CHAPTER 7

Implementing Change

Education, currently tuned for a past age, is now synchronizing with demands of the times. With information literacy and global awareness parts of our daily lives, it is imperative for educational change to become a priority. Even more importantly, it is critical this change become a priority for principals. Keeping with this thought, much of this chapter centers on ELCC Standards #1 and #2, which represent the importance of a school- and community-led vision as well as the importance of best practices and effective instructional programs.

Key to Leadership

Principals need to find ways to extend their spheres of influence.

In order to meet future demands, building-level administrators need to pay keen attention to new ways of leading schools. Forward-looking principals are thus creating global curriculum, high teacher quality, and reliable assessments. These same school leaders are calling for collaboration among other administrators, teacher leaders, staff, and the learning community. Sharing leadership, it seems, is a huge part of meeting new global demands and making needed changes in schools. The issue, however, is how to get all principals to meet these new challenges. Rotherham and Willingham (2009) recommend the following:

- *First*, leaders must ensure instructional programs are focused not just on skills;
- *Second,* schools need to revamp how they think about human capital and professional development;
- *Third*, schools must provide for new assessments that accurately measure rich learning and more complex tasks (p. 18).

To the dismay of many, however, there have been recurring problems with the lack of leadership in numerous schools throughout the country. In addition, there have been questions about curriculum, teacher expertise, and quality assessment. According to U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (2009), America has a broken system—a system of training, induction, evaluation, professional development, and promotion that is an artifact from an earlier era. Duncan elaborates by noting the need for reform for students, teachers, and principals. With this in mind, school leaders face a major challenge in developing the ability to address the enormity of these problems. Without better leadership, better teaching, and better assessments, change may very well be superficial at best.

Questions addressed in this chapter include the following:

1. What steps can principals take to meet the challenge of global demands and need for school change?
2. What critical elements need to be infused into schools of change?
3. What is a teacher-centered process and why is it important for principals to involve teachers in school change?
4. What are some alternative leadership steps principals can take to evoke change?
5. What is hidden curriculum and how can it impact school leadership?

PRINCIPALS OF CHANGE

A key to reforming schools continues to be for building-level administrators to keep and maintain a larger picture of the entire process. This follows closely with ELCC Standard #6, which emphasizes that school leaders understand the importance of political, social, economic, legal, and cultural contexts. With this in mind, principals and teacher leaders have found there is no one best way to improve instruction. And yet, fostering change is allowing creative school leaders to achieve and garner some ground in educational reform. According to Bernie Trilling (2010), global director of the Oracle Education Foundation, "real change" needs to move beyond the principal's office and penetrate the walls of the classroom. He suggests new inquiry- and design-based projects rooted in driving questions and real-world problems to be used as keys in unlocking education. Trilling also shares how students need to learn more deeply when applying classroom-acquired knowledge to real-world problems. In addition, students are most successful when they are taught *how* to learn as well as *what* to learn. Trilling recommends the following critical elements be infused into schools of change:

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communications and collaboration
- Creativity and innovation
- Information, media, and technology literacy

- Flexibility and adaptability
- Initiative and self-direction
- Social and cross-cultural interactions
- Leadership and responsibility

With this in mind, highly successful school leaders are acknowledging leadership and responsibility as critical factors in running schools. Principals in the future need to address *how* schools will interface with large global networks in which big issues in one part of the world instantaneously affect another part of the world. These same principals will have to assist students in learning how to learn as well as in how to meet a multitude of new and never-before-imagined careers. And finally, it will be up to these building leaders to assist students in facing new challenges of learning to work in a multitude of international settings.

Tip for Principals: 7.1

Leadership consists of cultivating and supporting individuals in real on-the-job settings.

According to Michael Fullan (2009), meaningful change requires whole-system reform. For principals to evoke this type of transformation, it will take leadership development to be job embedded. Fullan relates how school leadership consists of cultivating, developing, and continuously supporting individual leaders in real on-the-job settings. In tackling the challenge of reform, new leadership must focus directly on the organization, that is, its culture, structure, and processes. Subsequently, change is not just adoption and implementation. Real change involves nurturing such improvement strategies as collaboration, actively shared leadership, data-driven decisions, high-quality instruction, teacher commitment, and student effort as well as student engagement. In addition, Fullan believes job-embedded leadership requires the following:

- recruiting dynamic leaders and teachers
- creating a theoretically rich and practice-sensitive curriculum linking theory to practice;
- qrapping relevant coursework around field-based experiences;
- blending coaching techniques;
- creating cohorts of professionals; and
- securing financial support.

