Indicator Explanation

DOMAIN	PRACTICE	INDICATOR
Leadership	Customize and target support to meet needs	1B.2 The School Improvement Team provides and responds to regular (typically quarterly) feedback on progress toward goal-aligned implementation milestones and annual target measures.

Explanation: As schools engage in their improvement processes, elevating the quality of professional practice to achieve greater results in student learning, having reasonable annual targets enables them to measure their success. Standards-aligned benchmark tests provide one point of reference within the year to gauge progress. Including other data points will paint a more complete picture. The principal will be responsible for reporting out to the complex the school's progress against milestongs and annual target measures often relying on quarterly benchmark results and other data.

Questions: Is your Leadership Team charged with periodically reviewing data on student performance, curriculum, and actual instructional practice to make decisions about the core instructional program? At what points in the year are such decisions made? How are the Leadership Team's decisions recorded and reported? What data sources does the Leadership Team examine?

One element of the work of teams within the school is to constantly monitor and adjust the learning taking place in the classrooms. Teachers assess students every day though questioning, pre-/post-tests, checking homework, watching facial expressions and body language during instruction time, and a myriad of other clues that a student is either "getting it" or not. This information then gets processed by the teacher so that first and foremost, the teacher can adjust how information is being relayed to the student and how the student is interacting with the information, and secondly this information is shared in team meetings so changes can be made, if necessary to the instruction program, lesson plans, assessments, etc.

The Institute of Education Sciences (2008) considered the data that schools look at in order to make decisions. They found that "turnaround schools considered data at three levels: at the school level to focus on areas that needed schoolwide improvement to meet adequate yearly progress, at the classroom level to focus on teachers' instructional strengths and weaknesses, and at the student level to focus on instructional needs of individual students" (p. 14-15).

Teams used the data to determine gaps in student learning, where instruction needs improvement, professional development is needed, or if there are curriculum changes that need to made (IES, 2008). The Center on Instruction (2011) writes that "data can then become a useful tool to provide guidance when schools make resource allocations, introduce changes in curricular emphasis, establish connections across grades and content areas, select instructional materials, and develop processes for building professional capacity" (p. 109). Collecting and reviewing the data, however, is only the first step in the process. Changing professional behavior or instructional practices is the outcome of reviewing data. Without planning and implementing these changes, outcomes will not change. Schools and teams in particular need to take responsi-

bility as a collective whole for their own practices which affect all students' academic success (Goldring, Porter, Murphy, Elliott, & Cravens, 2007).

Goldring et al. (2007) presents a framework for learning-centered leadership that states,

> A key transformational leadership behavior is monitoring school activity (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2005). Early on, the effective schools literature identified monitoring school progress in terms of setting goals, assessing the curriculum, and evaluating instruction, as a key role of instructional leadership (Purkey & Smith, 1983)....The monitor students' programs of student to ensure that all students have adequate opportunity to learn rigorous content in all academic subjects (Boyer, 1983; Murphy & Hallinger, 1985). (p. 14).

However, it is imperative to state that monitoring is only one step in improving student outcomes. Monitoring is akin to gathering the data necessary to make informed decisions. Implementing changes in behavior of the staff in the building is what will bring about results.

Indicator Explanation

Center on Instruction. (2011). Aligning instruction. In C. L. Perlman & S. Redding (Eds.), *Handbook on effective implementation of school improvement grants*, (pp. 109-110). Lincoln, IL: Academic Development Institute.

Goldring, E., Porter, A. C., Murphy, J., Elliott, S. N., Cravens, X. (2007). *Assessing learning-centered leadership: Connections to research, professional standards, and current practices.* New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation.

Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Greene, J., Maynard, R., Redding, S., & Darwin, M. (2008). *Turning around chronically low-performing schools: A practice guide* (NCEE#2008-4020. National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/Turnround_pg_04181.pdf