
Leaders of Operations

The primary responsibility of curriculum leads is to develop the collective capacity of the organization to assure that all students are successful. One of the functions of these individuals' work to assure the capacity of the system and the success of the students is their leadership in effectively and efficiently organizing and sustaining resources in the implementation of processes and systems to support teaching, learning, and organizational effectiveness.

Effective curriculum leads assure a learning-focused allocation of resources. Key issues that must be addressed include targeting achievement gaps, organization of schools and the district to enable alignment of resources with learning improvement agendas, managing the politics of learning-focused leadership, and development of human capital of the school and district. The "tip offs" that these are not happening include uniformity in approach to resource allocation and demand for the "old way of resource allocation" because it benefits programs and adults, but not necessarily the students in the district.

The process of learning-focused resource allocation requires developing learning-focused theories of action, championing options that favor learning needs, and monitoring and evaluating resource effectiveness, equity, and adequacy.

Common practices and emerging strategies address allocation of people and expertise, money, and time.

- People and Expertise: The trend is toward allowing school-level decision making with respect to hiring staff. It is important to seek to level the playing field for high-poverty schools that often get the new teachers and really need the experience. It is also important to recognize the impact of leadership and organization of the school in the attraction, recruitment, and retainment of qualified teachers. Dissatisfaction with administrative support is the number one reason teachers leave the schools where they teach. Therefore, it is important to provide your building administrators with skills for the "support gap" for novice teachers in schools with high learning needs as the implications are huge for young students.
- Money: While allocation is often based on state formula and driven by student enrollment and staff-to-student ratios, we must strive for vertical equity, ensuring that schools serving students with different levels of needs receive differentially appropriate levels of resources. As we increase spending authority to schools, we must provide the necessary support to assure school-level leaders have skills in resource matters.
- Time: Rearranging time for instruction and other interactions with students requires creativity and should address both within the regularly scheduled day as well as through extended day and/or year opportunities. In addition, making time for collaboration and professional learning requires a focus on both processes and monitoring to assure the time is used appropriately. This requires the curriculum lead and the central office team showing, not telling, staff how to use the time effectively. Our job becomes guiding the use of restructured time toward a learning improvement agenda.

Our work in this area demands we can answer these questions:

- Have we altered policies and practices that foster the status quo and impede success for all students?
- Have we built the capacity of building leaders to address individual and institutional beliefs and values, alter entrenched cultural norms, improve their technical capacity and understanding of

how to use resources, and create ownership of their building's problems and solutions for those problems?

- Have we ensured the leaders/leadership teams have the power and resources to make and support good decisions to assure that programs are efficient and effective with the ultimate impact on students and their learning?
- Have we assured the most highly qualified staff that results in improvement and success of all students?
- Have we helped leaders/leadership teams in making the best decisions and holding people throughout the system accountable for performance?

Our job as leaders of operation – organize resources, processes, and systems to support learning!