In a nutshell, schools do not operate in isolation. Building leadership means building ongoing interactions and trust as well as confidence across the board. With focused vision, school leaders can hopefully provide a transition to high-yielding instruction and distributed leadership as well as the formation of effective learning networks. Through this collectively responsible process, principals and teacher leaders will be able to ensure and solidify the idea of 21st-century change.

Developing Diagnostic and Prescriptive Models

When considering change, it is critical for principals to dig deeper and find new ways to lead. In this regard, ask any successful school administrator, and he or she will tell you that diagnostic-prescriptive models as well as differentiated instruction are proven tools in evoking futuristic change, especially if the change occurs in the area of curriculum.

Tip for Principals: 7.2

Diagnostic-prescriptive approaches can assist principals in implementing differentiated instruction.

According to author Rick Wormeli (2006),

> Differentiated instruction is a collection of best practices strategically employed to maximize students' learning at every turn, including giving them the tools to handle anything that is undifferentiated. It requires teachers to do different things for different students, some, or a lot, of the time in order for them to learn when the general classroom approach does not meet student needs. It is not individualized instruction, though that may happen from time to time as warranted. It's whatever works to advance the students. It's highly effective teaching. (p. 3)

Savvy school leaders are finding differentiated instruction to be increasingly useful in transforming teaching and learning. Labeled as an individual approach, differentiated instruction allows teachers to remediate weaknesses and develop strengths. Such an approach complements and is often used with the response to intervention (RTI) models (Bender & Shores, 2007).

Tip for Principals: 7.3

As more teachers drive change, the more likely deep change will occur.

Invoking new ways of administering and teaching is critical to future success. As a result, planning, enacting, reviewing, and managing are what effective school principals do. Subsequently, prescriptive models and differentiated instruction augment curriculum transformation. This transformational strategy involves developing a series of tightly sequenced learning experiences. In short, as part of the process, a student moves through linear sequences at an individualized pace. When determining the performance of a

student, a school, or an entire school district, multiple measures of assessment are used to provide more accountability and clarity than performance on any single test can provide (Guilfoyle, 2006).

How effective are diagnostic-prescriptive models? The answer is almost impossible to sort out. However, studies by Ysseldyke and Tardrew (2003) revealed the difference in gains ranging from 7 to 14 percentile points in just one semester for students in Grades 3 through 10.

Elective Models

Unlike the more common diagnostic-prescriptive models, *elective models* seem to have a broader multipath network approach. Such models allow for a wider perspective of curriculum and instruction. For example, the content of a given elective course is usually determined by an individual teacher or a team of teachers who can draw upon their own special interests and perceptions of student interest. Under this approach, it is assumed highly aware and adept teachers can increase their capacity to oblige change. The more teachers propel change, the more likely it is that profound change will occur (Reason & Reason, 2007).

Unfortunately, with restrictive state and federal regulations in place, school administrators are shying away from the broad-based elective models. The perception is that "electives" are poorly designed and may not be as effective as the standard-based prescriptive models. No one knows if this is truly the case, and it will be up to continuing research to make the final determination.

OPERATIONALIZING CHANGE AND REFORM

Leading teachers toward guiding instruction takes courage and fortitude along with the ability to operationalize reform. Thus, in every school system, someone, usually the building principal, is often designated to determine change. So the question becomes, how can principals ensure positive change in schools?

Providing Alternative Leadership Strategies

According to Research Director Nancy Protheroe (2010), alternative leadership strategies offer up the following:

Analysis and problem solving. Insightful administrators are learning how to collect, store, organize, and analyze data to target high-priority problems. This digitized information is then used by school principals to develop quick and efficient action plans.

Tip for Principals: 7.4	Learn to look for quick, visible wins as well as positive feedback from staff.

Once building-level leaders develop an action plan, they should *drive for results*. With a stated goal of increased student achievement in sight, principals can quickly shoulder the need to move talented staff into leadership positions and offer support. The key is to know who will deliver and then assist these individuals in any way possible. Looking for quick, visible wins, principals can now concentrate on immediate feedback based on previously set indicators. Change is encouraged even if there is a slight deviation from the initial mission—the more success, the more chance of reaping positive gains in student achievement.

Anchoring targeted staff. Using this surprisingly valuable approach, principals can engage even more staff members in the process. In-service is mapped out and professional development patterns are woven into a cohort. Some staff may have to be reassigned or changed—but, in the end, targeting the right people in the right positions will provide positive results.

Focusing on success. Without jerry-rigging or influencing data, effective managers are learning to monitor the entire process and make changes where necessary. Any aberrations or tasks impeding progress are halted immediately. This is perhaps one of the most important phases of operationalizing change and reform.

