

Plan Professional Learning Implementation and Evaluation

School District Begins Action Planning with Theory of Change

McClellan School District recognizes that the more rigorous content standards will require changes in instructional approaches in most classrooms. The district leadership team, which is made up of representatives of teachers, principals, non-instructional resource staff, district office staff, and higher education partners, reviews student achievement, educator practice, and school system data. In the case of McClellan School District, the theory of change rests on the assumptions the planning team members hold.

District improvement goal: By 2017, all students will achieve proficiency on state assessments, district end-of-course assessments, and quarterly common formative assessments in tested content areas and achieve student learning outcomes in non-tested content areas.

District objectives:

- By 2014, the district will create conditions including (a.) school day schedules and school year calendars that provide a minimum of three hours per week for collaborative learning and planning among teachers; (b.) facilitation skills for principals and teacher leaders to support collaborative learning and planning; and (c.) protocols for the cycle of continuous improvement for collaborative learning and planning teams.
- By 2016, the district curriculum, ELL, and special education staff will develop and provide classroom-specific instructional resources at all grade levels and in all content areas; differentiate learning and assessment for students who are significantly underperforming, who have special needs, who have enrichment and extension needs, and who have limited English; and provide guidance to teachers, teacher leaders, principals, and non-instructional resource staff on how to select and use the resources.

The leadership team studied how similar other districts recently improved math performance. They also reviewed the literature and determined that, to achieve their student goals, they need to focus on improving the quality of instruction. The team sets the following educator objectives for the district's overall improvement plan:

Educator objectives:

- By 2016, teachers will demonstrate proficiency in implementing the district's deeper learning instructional framework within their classrooms as measured by the deeper learning Innovation Configuration map and peer, principal, and district staff walk-through data.
- By 2014, supervisors and instructional support staff (i.e. coaches, teacher leaders, resource teachers) will provide monthly constructive feedback and supports to teachers individually and in teams to refine their implementation of the district's deeper learning instructional framework.
- By 2016, principals, working collaboratively with the school's leadership team, will cultivate a culture of collaboration, collective responsibility, and learning, as demonstrated by an overall score of 80%

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or higher in related areas on the working conditions survey, to support the student achievement through the implementation the deeper learning instructional framework.

To achieve the educator objectives established, the McClellan district planners consider how to move from where they are currently to where they want to be as defined in the student goals and educator objectives. They draw from the research they studied and their own past experiences to identify the assumptions on which they posit their theory of change.



Figure 6. McClellan District theory of change

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In the case of McClellan School District, the theory of change rests on the assumptions the planning team members hold. Some of those assumptions are drawn from research; others come from evidence-based practice and the educators' own past experiences.

Assumptions underlying the theory of change depicted are as follows:

- All educators are responsible for the successful implementation of innovations.
- Multiple resources and supports increase the success of innovations.
- District and school leaders establish the conditions and provide the supports to transform practice.
- Sustained change in instruction that impacts student learning requires differentiated support over time.
- When educators work collaboratively, they increase both their skillfulness and commitment to change.
- Peer learning and support leverages the expertise of all educators to improve practice.
- Identifying and addressing barrier to change as they occur minimizes interruption in the learning process.

Resources About Implementation and Evaluation

Killion, J. (2008). *Assessing impact: Evaluating staff development, Second edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. https://store.learningforward.org/mms/merchant.mvc?Session_ID=8fbba35ffb2e28fc2822aa5141cf01d7&Store_Code=L4W&Screen=PROD&Product_Code=B371&

Center for Theory of Change
www.theoryofchange.org

Useful resources about logic models include:

University of Wisconsin Extension
www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html

W. K. Kellogg Foundation
www.wkkf.org/knowledge-center/resources/2006/02/wk-kellogg-foundation-logic-model-development-guide.aspx

The Community Toolbox
ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/sub_section_main_1877.aspx

Haslam, B. (2010). *Teacher professional development evaluation guide*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council. Available at:
www.learningforward.org/docs/pdf/evaluationguide.pdf?sfvrsn=0