1 CURRICULUM
The Value of Clear Learning Expectations

When you hear the word *curriculum,* what do you think of? We bet you think of the content and skills that students or learners need to master in any given course. You also tend to think of the aim of the curriculum, the mastery of the curriculum, and the materials that support the curriculum. In terms of instructional leadership, we need to expand this definition of curriculum to refer to the content and skills that learners need to master, with the content being an initiative designed to increase student achievement, the skills being what is needed to successfully implement the initiative, and the learners as your teachers. And, just like we do with course curriculum, we need to determine the aim of the initiative, the mastery of the initiative, and the materials that support the implementation of the initiative. When we do this, we will ensure that **all support and learning is driven by a clearly defined initiative with measurable and achievable outcomes.**

The Driving Force in Curriculum

For some, the term *initiative* applies to any set of expectations that a principal wants to implement at their school site. If that is the case, then all initiatives are created equal and deserve equal priority. But research doesn't show this to be true.

> If leaders and teachers were to attain piercing clarity about what actions matter most; if we were equally clear about the value and impact of those actions; if we learned and practiced them with "simplicity and diligence" (Collins, 2001, p. 91) — something stunning would happen for our students. (Schmoker, 2016, p. 14)

The initiatives that are worth spending time on are those sets of expectations that are directly related to increasing student achievement.

Examples of Initiatives That Focus on Increasing Student Achievement

- Implementation of a new set of curriculum resources that offer students access to rigorous materials.

- Implementation of a course scope and sequence that clearly identifies those crucial skills–what the students need to know and be able to do–that ensure mastery of the content and is built to be delivered in integrated units and lessons.

- Use of an effective and efficient instructional strategy–gradual release of responsibility, reciprocal teaching, English language development (ELD) strategies, etc.–that supports learning for a diverse set of students and lends itself to metacognitive growth.

- Use of a data protocol that ensures students are adequately monitored on their growth in a specific area by focusing on those supports that were present or were missing in their instruction.

- Building student ownership for each and every student so that they can define, clarify, and lead their own learning.

- Implementation of a distance learning process that allows for student success at the same level as in-person instruction.

Table 1.1: Examples of Initiatives That Focus on Increasing Student Achievement

A student-centered initiative focused on increasing achievement inherently has a set of expectations—the criteria that clearly describe success at the highest levels. These expectations can be divided into a sequence of specific outcomes. We will use the term "outcome" in this book because a measurable and achievable outcome can be described and explained by both the principal and the teacher. If expectations are too aspirational in nature—all students will

And, just like we do with course curriculum, we need to determine the aim of the initiative, the mastery of the initiative, and the materials that support the implementation of the initiative.

love reading by the end of third grade—the initiative is too broad, success is hard to measure, and the hard work languishes on the shore of good intentions.

With any initiative thus described, there will be a learning curve for each stakeholder—especially for teachers. As Helen Timperley (2011) states,

> The central challenge faced by all leaders is to create situations that promote teacher learning about teaching practices that make a difference for students. (p. 96)

This learning curve is inevitable because the initiative should be at such a level that each teacher will be asked to develop new skills, alter current practices, support colleagues, and reflect on their implementation. This new learning must be recognized and supported by the principal because it will take time for the teachers to develop the skills necessary to implement the initiative. In other words, the principal must foster the teachers' ownership of their learning to ensure the successful implementation of the initiative.

What can a principal do to move a teacher toward owning their learning regarding the initiative? Ownership is best defined as a mindset. Teachers who know they have the authority, the capacity, and the responsibility to own their learning during this process have an ownership mindset. Thus, to support a teacher to strengthen this mindset, the principal must delegate the authority, build the capacity, and give the responsibility to each and every teacher involved in the implementation.

The Imperatives for Ownership of Curriculum

To develop ownership, several things are imperative. It is imperative for all stakeholders—principal, assistant principals, instructional coaches, and teachers—to know and be able to articulate the outcomes of the initiative that will increase student achievement. It is imperative for all stakeholders to know and be able to articulate the skills they need to learn to implement the initiative, how they will show mastery of these skills, and what successful implementation of the initiative looks like. It is imperative that they know and be able to articulate why they are implementing this initiative, what skills will support implementation, and the value of this initiative regarding increasing student achievement. It is imperative that they are provided opportunities to listen, speak, read, and write about their understanding of the initiative with colleagues. It is imperative that they know and are able to articulate where they are in the learning and implementation process—initial learning and understanding, practicing, applying, or transferring. It is imperative that each

stakeholder knows and is able to articulate the resources and materials they need and how they will be used to support implementation at the highest level.

Table 1.2 below provides some helpful indicators that reveal when stakeholders are taking ownership of their learning.

How Do Stakeholders Demonstrate Ownership of Curriculum?

Each and every stakeholder is able to articulate:

- The goals of the initiative
- The purpose of the initiative
- The specific expectations of implementation
- The success criteria of the initiative
- The benefits of the initiative to students
- The benefits of the initiative to teachers
- The integration of the initiative with the other work of the school
- The resources needed to effectively implement the initiative

Table 1.2: Indicators of Ownership of Curriculum

For all stakeholders to be able to articulate the initiative they are implementing, they need to know the plan for the learning required for implementation. Thus, it is crucial for everyone to know where they are heading. While Jay McTighe and Grant Wiggins (2012) clarified the value of backward mapping for classroom learning, the same value of backward mapping holds true for adult learning.