Involving and influencing both internal and external forces. Involving staff (internal forces) is a pivotal part of formulating success. Maintaining a vision and completing a mission and objectives are musts as well. While cultivating consensus, principals and teacher leaders need to pass along positive information and gain approval from skeptics throughout the process. Furthermore, this needs to be tackled as a win-win. Making sure parents and community (external forces) are aware of positive changes can make the difference down the line.

Measuring and reporting progress. Avant-garde school leaders, using up-to-date assessment and reporting, are learning to link measurable, positive outcomes to initial budget allocations. Genuine successes are then shared with community members as part of a well-planned and well-orchestrated public relations program. In doing so, developing community awareness can make or break a project for a principal.

Tip for Principals: 7.5	A "fast cycle" of actions is necessary to keep new projects afloat.

When using the alternative leadership strategies as noted above, principals are better able to address the multiple faces of reform. Rarely, however, does a new program or project move along without any bumps or glitches. Any top-notch principal will tell you school improvement is not easy and that change needs to be continually monitored if it is to be successful.

FOCUSING ON CURRICULUM CHANGE

A great deal of energy and support exists in many circles throughout the United States to develop a common core set of standards for English language arts and mathematics. For example, the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers

are committed to the development of these common standards. This exertion is supported by 48 states, professional organizations, and business and government agencies. The real essence of the common core set of standards is they have the potential to provide coherence, rigor, logic, and organization (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Currently, "the most misleading perception . . . is that common core standards and the assessment of those standards are state efforts and not something required by the U.S. Department of Education" (Wilson, 2010, p. 42). However, "while states have not been mandated to adopt the standards, the Department of Education has made it perfectly clear: A state won't be eligible for millions of federal dollars unless it adopts the common core standards" (Wilson, 2010, p. 42).

In strong opposition to the Common Core State Standards Initiative, the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) believes that the Common Core State Standards Initiative is national standards merely by a different name (Estrada, 2010). In support of HSLDA's opposition to the common core standards, but for a different reason, the state of Virginia has opted not to adopt the common core standards because, as Governor Robert F. McDonald told reporters,

> The problem is that the way they have structured this program to mandate that we adopt a common core of standards to replace the Standards of Learning is unacceptable . . . we can't go back. We've been working on this for 15 years. Our standards are much superior. They're well accepted. They're validated. All the education leaders have a comfort level with those. So once again, a federal mandate to adopt a federal common core standard is just not something I can accept, nor can most of the education leaders in Virginia, nor can most of the legislators. (Anderson & Helderman, 2010, n.p.)

The Common Core State Standards were written by a team of education experts, teachers, and other stakeholders. The goal is to create a national network of common core academic standards. If we have common core standards, however, do we need national tests? Wilson (2010) endorses the need for national tests because "it would yield information that parents, employers and the public need to know and are entitled to know" (p. 43).

Tip for Principals: 7.6

"When you're finished changing, you're finished."

Benjamin Franklin

As principals reflect directly on common core standards, best practices, and an instruction-centered process, they soon realize teachers are at the core of change. Unfortunately, not all teachers want change, and sometimes these same teachers choose resistance. Their resistance is often born out of fear. Thus, change has to begin with transforming the mindset of veteran teachers who are comfortable with current practices and who are invested in the school community. These are the individuals who are generally used to doing things their way (Gwynne-Atwater & Taylor, 2010).

Rationale for Instruction-Centered Process

Developing a rationale for an instruction-centered process, one that is supported by teachers, is a good place for principals to start when planning change. This approach provides a focus as well as a rationale. It relies on teacher input and underscores one of many ways to get faculty to develop ownership and to buy into something new. The phases in the process include the following:

1. Establish project parameters
2. Orient for mastery
3. Map the desired curriculum
4. Refine the map
5. Suggest time allocations
6. Select and develop tests
7. Select instructional materials
8. Provide for professional development

Tip for Principals: 7.7

Instruction-centered change should reflect either the formal, perceived, or operational curriculum.

First step. According to international consultant and author Conrad W. Snyder (2004), the initial step in developing teacher-supported change is to determine what will be essential for students to encounter. Luckily, such information may already exist in the curriculum created by a state or federal educational agency or local school district, but it needs to be checked for comprehensiveness and expansiveness. Four criteria are often used to sort content listings and begin the development of generative questions around which the instructional events of materials can operate:

- To what extent does the idea, topic, or process represent a big idea that has enduring value beyond the classroom in everyday life and reality?
- To what extent does the idea, topic, or process reside at the heart of the discipline?
- To what extent does the idea, topic, or process require coverage through other instructional events in the classroom: extending the textbook?
- To what extent does the idea, topic, or process offer potential for engaging students, keeping their attention, and encouraging their interest in the topic?

