeing evidence that the use of data is maximizing learning.

7. Focused Professional Development

Professional development for all educators is aligned with the schools' and district's common focus, objectives, and high expectations. It is ongoing and based on high need areas

Leadership Responsibility – Monitor, assist, and evaluate staff implementation of the school improvement plan, effective instruction, and assessment practice(s).

Evidence

- Develop and pilot new instructional practices
- Design embedded professional development school/district calendar
- Plan/schedule for teacher mentoring and meetings
- Agendas of staff/department/grade level meetings, staff development, and timelines that involve analysis of achievement data trends
- Administration and instructional coaches plan/schedule staff training

Board Goal - Providing scientific, research based job-embedded professional development to close the teaching and learning gap

8. Supportive Learning Environment

The school has a safe, civil, healthy, and intellectually stimulating learning environment. Students and parents feel respected and connected with the staff, and are engaged in learning. Staff feel respected and connected within their building and the district. Instruction is personalized and small learning environments increase student contact with teachers.

Leadership Responsibility – Lead the development and annual update of a comprehensive safe schools plan which includes prevention, intervention, crisis response, and recovery.

Evidence

- Safety committee minutes and agendas
- Documentation of staff training
- Incident review documentation including progressive disciplinary action review
- Schedule of practices for prevention and intervention
- Resource Management Team (RMT) Minutes
- Summary of After School programs
- Data from parent, student and staff climate surveys

Board Goal - Using school crisis manual procedures and supervision to ensure that the school atmosphere is safe and conducive to learning.

9. High Level of Community and Parent Involvement

There is a sense that all educational stakeholders have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Parents, as well as businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort.

Leadership Responsibility – Promoting the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs.

Evidence

- Documentation of student/family engagement in student achievement plans
- Annual parent survey/observation data
- Documentation of parent engagement at Parent Information Resource Center, core in content areas, family nights, and conferences
- Documentation of community volunteers engaged in support services

Board Goal - Engaging parents in student learning with frequent communications and personal interactions.

Document Resources

Elmore, Richard. School Reform from the Inside Out: Policy, Practice, and Performance. Harvard Education Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2004

The nine objectives are based on the Nine Characteristics of High Performing Schools.

The instructional leadership responsibilities are based on the Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium.