

# *Executive Development Program*

## *For School Principals*

### **National Institute for School Leadership (NISL)**

### **UNITS, TOPICS, AND THEMES**

#### **Course One: World-Class Schooling: Vision and Goals**

##### **Unit 1: The Educational Challenge**

This unit explains why fundamental changes in the international economy have resulted in greatly raised educational requirements for all citizens in the advanced economies, and why social development and ethical behavior are no less important than high academic achievement. It helps the participant make a realistic assessment of the challenges that schools must meet if the new standards are to be achieved, including the corrosive effect of pervasive low expectations for many poor and minority students. And it is designed to help the participants accept and embrace the goal of getting every student ready for college without remediation by the time that student leaves high school.

*Topics:* vision and purposes of the NISL program; personal leadership skills and leadership development plan; changes in the global economy and effects on increased need for high-skilled workers; No Child Left Behind (NCLB) updates and related Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements; social, moral, and emotional development as enduring goals; all students must reach high academic standards; standards-based strategies to meet the challenges; and the leadership challenge. Major challenges facing principals: low expectations for students, faculty capacity, lack of authority to get the job done, lack of financial resources, and inadequate time to be an instructional leader. Pasadena case study.

##### *Main Themes/Concepts:*

- The principals will understand the district's vision/goals (as delineated by the superintendent or designee), as well as the individual principal's role in meeting challenges in the new context of 21<sup>st</sup> century globalization and NCLB/AYP.
- Changes in the world economy have dramatically reduced the need for low-skilled workers and increased the need for high-skilled labor.
- NISL training focuses on instructional leadership in a standards-based context.
- Standards-based instruction requires and provides a powerful set of strategies for meeting the challenges that schools and principals now face.
- NISL's goal is to assist superintendents/principals figure out how districts can take the people they have in place now or in the pipeline, and enable them to drive schools to a much higher level of performance with a budget no larger than they currently have.
- Principals are on the frontline of a national movement to raise student performance significantly--all students can and must meet high standards.
- Six main elements of instructional leadership are vision; systems thinking and data; effective instructional practice, alignment and coherence; learning communities and teams; and sustaining improvement
- You are a moral leader before anything else. Moral leadership consists in doing what is right for students.
- "To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society."

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- Keys to success are alignment/coherence of all elements of a standards-based system, strategic thinking about how all students can achieve high standards, and an unrelenting focus on results.
- The principal is the key driver of change/improvement.
- One of the most important challenges for the principal is to create a school that is an effective social setting in which students develop strong social skills and belief in themselves to succeed.
- In understanding the Pasadena High School case study, principals will discern the core issues, wrestle with the ethical dilemmas presented, analyze decision-making strategies, think through actions they might have taken themselves in comparison with those described in the case, comprehend the courage required in making tough decisions, and consider ways to make instructional leadership systemic and strategic—the main focus—not dependent solely on a powerful personality.

### **Unit 2: The Principal as Strategic Thinker**

The purpose of this unit is to enable the participant to think strategically about the challenges he or she faces and to put together a clear and powerful strategy for addressing those challenges. Much of this unit draws on experience from business and the military, but the participant is also asked throughout to apply what is learned to the world of the school—for example, they examine their own school visions against criteria for effective visions. Participants are introduced to the distinctions among tactical, operational, and strategic thinking. They are shown how to take into account all aspects of the problem to be solved, how to systematically assess the challenges to be overcome and the assets to be mobilized. And they are introduced to the elements of planning and decision making required both to construct a viable strategy and to execute it successfully.

*Topics:* criteria for evaluating school visions; the concepts of vision, mission, and strategy; strategic thinking and strategy; conceptual framework for thinking strategically; case study methodology; operational planning and tactics; decision making models, processes, and framework; strategic leadership; barriers to strategic thinking; politico-military, business, and education case studies.

*Main Themes/Concepts:*

- The main challenges that today’s principals face include low expectations for students (by the faculty, the community, and the students themselves), inadequate faculty capacity, lack of authority for the leadership to get the job done, insufficient time for the principal to be a true instructional leader, and inadequate financial resources,
- The principal must lead the effort and motivate a school team to create and commit to a vision of where the school wants to be over a period of years; develop a strategy to implement that vision; build action plans to execute the strategy; and apply a process for measuring accomplishments.
- Strategic thinking is not the same as simply planning ahead—thinking strategically is all about matching up clear ends or goals with the available or attainable resources.
- An effective conceptual framework for strategic thinking starts with an examination of the context and the vision, and includes consideration of assumptions, interests, objectives, capabilities, threats, and risks.

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- “Planning is essential, but plans are useless.” (Eisenhower)

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- To evaluate a school vision, the principal should ask whether or not the vision is achievable and doable; is focused on results; leads to accountability; is measurable, simple and clear; is actionable; whether it lends itself to a strategy to accomplish the vision; leads to hard choices, and whether it is worth fighting for.
- An understanding of decision making models—rational actor, organizational processes, bureaucratic politics, and dominant personality—helps the principal turn thought into priorities, effective action, and powerful practice.
- Strategic leaders share some common characteristics—among these are deep knowledge of their business, clear expectations and accountability, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and managing for results.
- Strategic leaders share power and build coalitions that rally behind a vision.
- Strategic thinking and strategy are little more than mental exercises unless accompanied by deliberative decision-making and decisive actions—with accountability for success.
- The principal’s responsibility is to consider different approaches and agendas in coming to a decision and implementing actions that carry out a decision. However, the goal is not just operational excellence (doing what you have been doing very well) but ensuring that the actions taken are coherent, consistent, and aligned with the strategy.

### **Unit 3: Elements of Standards-Based Instructional Systems and School Design**

The purpose of this unit is to help the participant develop a sophisticated understanding of the components of standards-based instructional systems and the ways those components can be combined to produce very powerful effects on student performance. Participants learn about different kinds of standards and assessments available and the appropriate uses of each. They learn how to distinguish assessments that are genuinely aligned to standards from those that are not. They learn how to build curriculum frameworks designed to array topics in a logical way to enable students to reach standards over a period of years and how to analyze and select instructional materials that are aligned with the standards and the frameworks. Most important, they learn what the role of the principal is in assuring that his or her school has a fully aligned instructional system that is focused on the standards and is internally coherent and consistent.

This unit also enables the participant to take on the role of leading the faculty in the development of a powerful, coherent school design. Participants also learn how to assess designs offered by third parties, how to select such designs in the light of the needs of their own school and how to adapt and extend those designs to fit those needs.

*Topics:* Standards-based instructional systems, standards: types and criteria; authority scale; assessment: types, purposes, and multiple uses; curriculum framework, instructional materials and aligned instruction; safety nets; degree of alignment in schools; standards-based education: issues; building coherence; and the role of the principal in a standards-based instructional system; school design models; principal’s own school design; strategies for redesigning the learning environment; stakeholder analysis.

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### *Main Themes/Concepts:*

- A standards-based instructional system includes several critical elements: clear, high standards; fair assessments, curriculum framework, aligned instruction, safety nets.
- Performance standards and assessments should drive teaching and learning in standards-based schools.
- The principal has a critical role/responsibilities in orchestrating an aligned and coherent standards-based instructional system, and the principal must ensure that meeting standards comes first in everything the school does.
- Principals must be able to distinguish between content standards and performance standards.
- The principal, together with the instructional leadership team, may have more authority than they may believe with regard to implementing a standards-based system.
- Principals need to identify and understand what constitutes good performance standards.
- Principals must understand formative, embedded, and summative assessments, as well as their relationship.
- Diagnostic assessments are critical because they enable the teacher to tailor instruction to the needs of each student.
- Assessments should be used to revise instructional strategies and align them to the standards and curriculum framework.
- Every child not achieving high standards will need the support of a comprehensive safety net system—mostly before the bell
- Every school has a design, even if only by default.
- Schools are systems wherein reform of any part of the instructional environment requires realignment of all other critical elements to ensure improved student learning.
- Successful school redesign requires the acquisition and continued support of key stakeholders throughout implementation.
- The redesign process includes: performing a rigorous needs assessment; establishing benchmarks and goals; researching school reform models and their track records; selecting the most appropriate model for adaptation/adoption; developing a comprehensive implementation plan; and evaluating performance and adapting the design as necessary.

### **Unit 4: Foundations of Effective Learning**

The purpose of this unit is to provide the participant access to the best research the world has to offer on the issues that relate to standards-based education and the role of the principal in leading his or her school to high performance. The research is distilled into a series of principles related to learning, teaching and curriculum. The principal is asked to consider the implications of those principles for the redesign of the school in the context of the new accountability systems and standards. The unit focuses on the particular role of the school leader in making sure that the way the school operates reflects each principle of learning, teaching, and curriculum.

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*Topics:* principles of teaching, learning, and curriculum; impacts/implications of five learning principles, five teaching principles, and three curriculum principles on/for the role of the principal in a school; class effects compared to school effects on student performance; classroom practices; TIMSS--Japanese and American classrooms; and concept mapping.

*Main Themes/Concepts:*

- School leaders pay little attention to developing a common understanding and systematic approach to teaching and learning -- the core business of schools.
- When the principles of teaching, learning, and curriculum are fully implemented, classroom instruction, student engagement, and curriculum alignment will look very, very different in our schools. Principals do things very differently in their schools.
- Recent research has shown that class effects on student learning are greater than school effects.
- Principles are a shorthand summary of many complex ideas—the dangers are that principles can oversimplify and important details may be missed.
- Five principles of learning: effort produces achievement; learning is about making connections; we learn with and through others; learning takes time; and motivation matters.
- Five principles of teaching: the teacher matters; focused teaching promotes accelerated learning; clear expectations and continuous feedback activate learning; good teaching builds on students' strengths and respects individuals' differences; and good teaching involves modeling what students should learn.
- Three principles of curriculum: the curriculum should focus on powerful knowledge; all students should experience a “thinking curriculum”; and the best results come from having an aligned instructional system.
- The principal needs to know what he/she would see and the impacts if the principles of learning, teaching, and curriculum were deeply operating in the school
- Improvement will occur if all classes/teachers operate at the level of the most effective ones in the school.
- Principals will understand vast differences in the teaching, learning, and curriculum in a Japanese and an American classroom treating roughly the same math concept (TIMMS videos)

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### **Course Two: Focusing on Teaching and Learning**

#### **Unit 5: Leadership for Excellence in Literacy**

This unit helps enable the participant to be an effective instructional leader in this crucial area. The aim is not to turn the principal into a literacy expert, but rather to enable the principal to recognize the key elements of best practice in the field of literacy and provide the principal with sound criteria for judging whether the school has an effective literacy program and some practice in using those criteria. Also included in this unit is instruction designed to enable the participant to recognize the key features of effective safety net programs in literacy, so that he or she can exercise leadership, if necessary, in the development of effective safety nets to make sure that all students are literate, no matter what level of literacy they had when they entered that principal's school.

*Topics:* basic reading and writing principles and standards; research findings; struggling readers in middle and high schools; reading assessment tools and approaches; literacy expectations; school-wide strategies for improving literacy outcomes for all students; professional development in literacy for teachers and administrators; personal reading profile; standards and accountability; characteristics of a good early reading program and of a good struggling readers program; NAEP Reading Achievement Levels for Grades 4, 8, 12; NAEP compared to State Assessments; Vygotsky.

#### *Main Themes/Concepts:*

- The citizenry's ability to read effectively has serious effects not only on the individual, but upon the economic development of the country.
- The principal must become steeped, as an instructional leader, in the essentials of teaching literacy, how to recognize best practices, and how to assess the quality of instruction by engaging in conversations with students and looking at their work.
- The United States performs above average in 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading achievement—compared to other developed nations. However, student performance compared to other developed nations, declines after 4<sup>th</sup> grade—now with serious consequences under AYP.
- Principals need to know and be able to apply at the appropriate level powerful instructional strategies for elementary, middle, and high schools in order to address the needs of struggling readers.
- Research into effective class organization offers compelling evidence to support the adoption of within-class instructional groups and the establishment of classroom routines. Those routines allow teachers to work in a focused way with small groups of students with similar learning needs.
- It is important for students to know what is expected of them. Standards, rubrics, and examples of student work help create a common understanding of what is good writing.
- The components of a good literacy strategy include an agreed-upon description of literacy needs linked to performance standards; teachers and students know what is expected; literacy learning should be regularly monitored and assessed; and good

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performance standards will reflect and illustrate a sound literacy strategy.

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### **Unit 6: Leadership for Excellence in Mathematics**

The aim of this unit is not to make the principal a math expert, but rather to enable the principal to recognize the key elements of best instructional practices in the field of mathematics—from basic skills to problem solving to conceptual understanding. The principal must be comfortable and confident in judging whether the school has an effective mathematics program and be able to lead continuous improvements in it. To that end, the unit brings the principal deep into math instruction in the classroom and provides video and role-playing opportunities for observations and coaching moments between the teachers and the principal. The unit also includes instruction to enable the participants to recognize excellence in safety net programs in mathematics. The principal must know how to put such a program in place to make sure that all students have the necessary mathematical skills and knowledge, no matter what level they had when they entered the school.

*Topics:* findings and recommendations from TIMSS and PISA; best practices in math teaching; characteristics of effective math classroom teaching; analyzing math lessons; evaluating math programs; the current state of math content; instructional leadership in math; and math leadership strategies.

#### *Main Themes/Concepts:*

- The principal's role is not to become an expert in math, but to become a leader who can assist others to identify characteristics of a good math program and effective pedagogy for classroom practice.
- The principal needs to set up processes within the school to ensure continuous improvement in math teaching and learning.
- TIMSS findings show that U.S. students fall behind their counterparts in Europe and Asia, and the assessment worsens as they spend more time in school.
- In the PISA results, U.S. students placed approximately at the OECD average just one rank above Germany.
- Schools must create a rigorous math program based on clearly defined standards--allowing all students to succeed in math.
- Principals need to take a balanced approach to math education: skills, problem-solving, and conceptual understanding—not just skills.
- The current state of math curriculum: content repetitive over the years, too many topics, consequential topics neglected, and level of content too low.
- Characteristics of effective school principals: remain focused on student learning and achievement, promote a positive culture of learning around math, examine the relevance of the curriculum, make math activities a priority, drive for results in math, and lead from behind.

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### **Unit 7: Leadership for Excellence in Science**

The goal of this unit is to enable principals to identify, implement, and support instructional activities for science education by using creative and innovative instructional leadership and distributed leadership principles. During the unit, principals will focus on the beliefs, behaviors, and consequences that characterize the present circumstances for science education in their schools as well as those across the nation. The main sessions of the unit include an assessment of the current science education context, performance standards, assessment and accountability, improved instruction and leadership practices, teacher capacity, professional development, and action planning. Principals will also engage in several hands-on experiments to illustrate the articulation of science concepts across grade levels.

*Topics:* National Science Education Standards; evidence-based explanation; engagement with phenomena; conceptual understanding; TIMMS results for science; sample science lessons; American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) benchmarking maps; backward design in science; and the five “E’s” of design.

*Main Themes/Concepts:*

- Engaging students and teachers with science education is critical to the continued economic, social, and technological leadership of the United States.
- In leading change, the principal is accountable for getting the best instructional practices for science into the school along with the most capable science teachers.
- Although there has been some progress, the U.S. still lags behind a number of other industrialized nations in science education.
- Science instruction should consist of three components: evidence-based explanation, engagement with phenomena, and conceptual understanding.
- Interest in science and scientific literacy are cornerstones of supporting creativity and innovation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.
- Excellent science instruction can keep students engaged in science and makes it more likely that they will pursue careers in STEM disciplines.
- The five “E’s” of design are: Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, and Evaluate.

### **Unit 8: Promoting Professional Learning and Phase I Simulation**

This unit helps enable the participant to lead a school-wide effort to continuously develop the professional knowledge and skill of the faculty. This means establishing a culture in which every professional on the staff is expected to be learning all the time and in which professional development is seen by the whole faculty as the most important tool by which it acquires the skill and knowledge it needs to implement successfully the strategies and designs the school has adopted for improving student achievement. Participants learn how to promote organizational learning through analysis of its successes and failures, through benchmarking best practices beyond the school and through disciplined searches for proven knowledge that bears on the challenges the school faces. Finally, the participant learns what to look for as he or she walks around the school and observes classrooms and how to use those observations as the basis for mentoring the faculty over time.

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*Topics:* characteristics of effective professional development; principles of adult learning; characteristics of a learning organization; benchmarking; scientifically-based research; NCLB requirements for staff professional development; creating communities of practice; lesson study; mentoring and coaching; and leveraging staff to build organizational capacity.