> It is imperative that they know and be able to articulate why they are implementing this initiative, what skills will support implementation, and the value of this initiative regarding increasing student achievement.

> Plan with the end in mind by first clarifying the learning you seek—the learning results . . . Then, think about the assessment evidence needed to show that students have achieved the desired learning . . . Finally, plan the means to the end—the teaching and learning activities and resources to help them achieve the goals. (p. 7)

With that in mind, principals who backward plan have the ability to tell all stakeholders what they are learning, when they are learning it, how they will apply the learning during the implementing of the initiative, and how they will continue revisiting the learning to deepen their understanding, thus giving everyone the opportunity to own their learning. All of this leads to strengthening schoolwide ownership.

Move Beyond Doing and Understanding to Owning Curriculum

What does ownership look like in practice? What does it sound like when a teacher owns their learning for the implementation of the initiative? What is the difference between a teacher who is simply *doing* the work or *understanding* the initiative and one who is *owning* what they are learning?

A teacher is *doing* when they can state the initiative.

A teacher is *understanding* when they can explain the goals and purpose of the initiative.

A teacher is *owning* what they are learning when they can state and explain the initiative as well as articulate the various aspects of the initiative, the benefits to both students and teachers, the learning that is needed for successful implementation, and the value of the initiative in terms of increasing student achievement.

The tables that follow present some examples of what this looks like and sounds like on a continuum of doing–understanding–owning in a variety of initiatives, particularly when we ask the question, "What is the initiative?"

Possible responses on the continuum from teachers working on the initiative "Develop and implement a course scope and sequence" when asked,

"What is the initiative?"

We are getting a new pacing guide.

We are developing a new scope and sequence that is updated to incorporate the newest standards.

We are developing and then implementing a standards-based sequence for English language arts. This will ensure we have a standards-driven curriculum and that we all know what skills and content students need to master by the end of the year, the sequence in which they will be taught, and how these decisions were made. This will help us have conversations within and across grade levels about student achievement.

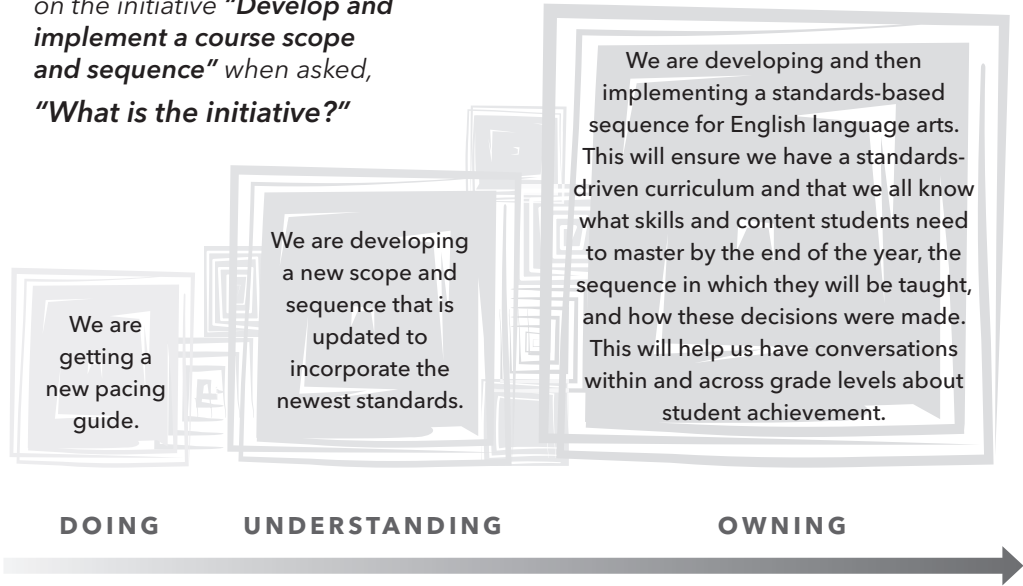**DOING   UNDERSTANDING   OWNING**

Table 1.3: Ownership Continuum of Curriculum When Developing and Implementing a Course Scope and Sequence

Possible responses on the continuum from teachers working on the initiative "Utilize reciprocal teaching" when asked,

"What is the initiative?"

We have to learn about another new approach to reading.

We are learning about the reciprocal teaching strategy to help increase comprehension.

We are implementing the reciprocal teaching strategy to increase active reading and comprehension. This is a research-based instructional strategy that can be used in all content areas. This will allow our students to see the connections across subjects. It will allow us to have schoolwide conversations about reading comprehension and engagement.