Second step. In this step, building-level leaders need to frame units around the enduring understandings and essential questions. Paradoxically, once a unit is firmly established, the question to ask is, what evidence exists to accept this as an understanding? The design criteria or filters at this point for the assessments are (1) validity, (2) reliability, (3) sufficiency, (4) authenticity, (5) feasibility, and (6) friendliness. These criteria reflect instructional events, with the difference that the student produces all the required responses in order to diagnose or check the status of the student in the areas of importance. Standard measurement criteria apply, but good principals and teacher leaders make allowances because the effects are only remedial, which probably does not hurt as continuing thoughtful practice. The better the evidence, however, the better the decisions made for instructional strategies. And assuredly, quality of measurement is an essential feature of quality instruction.

It is at this point that futuristically directed school leaders can help introduce new technologies to stimulate instructional change. Fortunately, this will boost the teaching and learning processes, enabling a continuous global connection among the educational colleagues, and allow substantive work to be ongoing and sustainable. For example, a program that can be utilized is Web-based live meetings. Web-based instruction is available online, and the operational cost is generally affordable. These Web-based programs allow for continuing dialogue and frequent contact. Online editing and review routines also enable interchange and interaction within the curriculum-development process. The curriculum is available for update and revision without expensive printing and publishing requirements, and the distribution of materials can be carried out efficiently.

Tip for Principals: 7.8

Sharing leadership is critical in meeting global demands and making needed changes in schools.

Third step. In the third step, principals and teacher leaders need to make the firm adjustment toward research-based teaching strategies that are solely based on improving student achievement. This helps demystify the process. For example, these strategies are guides to effective approaches. As we have seen, the problem with modern instructional design for school improvement lies in the level of teacher training and practicing expertise. The ideal project requires a teaching cadre that is trained in modern approaches to knowledge development, as well as mandated programs such as *response to intervention (RTI)* and corresponding teaching methods. A common lament for principals is that teachers do not always know how to use instructional material to provide a rich classroom learning experience. This requires considerable expertise. Therefore, it is important for building-level leaders to combine the curriculum in understandable terms with the structure of more didactic approaches (i.e., improving on the direct instruction methods already in place) with structured instructions to teachers in the newer teaching strategies.

Tip for Principals: 7.9

Tipping toward new methods of teaching does provide innovative instructional practices.

New ideas for change can have a unique and guiding presence when they do work. Thus, tipping instruction toward new methods does tend to provide innovative teaching. This is all part of the third step. In typical curriculum development, the teacher is given only the barest of instructions, and the final enactments are creative products of the teacher, not the designer. In the approach to teacher education under this project, a principal can provide complete strategic scaffolding for teacher enactments. Because some teachers may not have been trained in advanced technological methods, and they may have no examples from their own school or training at their university or college to fall back on. Therefore, various manuals and hands-on materials, developed by current curriculum publishing companies, can help principals in providing staff and teacher leaders with some new ideas and strategies that can be used as beginning building blocks for needed curriculum change.

Tip for Principals: 7.10

Defining the scope of a project is crucial to the success of gaining teacher support.

After opening new pathways to learning and the development of innovative teacher strategies, each individual school can be considered a unit of change and the transitional steps listed above can be a part of an action plan for mobilization. Plus, each step helps principals formulate a teacher-supported, instructional-centered process to make needed curriculum reforms (Snyder, 2004).

In the end, if principals and teacher leaders want to be agents of change, they need to understand how to support the spectrum of workflow, obtain support, evaluate instructional strategies, and initiate new programs. Additionally, these same building-level leaders must equally understand the concepts of *hidden curriculum*, *alignment*, *design*, and *curriculum mapping*.

Hidden Curriculum

One of the most fascinating aspects of instructional reform is the impression that the hidden curriculum makes. This often unnoticed and unknown and yet very important part of school operation can help or hinder how school administrators deal with transitioning in new programs.

Tip for Principals: 7.11

Hidden curriculum often lies outside the boundaries of a principal's intentional efforts.

The idea that schools do more than simply transmit knowledge seems to be the essence of hidden curriculum. There are differences between written and hidden curriculums and in how teachers teach and how students learn implicit concepts and patterns (Deutsch, 2004). According to Glatthorn (1987), the hidden curriculum, which is sometimes called the "unstudied curriculum" or the "implicit curriculum," might best be defined in the following manner:

> *Those aspects of schooling, other than the intentional curriculum, that seem to produce changes in student values, perceptions, and behaviors.* (p. 20)

As this sobering definition suggests, student achievement can be impacted from a plethora of sources other than just the intentional curriculum. As Glatthorn, Boschee, and Whitehead (2009) note, building administrators should be aware of the *constants* of the hidden curriculum and the *variables* of the hidden curriculum.