*Main Themes/Concepts:*

- The principal must deeply understand the importance of creating a learning culture in schools-directed at improving student learning outcomes
- The principal needs to deepen and weave in the relationship between principles of adult learning and the characteristics of effective professional development
- Deep professional knowledge and the effective use benchmarking and scientifically-based research should guide and enhance professional learning in schools
- The principal should understand in detail how to align school needs to teacher development, creating a powerful professional development sequence for staff—connecting directly to classroom practice.
- Strategies the principal can use to create time for and promote professional learning among teachers include: learning communities, lesson study, mentoring and coaching

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Note: The Coaching Institute (next under) is a two-day session—not one of the numbered units at this time.

***Coaching Institute:*** Using the roles of coaches in sports and business as a springboard for beginning this unit, we quickly move to the role and need for coaches in education. An instructional coaching model is introduced, and participants have an opportunity to analyze and plan for a coaching situation based on a video of a first year teacher. Our coaching unit is very interactive, allowing participants to engage in both individual and small group analysis using coaching scenarios and case study, as well as role-play in personal coaching situations that could occur in their schools. At the conclusion of this Institute, participants synthesize the concepts they have learned and create a presentation designed to introduce instructional coaching to their staff. A final activity has participants discussing ideas for promoting a culture that encourages and enriches coaching in their schools.

*Topics:* instructional coaching process; beginning coaching practice; review of coaching skills; applying coaching tools; individual and group coaching analysis; advanced coaching practice; personal coaching situation; sample coaching culture; and coaching presentations.

*Main Themes/Concepts:*

- Coaching is not for athletes only. A highly effective means of implementing instructional improvements in schools is through coaching.
- Coaching unlocks a person's potential to maximize performance, and coaching is critical to implementing change systemically.
- Instructional coaching is intentional and specific; it begins with a shared understanding of the school's goals for improving student achievement.

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- Evidence about the specific issue needs to be gathered prior to initiating the coaching conversation.
- The coaching conversation provides an opportunity to reflect on teacher practice in relation to a specific focus and the gathered evidence.
- The action plan should include specific steps to be followed, resources that will be provided, and follow-up measures.
- What gets monitored gets done.
- Sometimes, the most important role an instructional coach can take is to step back and view the situation from a perspective the teacher cannot see.

### **Course Three: Developing Capacity and Commitment**

#### **Unit 9: The Principal as Instructional Leader and Team Builder**

This unit enables the participant to reflect on his or her role as an instructional leader and to learn how to play that role effectively, alone or in combination with other members of the leadership team. The participant looks back in time to understand how the role of the school principal came to be disassociated from instruction in the United States, as opposed to most other industrialized nations, and reflects on the forces now at work to restore the principal's role as instructional leader. The participant is introduced to a variety of ways in which the role of instructional leaders can be allocated among the people who together assume the function of the 'principalship,' and considers how best to distribute leadership and allocate responsibility in the school for this function.

The unit also enables the participant to understand the power of teams to get the work of the school done and to develop the knowledge and skills needed to build high-performing teams in his or her school. Participants learn how to define the goals for teams, recruit and select their members, and motivate and coach them to success.

*Topics:* instructional leaders' daily activities; creating a shared vision for student learning; acting to ensure the vision is designed and implemented to improve student learning; identifying leverage points; addressing levers in literacy and professional development; supporting teachers for instructional improvement; elementary math, secondary math, and applying instructional leadership; Pasadena High School case study; current and prospective teams—criteria for success; team charters; high-performing teams; improvement of organizational performance; characteristics of high-performing teams; sustaining high performance of teams; plans for using high-performing teams in a standards-based school; teams and professional learning communities; parental involvement; and success indicators.

