

Building Instructional Leadership Teams That Make a Difference

What can you expect to get from this module?

The purpose of this training is to provide a series of workshops that first, will help principals lay the groundwork for building an instructional leadership team (ILT) that can share the work of instructional leadership in the school, and secondly, will help the ILT learn how to function smoothly and focus on their goals. The module focuses on how to form such a team, how to help them define their purpose and goals, and how to work together as leaders of a Professional Learning Community. Leading, learning and influencing are themes that run through the module.

What *shouldn't* you expect to get from this module?

This module does not address the needs of grade-level or subject-specific teams and committees, instead focusing on an area of great potential impact — schoolwide instructional improvement.

Who should take this training?

This module is for school leaders and potential school leaders. The audience may include school teams of principals, aspiring leaders, teacher leaders and others who are members or potential members of the school's instructional leadership team. **NOTE:** In order for this training to have significant impact, the principal **MUST** be part of the school team being trained.

Other SREB Leadership Curriculum Modules that support this module:

There are no formal prerequisites for this SREB module. Instructional leadership teams that attend will identify further learning needs for themselves and for their school; this decision-making progress will help them decide which other SREB leadership modules might be appropriate for follow-up training.

What will you have to do to get the most from this module?

Principals should attend a one-day workshop and also attend, with their instructional leadership teams, six half-day sessions. Teams must also commit to completing the prework, attending all sessions, and completing homework assignments. It is important for teams to have time between the sessions to reflect upon and apply what they have learned.

Big Ideas in This Module

- Leadership can be a role, but more importantly, it is a function that can be developed and shared.
- Principals can accomplish more as instructional leaders by sharing leadership and decision making with others.
- Teachers can be effective leaders if they have a supportive culture, a principal who leads and shares leadership, and opportunities for professional development.
- Shared leadership empowers teacher leaders to see their jobs as more meaningful.
- School teams can do more to improve instruction than one individual can.
- Building effective teams takes courage and persistence.
- The purpose of the instructional leadership team (ILT) is to improve instruction schoolwide to improve student achievement.
- When setting up an ILT, the principal must be purposeful and intentional to get the right people on the ILT team bus.
- The principal must establish a vision for the ILT and boundaries within which they work.
- An ILT should lead the school in becoming a functioning professional learning community.
- The ILT is a positive agent of change within the school.
- ILTs work within an overall school context that both influences them and is influenced by them.
- The ILT must always be looking at ways to sustain their work of improving instruction beyond the tenure of any given team member, including the principal.

Module Design. *Building Instructional Leadership Teams That Make a Difference* includes a one-day principal workshop followed by six half-day sessions for the instructional leadership team (1+6 half days). It also includes prework and homework assignments. Each section is described below.

Principal prework. Principals complete several short readings on leadership and teacher teams and answer some study questions. They also reflect on the current organization of teams and initiatives at their schools.

Principal Workshop (five hours). In this workshop, principals have a chance to discuss, with other principals, their beliefs about shared leadership and teamwork through a series of activities. They also look at current team functioning and school culture to determine what they need to do to lay the groundwork for an instructional leadership team. They develop criteria useful for selecting members for the team, which they will bring to the subsequent sessions.

Team prework. Participants complete several short readings about teacher leadership and the conditions that support teacher leadership in schools.

Workshop 1: Teacher Leadership (half day). Participants explore beliefs about teamwork and leadership, and learn about the qualities of an effective ILT. They construct a leadership timeline for their school so that they better understand the context in which they are working.

Workshop 2: Our Purpose and Responsibilities (half day). Participants differentiate the purpose of an ILT from other teams in their school and develop a focused purpose statement. The principal facilitates a discussion about current initiatives in the school, and the team discusses their overall responsibilities in sharing the role of instructional leader with the principal. Finally, they discuss stages of team development and relate them to establishing team norms, communication strategies, and decision-making procedures.

Workshop 3: Context for Improvement and the Team Charter (half day). Building from the previous workshop, participants complete a self-assessment of the context for improvement within their schools and discuss how the ILT influences the context and vice versa. They learn about the value a team charter can bring to the team, and they begin developing one.

Workshop 4: Agents of Change (half day). Team members develop a chronology of change initiatives in their school and use it to gain a better understanding of change management. They then look at some case studies and develop a model of how to effectively lead change. Given various change management tools, they chart a course into the future.

Workshop 5: Building the Learning Community (half day). Based on homework completed between workshops, participants collaborate to define the attributes of a professional learning community. They look at some exemplars of effective learning communities and identify strategies for promoting adult learning in their schools in ways that improve instruction.

Workshop 6: Building Sustainability (half day). Participants work with a set of indicators that help them assess their functioning and impact within the school context. They develop a monitoring plan with the aim of building and sustaining the work over time.