As a *constant*, the key component of the school as an organization is the classroom, where the most salient aspects of the hidden curriculum come into play. The classroom, in many instances, is a teeming place where issues of control often become dominant. Subsequently, control is achieved through differential use of power. Here, a teacher uses several kinds of power: selection of content, methods of teaching and learning, movement in the classroom, and the flow of classroom discourse. Too, control is achieved by the skillful use of accountability measures, as teachers spend much time evaluating and giving evaluative feedback. As a result, students unconsciously learn the skills and traits required by the larger society.

The *variables* of the hidden curriculum can be classified into three categories: organizational, social-system, and culture. The *organizational* variables pertain to how teachers are assigned and students grouped for instruction: team teaching, promotion and retention policies, ability grouping, and curriculum tracking. The *social-system* variable is an aspect of school climate: administrator–teacher relationships, relationships among teachers, decision making involving teachers, teacher–student relationships, and student participation in activities. Obviously, all these factors can be influenced through effective leadership by both principals and teachers. *Culture* variables relate to belief systems, values, cognitive structures, and meaning. These variables are associated with clear goals that are understood and supported by all; high expectations and strong commitment to student achievement; an emphasis on academics; rewards and praises publicly given for student achievement; an emphasis on cooperation and group competition; and students valuing academic achievement. These aspects of the hidden curriculum also can be influenced by principals and teachers.

Anecdotal stories and general consensus appear to validate the subtle and pervasive influence of the hidden curriculum on school operation. And thus, it is critical for principals to remain on top of these *stealth issues* if they want to make a difference in the overall success of any educational program.

Curriculum Alignment

Tying curriculum alignment to student achievement is a real-world example of top-down reform. In a time of large class sizes as well as testing and skills accountability, a major challenge for today's principals is developing a solid and yet far-reaching instructional program. The result is that school leaders, wrapped in a spin of political change, have the never-ending job of aligning local programs with state and national curriculum (Balfour, 2009). With this in mind, it is important to appoint an instructional building-level committee. As noted previously in Chapter 5, a community-based representative group can assist the principal in planning and coordinating the curriculum. This committee should include an appropriate number of representatives of teachers and parents. A special point should be made here about the allocation of leadership responsibilities. Rather than just assume a principal will play the key leadership role, it is helpful to formulate a leadership team so that the talents of many individuals are utilized and responsibility is shared. This is where teacher leaders can excel.

Standards-Based Versus Curriculum Integration

Another nuance of top-down reform involves schools moving to a "standards-based" curriculum. Accordingly, building-level administrators are learning to conjure up well-organized curricula with goals stated in a clear and concise manner. With this in mind, complex ideas and skills are set to follow simpler ones. Student abilities are always considered, and changes in teaching strategies are differentiated. Topics are addressed and then covered again in a spiraling skill approach, with the learning level advancing with each reteaching. The hope, then, is that students will develop a richer understanding of the subject area, and there is an appreciation of specific details within the material.

Curriculum Design

As government officials continuously push for a dangerously narrow set of regulations, pressure-laden principals are turning to a variety of top-down instructional design models. This has a tendency to force "under-the-gun" principals to move toward an outcome perspective or end-in-mind approach, which is often inverse in nature. This is usually a standards-based alignment, which often accompanies high-stakes testing.

Tip for Principals: 7.12	High-stakes testing often means high-stakes stress for school leaders.

Such dramatic moves toward standards-based alignment will hopefully keep the proverbial administrative train on the track. Admittedly, these moves can be aided by outside experts. With education largely dependent on what the public says, the goal for principals and school leaders is to involve as many experienced stakeholders in the process of change as possible. Thus, many districts are moving toward outside agencies to elicit positive 21st-century reform. Outside agencies, such as Frank Locker Educational Planning and Public Consulting Group, are private companies that provide an additional perspective on how to revolutionize teaching and learning (Kelly, 2010). These educational companies generally involve everyone from janitors to teachers to parents to administrators to business leaders to college professors in working to embrace community change. Furthermore, they assist with technology, cooperative learning, progressive education, and "project-based" education as well as other goals. Accordingly, and with this in mind, delegating any curriculum work usually falls into the categories of goal development, defining courses, dividing courses into units, planning units, and formulating lessons (Danielson, 2002).

Mapping Desired Curriculum

When focusing on big instructional changes, building-level principals and teacher leaders are discovering how to lay out and map desired curriculum. Mapping has a way of nudging school leaders wanting a hands-on approach to focus on *what is* being taught—not just on *what should* be taught. In addition, researchers (see English, 1980, and Jacobs, 2004) are sharing how mapping can determine what teachers actually teach. For a variety of reasons, some teachers do not teach what they think should be taught. Perhaps this is because they lack materials, they believe they are constrained by administrators' or parents' preferences, or they are not sure that colleagues would approve. Who knows? Therefore, it seems desirable from a principal's perspective to find out what teachers should be teaching, rather than simply formalizing unnecessary compromises just to obtain change.