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### *Main Themes/Concepts:*

- The role of the principal should be that of “head teacher.”
- Principals are responsible for leading school improvement initiatives to implement sound instructional practices.
- Standards-based reform and accountability systems require schools and their leaders to do things for which they are largely unequipped.
- Principals must find ways to manage other tasks that occupy their time, preventing them from being involved in instructional leadership.
- Principals can take action to be effective instructional leaders by engaging in focused instructional activities.
- Principals must have an instructional vision and build an enthusiastic following for the vision; there must be a coherent overall strategy for improving instruction.
- Principals must have a deep commitment to the idea that all students, with proper instruction, can meet internationally benchmarked standards, and it is the faculty’s responsibility to make this happen with the principal’s support.
- Principals must lead faculties in setting goals and targets for student achievement that are attainable but challenging.
- Principals must take the lead in designing and aligning school and classroom organization, curriculum, and resources to achieve the vision.
- Instructional leaders spend time in the classroom observing instructional practices and classroom dynamics, and they are able to evaluate instruction.
- Instructional improvement is not random; it is a discipline, a practice that requires focus, knowledge, persistence, and consistency over time.
- No one can implement instructional leadership alone. Principals must distribute some of the responsibilities of instructional leadership to the staff and community. “None of us is as smart as all of us.” (Warren Bennis)
- While there are many benefits from creating and using teams in schools, the main rationale should be increased student achievement.
- Distributed leadership allows responsibility to be shared among the staff and fosters collaboration and communication within a school.
- Obstacles to effective teams in schools include structural, cultural, teacher capacity/dedication, and budgetary.
- Effective principals exercise leadership by enlisting those who have the required expertise –weaving together people, materials, and organizational structures.
- Schoolwide leadership teams join together teachers, administrators, parents, students, the community, and representatives of interested organizations to implement schoolwide programs and comprehensive school reform.
- A professional learning community is a group or team in which members interact to share information, reflect on best practices, and make decisions focused on improving instruction and student achievement.

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### **Unit 10: The Principal as Ethical Leader**

This unit provides participants the opportunity to examine their roles as ethical leaders in their schools. Day-to-day pressures of being a principal, standards-based reforms, and new accountability requirements are fundamental conditions of the principal's job. In many situations, principals are so pressured by operational demands that they lack time to think deeply about the ethical assumptions and implications of their decisions. Principals are not only responsible for their own ethical behavior but also must help create and nurture an ethical culture in each of their schools. The moral principles of a just, fair, and caring community are presented, and participants use these principles to guide their discussions and decisions about the several case studies used in this unit.

*Topics:* importance of ethics and ethical decision making in the schools; a just, fair, and caring community; bullying case study; community involvement (Somos Uno case study); resources and barriers to improvement in ethical dimensions of school culture; characteristics of a safe and effective school; defining moments come into each of our lives where ethical decisions must be made—from these we hope to experience moral growth and deep commitment;

*Main Themes/Concepts:*

- Too often principals are so pressured by the range of demands to get things done that they lack the time to deeply consider the ethical implications of their decisions.
- Principals are responsible not just for their own ethical behavior but also must create and nurture an ethical school community, consistently placing the interests of students above the interests of adults.
- Principals must place ethical growth and development at the top of the core missions in their schools.
- Principals are responsible for creating, nurturing, and sustaining a just, fair, and caring community.
- It is not enough for the principal to understand that a just, fair, and caring community is necessary for attaining high achievement by every student, but the principal must also create the strategies for developing, nurturing, and sustaining a community of learners and high student achievement.
- Moral dilemmas present themselves when two or more ethical principles conflict with one another, and there is no easy answer on which way to go.
- “Unless you have a culture of high expectations for all the students, you’re playing immorally. . . .” (Tom Sobol)
- A just, fair, and caring school community does not just happen—the three qualities are always in tension and do not easily coexist.
- “Kids grow and develop morally or they fail to with disastrous consequences.” (Tom Sobol)
- The principal needs to ask “What should I do?” before “What would I do?” when confronted with ethical dilemmas.
- Students have a keen sense of what is fair, and they learn best in a just and caring community.

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### **Course Four: Driving for Results**

#### **Unit 11: The Principal as Driver of Change**

This unit enables the participant to design, lead, and drive a change process calculated to produce steady improvement in student achievement. The participant learns to analyze the motivations of the various participants in the process, to identify friends and foes and to maximize the former at the expense of the latter over time, moving steadily from small wins to substantial gains. The principal should also learn how to identify root problems and causes, gather intelligence, and formulate a plan on the basis of appropriate data, set performance targets, select strategies and develop sound implementation plans.

*Topics:* High-risk changes needed; the Kotter model; overcoming barriers; identifying the stages of change; dealing with resistance; creating small wins and consolidating change; anchoring change in the culture; corporate case study; Bolman and Deal's four lenses; and managing change.