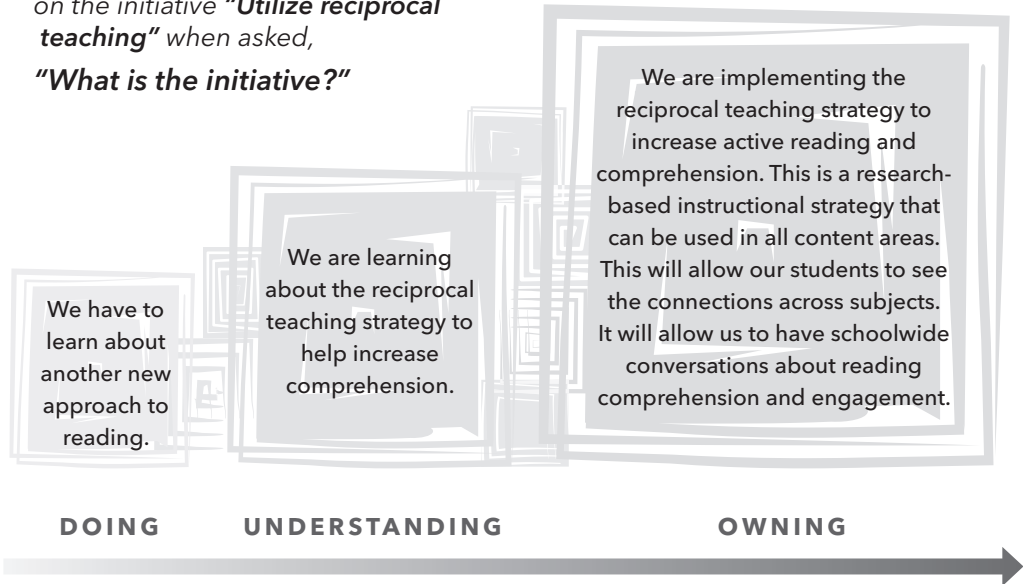**DOING   UNDERSTANDING   OWNING**

Table 1.4: Ownership Continuum of Curriculum When Utilizing a Specific Instructional Strategy, Reciprocal Teaching

*Possible responses on the continuum from teachers working on the initiative **"Use new curriculum materials and textbook"** when asked,*

"What is the initiative?"

We are implementing a new mathematics textbook series. This will provide us with the necessary resources to support the teaching of our mathematics standards. As teachers, we won't have to search for materials that support the skills in the standards. It will also create continuity for our students.

We will receive a new math textbook series. It is updated with the new standards.

We are getting new math books.

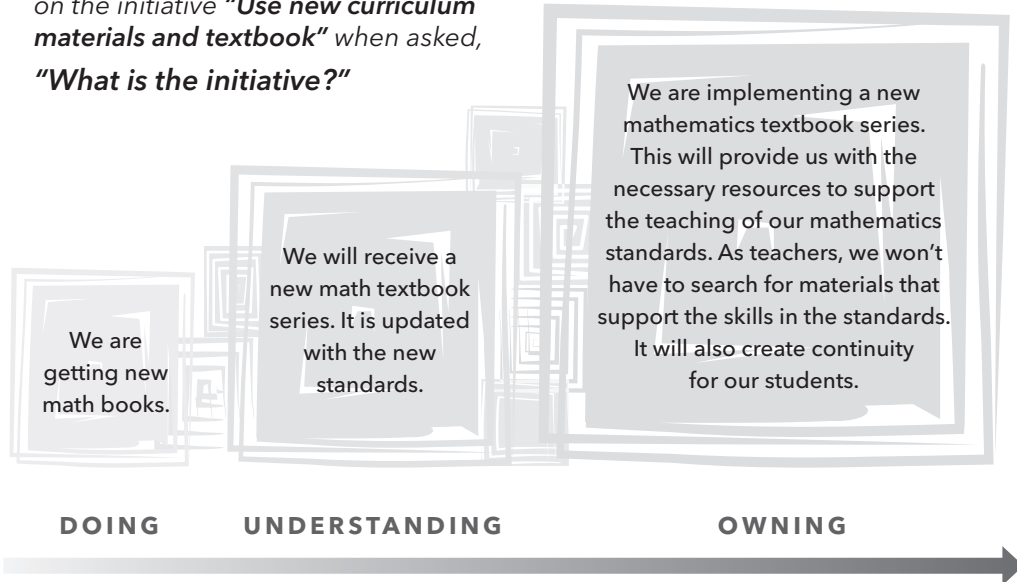**DOING   UNDERSTANDING   OWNING**

Table 1.5: Ownership Continuum of Curriculum When Using New Curriculum Materials and Textbook

*Possible responses on the continuum from teachers working on the initiative **"Develop student ownership"** when asked,*

"What is the initiative?"

We are increasing the supports we provide to students each day to develop student ownership. We want all teachers to know the supports in curriculum, instruction, assessment, and climate, their value in supporting student ownership, and to ensure that all students are receiving them. This will allow students to receive these supports in all classes throughout the day.

We are learning about student ownership so we can help students take more responsibility for their learning.

We are doing a new program about student ownership.