A meaningful way to map the desired curriculum is to survey the teachers grade by grade. The survey instrument is a crucial element, because the content and structure of the instrument will very much affect the kinds of data elicited. An expert in the field (either someone from the district or an external consultant) should help a principal develop a draft of the form.

Developing Materials and Support

As noted in ELCC Standard #3, organization and resources can be critical to the operationalizing of student success. Principals are learning to work smarter, not harder. In doing so, getting the puzzle pieces to line up correctly is becoming a major part of every principal's job. With a curriculum fully mapped, building-level leaders are becoming more adept at helping teachers implement improved curriculum. However, success of the past does not mean success in the future. Without a doubt, schools already constrained by limited resources are looking for innovative ways to meet the conflicting governmental mandates (Sorrentino & Zirkel, 2004). This means building-level administrators need to maintain an ethical stance and understand a system's capabilities. This also means providing new materials and supporting teachers with new efforts. Finding a variety of ways to infuse technology should rank high on this list. Therefore, to achieve success, school leaders

need to provide cutting-edge digital tools and materials, improve overall effectiveness, enhance ability to respond, obtain teacher commitment, delegate decision making, and increase teacher satisfaction and morale.

Tip for Principals: 7.13

Time allocated to a particular area of the curriculum often relates directly to student achievement in that area.

Time Allocations

Time can be a *change* killer for building principals. Thus, precious instructional time should not be encroached upon by other activities—but it often is. When bringing this concept to the forefront of concerns, principals and teacher leaders need to review recommendations of experts, reflect on district curricular goals, and recommend time allocations for each strand of the curriculum. These recommendations are made part of the final curriculum report and help activate needed reform. A variation of this method relies more upon teacher input about time and strands and sets allocations level by level.

A principal poses the question to all teachers in the school as to how they can teach a subject at a given level of schooling: *As you think about the students in our middle schools, what percentage of time do you think we should allocate to each strand of this curriculum?* The building-level leader then works with teachers to agree on time allocations that reflect their perceptions and at the same time are responsive to districtwide priorities. Below is how one group of middle school social studies teachers answered the time allocation question.

Social studies strands	Percentage
History	50
Map and study skills	20
Geography	15
Civics	10
Other	5

Monitoring Student Assessments

In today's world, increasing student achievement is fast becoming a critical part of every principal's survival. Furthermore, most building-level administrators are feeling the pressure that many students are not performing academically. Thus, in many states, the principal's job is now in jeopardy. Whether this is true or not, principals are realizing their jobs are becoming directly linked to increases in student achievement.

The bottom line is for principals to tackle the challenge of monitoring student academic growth. Furthermore, principals and their teacher leaders need to consult with measurement specialists in the district to select standardized tests that adequately reflect the improved curriculum. Such thinking is an important consideration, because performance on standardized tests is often used as a measure of school success. While the issue is most critical in major subject areas, it also needs careful consideration in any area of the curriculum in which standardized tests are used.

In sum, school leaders are coming to the realization that tests can and do make or break success when developing new programs or taking on needed reforms. Fortunately, locally developed examinations (such as Web-based Exam View) are usually tied to state and national standards. These Web-based exams can be used both to assess student achievement and to ensure that teachers are implementing the mastery curriculum. If faculty and staff know their students will be tested on specific content, they are more likely to emphasize that content to induce change.

Because student achievement tests are so critical for reform, they need to be administered with utmost care to ensure reliability and validity. In this regard, it is the responsibility of the building principal to keep testing and assessment in perspective. Keeping teachers and students from panicking with test anxiety is a major role of a building-level administrator. This can be done with proper in-service and professional development programs. Nevertheless, test anxiety remains a concern. State accountability requirements, correlated closely with needs and wishes of the corporate community, continue to gain control of the ethos and the aims of education that are offered to the students at some schools (Kozol, 2007). As part of the reform process, the advice of measurement specialists should be required, and every form of the tests should be used in pilot studies before the tests are administered throughout the district.

Tip for Principals: 7.14

Web-based assessments can provide quick and accurate measures that can be aligned with state and national standards.

Electronic Testing

In moving from casual talk to substantial curriculum change, principals and teacher leaders need data scores with meaningful references. With this in mind, school administrators now must be able to obtain accurate digital measures, especially student measures that align with standards and produce timely results.

