

Team Leadership and Communication Module

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Modules within the OCPEA's OLI4 Project

The modules focus specifically on the role of the principal in supporting higher levels of learning for all students, faculty, and staff. In particular, the modules are intended to highlight the development of principal knowledge and skills in leading teacher learning and development, supporting the effective use of building leadership team (BLT) and teacher-based team (TBT) structures, and supporting the collective capacity of the school and district in meeting the instructional needs of and improving results for all children, including children with disabilities. Specific examples incorporated into the modules address the use of the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) or align with the OIP as an instructional/improvement framework; the effective use of data to make instructional decisions; how to gain focus around the core work of teaching and learning; how to identify and implement fully shared instructional practices; how to monitor the degree of implementation and the effects of such implementation on student, adult, and organizational learning; and how to support the ongoing development of an inquiry-oriented school culture that supports school personnel in assessing their individual and collective impact on student learning. The modules of this project align with the work of the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC).

Course Description

This online learning experience is designed for pre-service school leaders focusing on leading teams and groups, and also helping teachers to lead teams/groups. This includes an examination of the communication necessary to help teams/groups succeed. Students gain knowledge, experience and resources supporting shared leadership in meeting the needs of all children including those with disabilities through readings, videos, slideshow presentations, and case studies. Students explore and share their personal experiences with children with disabilities expanding the knowledge and skills needed through reading, reflective writing, dialogue, and problem-based learning.

Course Objectives:

During this learning experience students . . .	Assessments
Apply the concepts learned by leading a team/group (or developing detailed plans to lead a team/group.) We prefer the student do some actual team leading in a school, but understand that certain restrictions may interfere with making this possible for all.	Reflective writings Responses to discussion questions Problem-based learning experiences
Demonstrate effective communication skills within their teacher-led group or team.	Reflective writings Responses to discussion questions Practice listening skills, paraphrasing and offering feedback.

Resources:

Telfer, D.M. (2011). *Moving your numbers: Five districts share how they used assessment and accountability to increase performance for students with disabilities as part of district-wide improvement*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes. www.movingyournumbers.org

OLAC Module: Developing Shared Accountability – The Why, Who, How and What of Teams
Available at www.ohioleadership.org

Listening survey (separate attachment – .pdf)

Optional Resources:

- Howley, A., & Howley, M. (2012). *Higher education guide to Moving Your Numbers: Guide for administrator preparation programs*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, National Center on Educational Outcomes. www.movingyournumbers.org
- Wiemann, M.O. (2005). *Student activities manual for Adler, Proctor, & Towne's Looking out, Looking in*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publ.
- Leading meetings (Appendix A.)
- Case Studies (Included below)

Activities

1. Students write a brief reflection on their district's use of teacher-based teams and the success of that venture.
 - Offer examples of what teams are utilized in the district.
 - What teams have worked well in your experience, and which did not? Why have the successful teams worked well?
 - What supports did the teams have?
2. Students respond to writing prompts based on readings.
 - Many roles come into play when working as a team or group? Some are informal and some are formal roles.
 - Time-keeper (keep the group on the agenda and on time)
 - Recorder (keep notes of what occurs)
 - Makes sure all have a voice (this person watches to make sure everyone gets to speak or watches for those not speaking – bring this up to the leader after the meeting. What can be done to include them more in the next meeting? Why are they not speaking up?)
 - Encourager (Being friendly, warm to all; reduce tension; getting people to explore differences)
 - Others...the Blocker...the Dominator...the Avoider...
 - What roles would you consider instituting in a team made up of 10 6th grade teachers?
3. Take the Listening Survey and rate yourself according to the scale.
 - How are you doing?
 - Good effective listening can be learned. Read the rest of the article with the Listening Survey.
 - “Great leaders are great listeners” and “Great listeners often hear things not being said.” Offer your response to these statements.
 - Why is listening important in leading a meeting?
4. What is the difference between Cooperation and Collaboration? If one is considered better than the other, how would the leader facilitate that process within the team? Discussion first in small groups and then as a large group.
5. Students small group discussion about the best meetings they have been a part of---what made them good meetings? Develop a large group chart of ideas to ensure effective and efficient group meetings and team meetings. (Leading Meetings Activity – **Appendix A.**)
6. What forms of communication seem to work best in your building? Written, oral, social media? Devise a communication plan in your group for making sure your building is always well-informed and up-to-date with district and state information.

7. Students respond to one another through the activity/discussion questions.
4. Students engage in problem based learning by developing a plan of action for the Case Study.