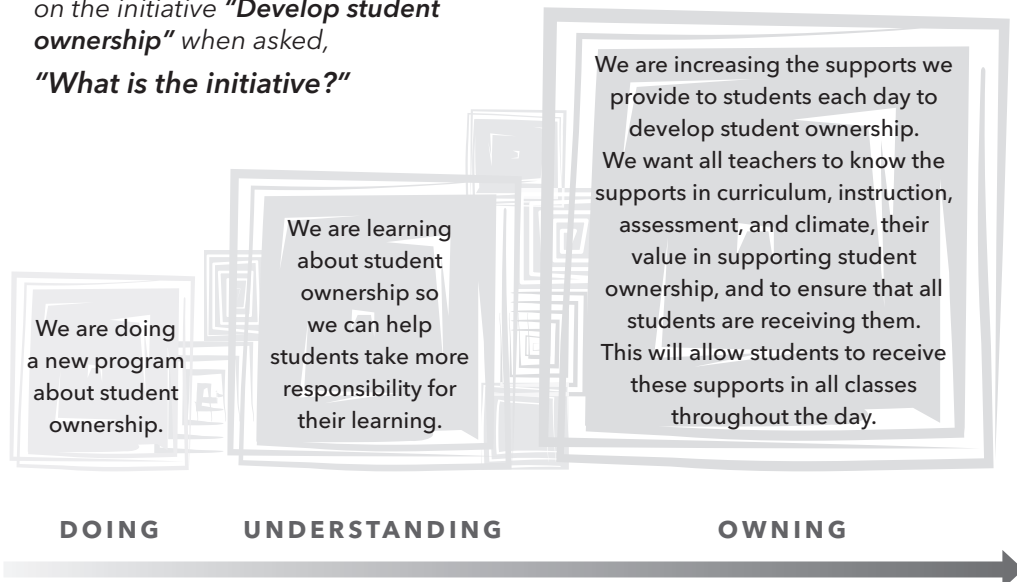**DOING   UNDERSTANDING   OWNING**

Table 1.6: Ownership Continuum of Curriculum When Developing Student Ownership

*Possible responses on the continuum from teachers working on the initiative **"Implement a data protocol"** when asked,*
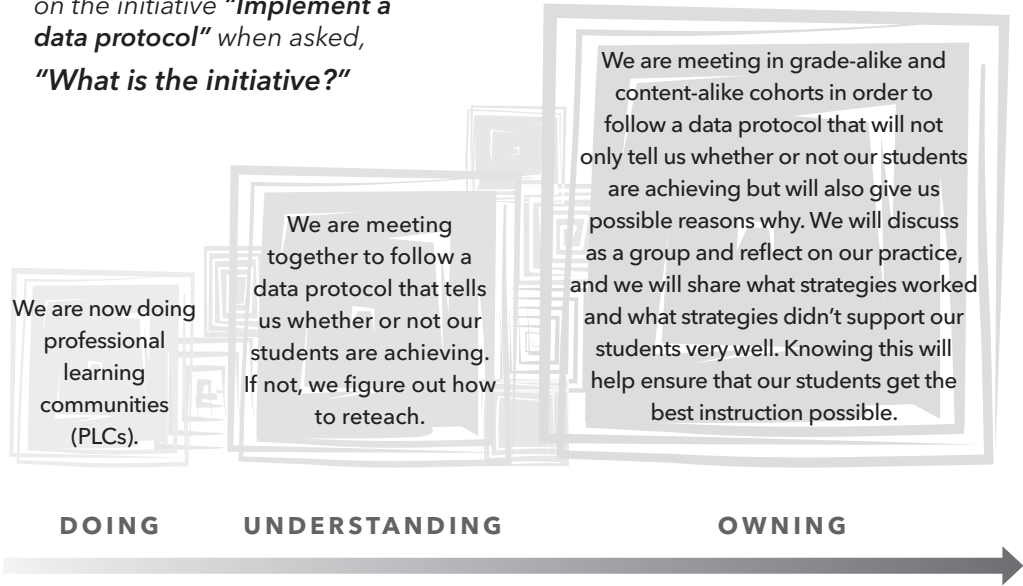
"What is the initiative?"

We are now doing professional learning communities (PLCs).

We are meeting together to follow a data protocol that tells us whether or not our students are achieving. If not, we figure out how to reteach.

We are meeting in grade-alike and content-alike cohorts in order to follow a data protocol that will not only tell us whether or not our students are achieving but will also give us possible reasons why. We will discuss as a group and reflect on our practice, and we will share what strategies worked and what strategies didn't support our students very well. Knowing this will help ensure that our students get the best instruction possible.

DOING   **UNDERSTANDING**   **OWNING**

Table 1.7: Ownership Continuum of Curriculum When Implementing a Data Protocol

*Possible responses on the continuum from teachers working on the initiative **"Teach through distance learning"** when asked,*

"What is the initiative?"

We have to teach our students while they are at home.

We are continuing to teach our students, but the delivery, practice, and assessment process will use technology so that students can access their learning at home.

We are expecting our students to learn at levels that are as close to being in class as possible. We will utilize our current technology as we develop lessons, strategies, and assessments that can ensure at-home success. We will help parents with suggestions about how they can support their children.

DOING   **UNDERSTANDING**   **OWNING**

Table 1.8: Ownership Continuum of Curriculum When Teaching through Distance Learning

The Practices That Drive Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

Even though there are hundreds of strategies a principal could use during implementation, we will focus on the three practices in curriculum that research shows increase the opportunities for learning—by increasing the opportunities for ownership. The following three strategic learning practices are what your adult learners need in order to learn.

- **Strategic Learning Practice, Curriculum 1:** Adults are supported by relevant expectations with measurable and achievable outcomes that are accessible and drive all learning.

- **Strategic Learning Practice, Curriculum 2:** Adults are supported by a plan for learning that provides an integrated approach and that supports conceptual redundancy of the outcomes.