Data should include:

- Norms for public accountability
- Curriculum references to focus instruction
- Prior scores to assess growth individually and collectively
- Benchmarks to measure yearly adequate progress

Leading curriculum reform continues to be a central pillar for some technology-oriented groups. For example, the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA, 2010) was one of the first organizations to provide computerized achievement-level tests aligned with local curriculum and state standards. Valued by most school leaders, electronic or Web-based adapted tests combine the benefit of technology with the integrity of level tests. But they do come with a cost: They are expensive.

Mindful as to the need for validity, electronic tests draw from a bank of more than 30,000-plus calibrated test items. When students access a digitized adaptive test, the difficulty of the test is adjusted to the student's performance. The level of each question is based on how well the student has answered the questions up to that point. As the student answers correctly, the questions become more difficult. If the student answers incorrectly, the questions become easier. Each student then receives a personalized test specifically designed for her or him. An even more astonishing feature is the ability for students to stop at any point and go to lunch or recess and come back to start where they left off. Following this perspective, schools using NWEA's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) system are finding electronic formats are reducing test anxiety and at the same time are very accurate.

Thanks to fast-link online capabilities, when a student completes a computerized adaptive test, the MAP system reports the student's score on the screen, allowing for immediate feedback. Theoretically, a student's up-front score should show growth from year to year and can be correlated longitudinally to scores from previous years. These firsthand data have the ability to create instantaneous and worthwhile changes in instructional direction for any teacher or principal, depending on information received. Accordingly, computerized adaptive tests have proven to be one of the fastest and easiest ways to assess student learning and learner needs. As a result, NWEA prepares tests for the district around local standards and curriculum or an already prepared state version.

What is novel and really valuable is that principals can download information about students and classes shortly after the test is completed. Results can be printed for individual teachers or parents as well. Another great feature involves the ability for teachers to assess student scores at any time throughout the year as well as obtain gains made in certain areas. The true test, however, is when curriculum and teaching strategies are altered based on immediate feedback.

Selecting Test-Related Materials

In a quest for successful change, any endeavor should come with a clear focus and knowledge. Admittedly, change can be arduous if not approached carefully. In this regard, principals and teacher leaders are learning to take great care in not having curriculum committees reinventing the wheel. It is critical, then, for school leaders to determine guidelines for evaluating and selecting new materials—especially test materials. Doing so helps point out any special features the improved curriculum might require. An example might be, "All language arts texts must give special attention to grammar skills." Once this is done, a curriculum committee can follow up with a review of materials to best support teachers when they actually implement the improved curriculum.

Hence, principals and teacher leaders at all levels of education are keeping a close and sharp eye on potential problems as they relate to school reform. Monitoring the teaching and learning process is a key to successful material selection. It should be stressed here, however, that Web-based learning approaches and textbooks should serve the curriculum, not necessarily dictate it. In too many instances, schools reverse the process. For example, a principal purchases a program and then allows the staff to use the publisher's scope-and-sequence chart as the basis for the curriculum. The folly of such an approach is apparent to anyone who understands how school materials are designed. To sell well, materials must appeal to a mass market; as a consequence, textbook authors often include content that they know is inappropriate for no other reason than because they believe the market demands it. Unfortunately, as many principals have learned the hard way, a program's scope and sequence do not always follow a school or a state's curriculum alignment and/or skill requirements. Thus, it is up to building-level leaders to monitor the process and guide teachers through each selection.

PRINCIPAL: CATALYST OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

With 21st-century philosophy as a laser-like guide, principals must now develop a new perspective of leadership. Following with this approach, instructional practices need to mix with new developments in technology to help create the global classroom of the future.

Tip for Principals: 7.15	Technology innovation stimulates change.

As part of the global change process, further advances in technology are aligning with differentiated curriculum strategies. Currently, a movement is toward low-cost, portable devices for student use in all schools and homes that can be connected through global networks and tailored for specific tasks or applications. Some classroom teachers currently have the capability of communicating and exchanging information worldwide with students via Web-based programs.

From a principal's perspective, technology, with its overflowing waves of information and media, can and does make a tremendous difference in encouraging instructional change. Thus, the use of technology promotes investigative skills, makes learning more exciting, provides opportunities to apply knowledge, and prepares students for an increasingly technologically advanced world. Through this type of diffusion theory and process, technology does appear to be changing how we think of curriculum as well as how we think of education (Leigh, 2003).

With new advancements in technology and student assessment, principals and teacher leaders are channeling energies toward collecting more classroom data. This is because students are becoming more acquainted with using digital formats such as classroom performance systems (CPS). These are commonly referred as "clickers" and help to enter pre- and posttest data instantaneously. Data from these student assessments can then be graded electronically and uploaded to a principal's computer. This provides real-time student data to the principal and teacher leaders as well as to other administrators needing information.