#### *Main Themes/Concepts:*

- Many economic, political, and social forces drive change in schools.
- The principal plays a critical role in leading the systemic change needed to achieve high standards of academic, social, and ethical development for all students.
- Principals must understand when it is appropriate to take risks that are inherent to any change effort.
- Principals play a critical role in designing, implementing, and anchoring a change process.
- The purpose of leadership is not to produce consistency and order; rather, it is to produce movement and create change.
- Leadership focuses on strategies, creativity, and taking calculated risks, whereas management focuses on operational excellence and risk mitigation.
- Principals need to find a balance between when they need to lead and when they need to manage.
- To implement change, a principal must be able to analyze the root problems and causes, gather intelligence and formulate an appropriate plan, select strategies, set performance targets, and develop sound and sustainable implementation plans.
- There are barriers that are likely to be encountered in implementing improvements, and principals must know how to work with key stakeholders to overcome these barriers.
- Once resistance has been overcome, principals must remain motivated and committed to the vision and provide evidence that progress is being made thereby anchoring change in the culture.
- Analyzing a change effort from the perspective of various stakeholders will help principals learn how to gain buy-in.
- Change is difficult and involves eight steps according to Kotter. This change model includes: establishing a sense of urgency, creating a guiding coalition, developing a vision and strategies, communicating the change vision, empowering employees for

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action, generating short-term wins, consolidating gains and producing more change, and anchoring new approaches in the culture.

- People view the world differently. When dealing with problems or issues that affect others, leaders need to consider the multiple perspectives and focus on the forest, not the trees (Bolman and Deal's four lenses or frames)
- Managers tend to use the structural frame, while leaders tend to use the symbolic and political frames. However, the most effective principals use all four lenses to reframe issues and solutions.

### **Unit 12: Leading for Results**

The participant focuses on the crucial role of data in the drive for results, including setting targets, and collecting, displaying and analyzing data on program implementation and student progress in relation to standards. The participant also learns how to use data in the process of setting goals, monitoring progress, allocating and reallocating resources and managing the school program. Finally, the participant integrates materials from earlier units that relates to the crucial role of the principal in providing a vision of the results worth achieving, keeping that vision constantly in front of the school community and allocating responsibilities to everyone involved for realizing that vision.

*Topics:* Adequate Yearly Progress; using data to assess school-level performance; student demographic data; teacher demographic data; mean scale score indicator; NY school performance index and AYP; percentage of students performing at various levels of ELA standards; Summerville Middle School and PS 16; using data for improvement; and data and your school.

*Main Themes/Concepts:*

- By school year 2007-08, states must have in place science assessments to be administered at least once during grades 3-5; grades 6-9; and grades 10-12.
- States must have accountability plans that specify how they will achieve 100 percent student proficiency by 2014.
- An intelligent and comprehensive use of data is key to meeting the challenge of improving student learning. NCLB and AYP have sharpened the principal's focus on data to improve student learning.
- Data is a powerful management tool to guide the sustained improvement of instructional practice and student learning. The intelligent use of data is key to any instructional leader's success in managing for results.
- Effective school leaders create a culture where educators are comfortable with and knowledgeable about data used to determine a school's strengths and weaknesses.

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## *For School Principals*

### **Unit 13: Culminating Simulation**

The culminating simulation draws together all the major themes of NISL into a two-day experience for participants. The computer-assisted simulation starts with a case study on Greenwood Middle School, including about ten pages of student data that participants study in-depth before the exercise begins. The exercise itself requires the players to make choices in response to questions and issues that are related to the scenario and to prior decisions. The responses follow a cause-and-effect chain of logic down six levels of relationships—such that choices made later in the exercise are delimited by earlier decisions. There are five baskets of issues related to the analysis of data, strategic thinking, distributed leadership, literacy (a main focus in the scenario), and coherence/alignment of all the elements of a standards-based system. There are also expert commentaries on video that are used to advance the discussion of each basket of issues. On the second day, the participants create two layers of the exercise themselves, based on an update (two years after the events in the main case study). The final phase has the participants choosing an action or initiative to apply in their schools, and then to report back on in about six months.

(Option) If the school district wishes, the participants may focus on a project defined by the district that provides an opportunity for the participants to use much of what has been learned in the executive development program. The project must meet certain criteria defined in the course materials, one of which is that it is a project with real value and importance to the district, apart from its educational value for the participants. They learn how to think strategically about how to achieve their goals and implement their plans. In working on reform projects, the principals are expected to participate in continuing local study groups during the school year, for a minimum of three hours a month for six months a year.