- **Strategic Learning Practice, Curriculum 3:** Adults are supported by access to materials that match the content and rigor of the outcomes.

Let's define each aspect of the three practices to make sure we are all on the same page.

Strategic Learning Practice, Curriculum 1: Adults are supported by **relevant expectations** with **measurable and achievable outcomes** that are **accessible** and **drive all learning**.

Relevant expectations are the actions of the initiative that clearly describe success at the highest level. These are the actions teachers need to demonstrate.

Measurable and achievable outcomes clearly define *what* teachers are expected to implement. They also define *how* teachers will demonstrate that they have successfully met the expectations. This demonstration assesses the level of application and is the measurable aspect of the outcome. The measurable outcome must be achievable in the time parameters of the initiative.

Accessible allows for all teachers to understand and articulate what they are learning, the value and purpose for learning it, and how they will know they have implemented it at the highest level.

Drive all learning implies that learning and supports link directly to the outcomes of the initiative.

Strategic Learning Practice, Curriculum 2: Adults are supported by a **plan for learning** that provides an **integrated approach** and that supports **conceptual redundancy** of the outcomes.

Plan for learning is a series of professional learning opportunities and supports that are linked together and work toward the outcome of the initiative.

Integrated approach ensures that teachers are provided multiple and varied opportunities with the expectations of the initiative. This usually includes opportunities to learn about, observe, practice, discuss, and plan specific to the expectations of the initiative.

Conceptual redundancy ensures that teachers have opportunities for repetition and practice in a variety of approaches. This also means that there is a clear connection between the goals of previous initiatives and the goals of the current initiative, all tied to student achievement.

Strategic Learning Practice, Curriculum 3: Adults are supported by access to **materials** that match the **content** and **rigor** of the outcomes.

Materials are those resources that directly support the initiative's outcome.

Content is the learning of the initiative that is to be acquired.

Rigor means materials and support exemplify the highest level of success of the initiative.

Thus, all support and learning must be driven by a clearly defined initiative with measurable and achievable outcomes because:

1. When teachers clearly understand the goal of the initiative, they have a better chance to be successful.

2. When teachers clearly understand how the work of the initiative is integrated into their current work, they have a better chance to be successful.

3. When teachers have access to appropriate and relevant resources, they have a better chance to be successful.

These practices form the foundation of the clear and consistent actions the principal must take to support their teachers' ownership of their learning to ensure successful implementation of the initiative.

How does a principal do this? They must model the thinking behind the ownership and explicitly address the skills of ownership. This takes planning. In order for all stakeholders to answer these questions—"What is the initiative?" "What is the purpose of the initiative?" and "What are the success criteria of the initiative?"—principals must be strategic in the actions they use to support staff.

In other words, these three strategic learning practices translate into the four actions of instructional leadership in curriculum:

- ▸ Clarify the goals of the initiative.
- ▸ Integrate the goals of the initiative with other expectations.
- ▸ Provide the resources needed to implement the initiative.
- ▸ ***Share this information with the staff.***

To lead the actions of curriculum, the principal must ensure that all stakeholders understand the content and skills needed to successfully implement the initiative. Curriculum must also include the demonstration of learning that shows the successful implementation of the initiative. This demonstration must be measurable and observable so that both the teacher and the principal can monitor progress. The initiative should be discussed, developed, and determined by a community of leaders. To be clear, the principal does not need to decide all of these actions by themselves—in fact, the research would argue against that. Use your faculty and staff to develop the actions of the initiative. Your task is to lead these actions.

Finally, one of the most important aspects of instructional leadership is to continuously, purposefully, and intentionally share information with the staff. This is the notion of conceptual redundancy. "To succeed, leaders must carefully select, severely limit, and then persistently clarify (and clarify, and clarify, and clarify) the work to be done by those who lead" (Schmoker, 2016, p. 11). If you think your staff needs to hear the information again, you're right and they do. If you think your staff does not need to hear the information again, you're wrong and they do.

Questions to Guide Implementing the Actions of Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

All support and learning is driven by a clearly defined initiative with measurable and achievable outcomes.

Use these planning questions to focus your support

Clarify the goals of the initiative.

- ❑ What are the goals of the initiative?

- ❑ What is the purpose of the initiative?

- ❑ What, specifically, will the teacher be expected to implement?

- ❑ What, specifically, are the success criteria for the initiative?

- ❑ How will the success of the initiative benefit the students?

- ❑ How will the success of the initiative benefit the teachers?

Integrate the goals of the initiative with other expectations.

- ❑ How does the initiative support the other work of the school?

Provide the resources needed to implement this initiative.

- ❑ What resources will the teacher need to effectively implement the initiative?

Share this information with the staff.

- ❑ How will this information be shared in as many distinct ways as possible?

Table 1.9: Questions to Guide Implementing the Actions of Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

An Example of Teacher Ownership in Curriculum

WHERE: A junior high school led by Principal Thompson

WHAT: The initiative is the development and implementation of a course scope and sequence (for English-language arts [ELA] in sixth, seventh, and eighth grades) that clearly identifies those crucial skills—what the students need to know and be able to do—that ensure mastery of the content and is built to be delivered in integrated units and lessons.