With access to digitized up-to-the-minute performance information, principals, teacher leaders, and central office staff are now able to analyze, chart, and graph every student, class and/or school within the district. Thus, school leaders, sitting in their offices, can instantly diagnose academic weaknesses in any classroom or school environment. If this is not enough, these same administrators can now display, annotate, organize, import, capture, record, analyze, and share whatever information is provided. With accurate data results (that are easy to read and understand), principals and teacher leaders now have the resources they need to take immediate action as well as to help schools or staff improve performance and induce change. Naturally, all of this uploaded information is encrypted, allowing for data transactions to be private, secure, and safe.

As a result, new ideas and new changes are allowing stellar school leaders to blend an assortment of innovative assessment processes. This includes but is not limited to examview, web-based learning, interactive whiteboards, RTI strategies, pacing guides, and other ideas to transform classroom instruction. Such multitiered system designs specifically support student-centered collaborative learning and are becoming commonplace in schools. Many Web-based systems can provide high-quality lesson content and large digitized question banks with student response and presentation hardware that is easily accessible. As a result, more teachers now produce and administer standards-aligned formative tests, quizzes, and study guides using technology.

In retrospect, there is a powerful new sense of change being generated in today's schools as 21st-century global ideas are now coming into fruition. With these new technologies, all principals and teacher leaders have or can have the ability to alter and improve how their schools really do operate. As a result, on the face of it, education is changing for the better.

SUMMARY

School leaders are finding that experience really does matter, especially when initiating change in schools. With this experience comes a desire for today's administrators to begin the process of forging change as a tool for school improvement. Thus, making change happen for teachers and students holds colossal potential for developing a renewed image and commitment to academic achievement. This is a critical role for principals. Change is not easy, nor will it take place without sacrifices on the part of leadership. Finding different ways to improve instruction will be a critical component for new leaders if they are to change schools. The question remains, will our future principals be up to the task?

APPLICATIONS

1. Why should principals encourage change in schools?
2. List three ways principals can foster change in their individual schools and discuss how the principal can lead the process.
3. As a principal, how might you implement a new program in your school? What steps and strategies might you use to move the process along?
4. Why are both building connections and trust important aspects of leading change?
5. How are today's principals balancing a need for change with high levels of resistance from teachers? Give several examples.

CASE STUDY Building Trust Through Change

Players

Dr. Darlene Smathers, principal, West End School

Grant Thornby, fifth-grade teacher and teacher leader

Setting

Principal's office

Scenario

Dr. Darlene Smathers, principal of West End Elementary School, is meeting with fifth-grade teacher Grant Thornby in the principal's office. Darlene is upbeat and excited about the new technological changes being made in her school. The district has just purchased a new classroom performance multiuser program using "clickers" for students to answer questions relating to pre- and posttests. This allows teachers and the principal to quickly collect critical response data and to evaluate curriculum and instruction through an electronic evaluation management system. With instant data and streamlined test administration, Principal Smathers will be able to monitor students in each classroom. Data can be analyzed by administrators at all levels to pinpoint detailed information in classrooms and at grade levels.

"You know, Grant, I'm really excited about this new electronic management system," states Principal Smathers with a newfound smile. "I can now see and track what's going on in classrooms. Hopefully, we can generate some changes."

Grant Thornby, a teacher leader and friend of Smathers, isn't smiling. He begins pacing the office. Looking worried, he mutters. "I guess its okay that you're able to get pre- and

posttest data from our classrooms—that's not the problem. I'm a bit concerned, however, about central office getting this stuff and what they'll do with it." He then adds with an after thought, "We trust you."

The Challenge

Analyze the nature of Grant Thornby's problem. Why is he, as a teacher leader, concerned about this new change? What is being suggested here? How should Principal Smathers handle this situation?

Key Issues/Questions

1. How can new technological changes affect school relations and operations?
2. Why is trust between teachers and principals important? Is trust between principals and central office administrators just as important? Why or why not?
3. Should Principal Smathers be concerned about central office administrators having instantaneous data directly from classrooms? How might this affect teacher–principal relations in the future?
4. Why might Grant Thornby trust Smathers but not other administrators? Is this a good or bad situation? Defend your answer.
5. List several controversial changes in schools and describe how principals can help ease teacher concerns about these changes.

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www.aasa.org

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
www.ascd.org

Curriculum Theory: Understanding by Design/Grant Wiggins
http://www.arps.org/grant170/170a/curriculum_theory.htm

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www.edweek.org

Education World Article on Multiple Intelligences
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University of Maryland: Department of Education: Educational Policy and Leadership
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Note: Web resources are time and date sensitive. Websites listed above may become inactive at any time.

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