Second Activitiy/Lesson:

1. Read and review the OLAC Module: *Developing Shared Accountability – The Why, Who, How and What of Teams*.
This can be run like the “flip classroom.” Have the candidates watch the Module and any videos that go with it, and then have the class discuss what they saw and understood.
 - a. Why should we have teams? Evidence?
 - b. Who belongs on which team?
 - c. How can we support teams in order to make them more effective and more efficient?
2. Read and review the OLAC Module: *Teacher-Based Teams (TBTs): What Districts Need to Know*
 - a. Do they see this kind of collaboration in their school district?
 - b. How similar is their own, or how different, in their own districts?
 - c. How would one go about moving a building to a strong building based on collaboration and teams?
 - d. Once teams are in place, how would one deepen the culture to make this an expectation?
 - e. When teams are not working well, how can one help a team to work more effectively and efficiently?

Case Study#1

Module: Leadership and Communication Case Study Group Activity

- Purpose – Students will work as a team to analyze the dilemma presented and come to consensus as to the steps one would take in solving the dilemma.
 - Directions:
 - The Goal: The team is working on improving the student achievement (i.e.: value-added scores) of the gifted students in this school (elementary or middle school setting). There seems to be little or no growth in that measure for the building’s students who were identified as “gifted.”
 - The dilemma:

Ten teachers were brought together, some by volunteering and some were “voluntold” by the assistant superintendent to be on the team. The team is struggling with the value-added measure for gifted students, but also struggling with the process. The difficulty in the process is one teacher does not believe in the value-added measure, whether it has been state-implemented or not. Another teacher could have some good ideas (“we think”) but will not speak up. Not everyone wanted to be on this team. How does the Principal bring this team together to help the gifted students with gains in their value-added measures?
 - What information and/or data do you wish you had, but is missing? What information do you have?
 - The Plan should address the following items:
 - Statement of the Need (Problem) – briefly describing the problem (area of improvement)
 - Goal – briefly describe the overall goal to be achieved
 - Strategies / Action Steps – identify the key strategies that will be used achieve the goal **This is the key for this Case Study.**
 - Indicator – identify how you will evaluate if the goal is achieved
- A. As a group/team, this project can be run as the above is stated.
- A. As an individual, one can utilize a written response (20 minutes) if online or as an individual project:
1. As a position leader in your school, how would you begin to lead your staff toward resolution of this case?
 2. Then follow the steps in the Improvement Plan listed above.
- B. Explain and detail out how could the Plan be developed as a team? Discuss the steps one would take to make this a team effort, making sure everyone on the team has a voice and does value the project?
- C. As the leader of this team, how can one address the two teachers mentioned? How does one handle disagreements within the team? How can one build consensus within a team? How can the leader keep the focus of this group on the students and their needs?

Alignment with OLAC, CEC, and OPS/ELCC

1. OLAC Modules: *-Developing Shared Accountability – The Why, Who, How and What of Teams.*
-Teacher-Based Teams (TBTs): What Districts Need to Know

Available at www.ohioleadership.org

Ohio Principal Standards:

This Module aligns with Ohio Principal Standards 2 (Use of Data), 3 (Use of Resources), 4 (Collaboration). http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Teaching/Educator-Equity/Ohio-s-Educator-Standards/StandardsPrincipals_sept07.pdf.aspx

CEC:

This Module aligns with Standards 75 (Instructional Planning) and 7 (Collaboration).

<https://www.cec.sped.org/~media/Files/Standards/Professional%20Preparation%20Standards/Initial%20Preparation%20Standards%20with%20Elaborations.pdf>

Appendices

Appendix A. Example of a Leading Meetings activity:

In small groups of 4-6, ask them to brainstorm what makes a good meeting? Why was it effective? What little things made an impression on you?

Example of a possible list of ideas on what makes a good meeting:

Good Meetings –

Why were they good? Why did they work well? What was it that allowed you to get the most out of that meeting?

1. Charismatic presenter (an expert)
2. Organized: Had an agenda and clear goal
3. Passionate about the topic
4. Goal-oriented
5. Topic flowed in a logical progression
6. Show us or something “hands-on”
7. The presenter/leader is a good coach
8. Those attending along with the presenter have a shared vision and shared responsibility
9. Meet us where we are at/Don't speak above us...or below us. [Don't read the powerpoint!]
10. Attendees walk away with something (tangible) or practical they can use right away.
11. A positive environment
12. Audience is positive and vested in the topic and the meeting
13. Food
14. Warmups to cut the school day off from this meeting
15. Meeting is an appropriate length
16. End on time!!

Appendix B. Listening Survey (attached as a .pdf)