WHO: The seventh-grade team of three teachers

Let's hear what these teachers had to say about the initiative as they were asked these questions regarding curriculum:

> ▸ *What is the initiative?*
>
> ▸ *What is the purpose of the initiative?*
>
> ▸ *What are the success criteria of the initiative?*

First, we asked, *"What are you working on?"*

TEACHER 1:   "We just completed Unit 1 using our new ELA scope and sequence. We are now reviewing it to see if there are any changes we think we will need to make for this unit for next year. We are also looking at the coming units to see if we still agree with the decisions we made around the scope and sequence of the standards."

Then, *"What is the initiative you are implementing?"*

TEACHER 2:   "We were asked to develop a scope and sequence for English that was standards-based and was organized so that we could more easily plan and deliver an integrated unit. To us, that meant a unit that had a clear reading and writing focus—the reading was information to be used in the writing and the writing would be built from the text."

And, *"What is the purpose of this? What caused you all to create a new scope and sequence?"*

TEACHER 2:   "We had been looking at our ELA data to see where our students needed more support. Some standards stood out as weak areas. Once we began discussing them it became clear that we weren't all on the same page when it came to the standards—what the expectations of them were, how we were teaching them, when we were teaching them, honestly, if we were teaching them."

TEACHER 1:   "Yes. Mr. Thompson was a part of these conversations. It was clear to him that we needed to make certain we were all in agreement on the expectations of the standards and that we needed an ELA scope and sequence that was driven by the standards."

Then we asked, *__How was it decided that a scope and sequence was what was needed?__*

TEACHER 3:   "In order for us to make sure our students could master the standards by the end of the year, we had to have a plan to get there. A scope and sequence allows us to map out the entire year. We made certain all our standards are taught before our high-stakes assessment. We made sure that critical standards are addressed more frequently. We made certain we built units to leverage the integrated nature of the standards. We used our learning of the standards to build a strong scope and sequence that will give our students the best opportunity to master them."

TEACHER 1:   "We also wanted to have a scope and sequence that would make certain we didn't fall into the teaching of texts. We want to make sure our instruction is driven by the standards first, using the texts as a curriculum resource to help the students learn and practice the skills of the standards."

We followed up with, *__What are the success criteria? How will you all know that you are successful in this initiative of a standards-driven approach guided by a scope and sequence?__*

TEACHER 2:   "When we are all comfortable with the standards being the driving force of the decisions we make each day. We meet weekly to discuss what standards we focused on, how we taught them or had the students practice with them, our successes and failures, and how this will inform the decisions we make for the coming week."

TEACHER 3:   "It is amazing to me how our conversations have changed in a short period of time. The standards really drive what we do now. That was not true before. So, to answer your question, we will know we are successful when we are all teaching to the standards and when we see the increase in our student's mastery of them because of this work."

These answers show a clarity of focus that demonstrates these teachers are on their way to owning their learning when it comes to this initiative. But, how did they get here? How did Principal Thompson implement the actions of instructional leadership in curriculum?

An Example of Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

When speaking with Principal Thompson, he explained that he knew his task was to determine and lead these actions:

▸ Clarify the goals of the initiative.

▸ Integrate the goals of the initiative with other expectations.

▸ Provide the resources needed to implement the initiative.

▸ Share this information with the staff.

He began the process by answering the question from the planning chart on page 28.

▸ ***What are the goals of the initiative?***

PRINCIPAL THOMPSON: "I was with the English teachers reviewing data from a benchmark assessment. There were some standards that the students overall did not perform well on. We began to discuss these standards. It became clear to me immediately that my teachers were not all viewing the standards in the same way. There seemed to be disagreements as to what the standards expected students to be able to do, which standards were being taught, if the standards were the instructional focus or if the text being read was the focus. The team was not on the same page at all."

"After that day, I met with the lead English teachers of each grade level and discussed my concerns. We came to an agreement that we needed to develop and implement a standards-based scope and sequence."

Once that goal had been determined, Principal Thompson then had to determine the following:

▸ ***What is the purpose of the initiative?***

PRINCIPAL THOMPSON: "Our overall purpose is student achievement. To do that, we have to ensure we have a standards-driven curriculum. This means our teachers must know what skills the students should master by the end of the year, the sequence in which they will be taught, and how these decisions were made."

▸ ***What, specifically, will the teacher be expected to implement?***

▸ ***What, specifically, are the success criteria for the initiative?***

PRINCIPAL THOMPSON: "I knew I then had to decide what it was I expected from the teachers. I knew it was not enough for us to build a

standards-driven scope and sequence that teachers would just follow. I knew that would lead to passive compliance. What was most important to me was that the teachers owned the scope and sequence. They needed to have a deep understanding of the standards, they needed to be able to justify the decisions made around the scope and sequence, and they needed to be able to articulate, every week, which skills they are directly teaching or supporting in each lesson, and where their students are in mastering those skills. Our success will be measured by their decisions and their ability to articulate and justify them."

But Principal Thompson knew that if he wanted real buy-in from his teachers, they would have to see the benefits to this work. He then had to determine:

- *How will the success of the initiative benefit the students?*
- *How will the success of the initiative benefit the teachers?*

PRINCIPAL THOMPSON: "I knew that if they were all stronger in the standards and we had a carefully planned scope and sequence, there would be ongoing benefits. Our teachers would be equipped with the knowledge to focus on the skills of the standards in a manner that allowed for meaningful integration. It would benefit our students to have authentic opportunities to learn, practice, and apply the skills throughout the year."

"But I know I have a range of teachers. Some are open and always looking for ways to grow. But I do have some that are quite set in their ways. If I was going to get the teachers to meet these expectations, they all had to see what was in it for them. I also knew that I couldn't lead this initiative on my own. I made certain I worked with the lead teachers to carefully craft our messaging."

"When we began to roll out the initiative, we made sure we did it in a way that honored our teachers. We asked teachers to identify the standards they felt the most confident about and to bring to our sessions examples of how they have been successful with them. Then, as we conducted the training, we had them share. The teachers all left with a much deeper understanding of the standards and were participants in the session."

"Once we developed the scope and sequence, I had the teachers develop the justification statements for the decisions they made. I knew that if my teachers could articulate how and why the decisions were made, they would own them. More importantly, they would own the thinking behind them."

"For our students, we are now confident that regardless of the class they are assigned, they will be provided with a standards-driven curriculum. Our teachers will be able to have stronger grade-level conversations and share ideas and successes. And our teachers will be able to have vertical conversations so we can more closely monitor student progress from year to year."

To ensure that his teachers did not feel overwhelmed, Principal Thompson had to determine:

▸ *How does the initiative support the other work of the school?*

PRINCIPAL THOMPSON: "Our focus last year was on the implementation of a data protocol process. I could see clearly how our work on our standards-based scope and sequence aligned beautifully to that work. But it wasn't enough that I saw it. I needed my teachers to make the connections. Rather than me telling them what I thought, I asked them. I brought out our work from last year—its goal, purpose, benefits, etc. I asked the teachers to decide if this initiative supported our previous work. If so, how? If not, why?"

"The teachers overwhelmingly saw the connections and benefits. They identified that having a scope and sequence would strengthen their data analysis. It would ensure that our focus was not on the lessons they taught but on the learning of the skills of the standards. They saw how they could expand their data conversations from just their grade level to across the grade levels. This only increased their buy-in!"

To ensure that his teachers had sufficient resources and materials to successfully implement the initiative, Principal Thompson had to determine:

▸ *What resources will the teacher need to effectively implement the initiative?*

PRINCIPAL THOMPSON: "If we are going to ask our teachers to learn something new, and possibly change the way they have been working, we had to make certain they had the right resources that would help them. We needed resources on standards, sample scope and sequences, and exemplar integrated units. We decided to utilize an outside professional development company that could help us see the standards in a new light and that could guide us through the process of developing a scope and sequence."

"We also wanted to make certain we provided them with time and support. We already had weekly grade-level PLC meetings set in our schedule.

In addition, we found dedicated time for collegial lesson study opportunities and optional additional standards training for those who felt they would benefit from it."

To ensure that his message was clearly articulated and understood, Principal Thompson had to determine:

> ▸ *How will this information be shared in as many distinct ways as possible?*

PRINCIPAL THOMPSON: "I have been working hard on being more effective with communication over the last couple of years. I learned the hard way that what I say is not always what people hear. I knew that I needed to be super redundant in my communication on every level of this initiative. This meant that things needed to be repeated over and over. And not just in one manner but in lots of ways. I also make certain I put our message in writing. This allows people to read it in their voice, and it gives them time to reflect on the message and the space to generate questions they may have."

"In addition, I make sure to work with the leadership team. First, we all have to be on the same page about how to discuss the initiative. We decide what to say and how we will share in the delivery of the message. This way, it is stated by many and heard by many."

How Other Administrators Utilize Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

INITIATIVE: Using a new math textbook

ADMINISTRATOR: Assistant principal leading the math department at a low-performing high school

"Our district adopted new math textbooks. I knew from my experiences as a teacher that this could be overwhelming. I knew that I needed to get ahead of the adoption and make certain my teachers realized that our goal was not the new textbooks. Our goal of teaching the standards remained our top priority. These new materials would just complement the work we were already doing, not replace it. I also knew that my message could conflict with what they may hear during district training sessions on the materials. So, I had to be sure to share our message over and over. It was also important that I gave them chances to state our goals as well. It could not just be me saying it.

They needed to say it in their own words as well. This made such a difference as we implemented the new materials."

INITIATIVE: Implementing a new data protocol

ADMINISTRATOR: First-year principal at an elementary school

"Our school's initiative was to implement a data protocol process. We clearly laid out the purpose of this initiative and why we believed our school was ready for it. I felt that most everyone was on board. But I knew that for this to really work we needed everyone to understand their role in the initiative. There were expectations for leadership, coaches, and teachers. There was some confusion and it felt like some folks were just going through the motions. We decided to write down what was expected from each role: what they needed to do before our data analysis meetings, what their role was during them, and what they were expected to do after each one. This took a lot of back-and-forth conversations, but the process strengthened our understanding and buy-in. I will use this process for each initiative we implement from now on."

INITIATIVE: Implementing the reciprocal teaching reading strategy

ADMINISTRATOR: CEO of a K–8 charter school

"We implemented reciprocal teaching to help strengthen our students' comprehension and engagement with text. Before we decided to focus on this initiative, we looked at the research and saw how beneficial it could be for our students. As we began the work, I started to hear some grumblings from teachers along the lines of 'this is just one more thing we need to do.' I realized that all our focus, rightly so, was on how this would support our students. I forgot to focus on how this would benefit the teachers. I had to backtrack and make certain that they all saw and believed that this would be as beneficial to them as it was to our children."

What Teachers Say About Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

INITIATIVE: Developing student ownership across the school

TEACHER: Sixth-grade teacher

"I am so appreciative of how our principal shares information regarding student ownership with us. With prior administrators, we were basically just told to show up and do this and do that. We never really knew why we were doing things and we never knew what was expected from us. With this initiative on student ownership, our principal shares with us the focus for the year, why this is our focus, what is expected from me, and what is the plan. He also tells us what we can expect from him. That way, it feels like we are a collective 'We,' not just individual 'I's.'"

INITIATIVE: Incorporating distance learning into instruction

TEACHER: High school chemistry teacher

"We have been told time and time again that our students should know the objective of every lesson. They should know what specific skill they are learning and how they will demonstrate that they have learned it. But when it came to our learning, we never received this before. Now we do. For every professional development session on distance learning, we are told exactly what we are expected to learn and how we will know we have learned it. We are told how the session connects to the big picture of our school goals. That clarity has been so supportive. And this has helped those of us who are still a bit uncomfortable using so much technology."

Curriculum Reflection

How well do you develop your staff to own what they are learning with regard to the initiative?

In this chapter, we have shown you what ownership looks like in practice. We have shown you what it sounds like when teachers own their part in curriculum. And we have given examples of how principals have utilized the actions of instructional leadership in order to better support the successful implementation of the selected initiative.

We have also explained the differences between teachers who are simply *doing* or *understanding* curriculum and those who are *owning* what they are learning and implementing.

Remember, we said that a teacher is *doing* when they can state the task in front of them and recite what they are doing, or what is expected of them.

Remember, we said that a teacher is *understanding* when they can explain the skills they are learning in order to successfully implement the initiative.

Remember, we said a teacher is *owning* their learning when they can articulate what skill they are learning, why they are learning it, how they will demonstrate they have learned it, and how they will use this learning to most successfully implement the initiative.

Think of your teachers and staff. When you ask them these questions, what do they say?

"What is the initiative?"

"What is the purpose of the initiative?"

"What are the success criteria of the initiative?"

Listen to their answers. Where do they fall on the doing–understanding–owning continuum? Think about the supports they need from you to develop ownership. How often and to what degree do you offer these supports? In other words, what impact do you have on leading the initiative and developing ownership?

John Hattie's research (2012) revealed that "Such passion for evaluating impact

> To lead the actions of curriculum, the principal must ensure that all stakeholders understand the content and skills needed to successfully implement the initiative.

is the single most critical lever for instructional excellence—accompanied by understanding this impact and doing something in light of the evidence and understanding" (p. viii).

What follows are reflection activities that will help you determine your impact on ownership—both areas of strength and areas of growth. These activities will help you understand how you utilize the actions of instructional leadership from the point of view of whom you are leading—the teachers and your staff.

Remember that to develop ownership, all support and learning must be driven by a clearly defined initiative with measurable and achievable outcomes.

Also, remember that your actions are key to the development of ownership and the successful implementation of the initiative.

Reflect on the Implementation of the Actions of Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

All support and learning is driven by a clearly defined initiative with measurable and achievable outcomes.

How well and how often did you clarify the goals of the initiative by offering the following supports?

- The goals of the initiative were clearly explained and defined.

- The purpose of the initiative was clearly explained and defined.

- The expectations for the teachers were clearly explained and defined.

- The success criteria for the initiative were clearly explained and defined.

- The benefits of the initiative to the students were clearly explained and defined.

- The benefits of the initiative to the teachers were clearly explained and defined.

How well and how often did you integrate the goals of the initiative with other expectations by offering the following support?

- How the initiative supports the other work of the school was clearly explained and defined.

How well and how often did you provide the resources needed to implement this initiative by offering the following support?

- The resources the teachers need to effectively implement the initiative were clearly explained and easily accessible.

How well and how often did you share the information with the staff by offering the following support?

- The information was explained, defined, and shared in as many distinct ways as possible.

Table 1.10: Narrative Reflection on the Implementation of the Actions of Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

Reflect on the Implementation of the Actions of Instructional Leadership in Curriculum

All support and learning is driven by a clearly defined initiative with measurable and achievable outcomes.

To what degree did you clarify the goals of the initiative?

- The goals of the initiative were clearly explained and defined.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

- The purpose of the initiative was clearly explained and defined.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

- The expectations for the teacher were clearly explained and defined.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

- The success criteria for the initiative were clearly explained and defined.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

- The benefits of the initiative to the students were clearly explained and defined.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

- The benefits of the initiative to the teachers were clearly explained and defined.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

To what degree did you integrate the goals of the initiative with other expectations?

- How the initiative supports the other work of the school was clearly explained and defined.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

To what degree did you provide the resources needed to implement this initiative?

- The resources the teachers need to effectively implement the initiative were clearly explained and easily accessible.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

To what degree did you share the information with the staff?

- The information was explained, defined, and shared in as many distinct ways as possible.

5	4	3	2	1
always		sometimes		never

Table 1.11: Evaluative Reflection on the Implementation of the Actions of Instructional Leadership in Curriculum