

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

2007-2010

The problem statement

There is widespread agreement in educational research: the single most important lever for accelerating student learning is high quality teaching. In addition, one of the most important levers to improve the quality of teaching is effective leadership—leadership that focuses on improving instruction, providing teachers with high quality, systematic professional development and accountability for accelerating student learning. Unfortunately, there is not only a shortage of high quality leaders in urban schools, particularly in the lowest-performing schools, but the training, support and development they receive has been insufficient. In addition, while there has been a wealth of research and theory on leadership in general, there are far too few examples of how to implement and build effective leadership at an operational level; in other words, what skills, competencies and processes are required of a high-impact leader to turn around a low-performing school, sustain improvement and close the achievement gap. Finally, while much of the current literature focuses on the role of a single leader, systemic improvements cannot be achieved unless schools utilize the skills of multiple leaders, from grade level team leaders to the principal, working together to establish a continuous improvement system to transform their schools.

The PartnersSI solution

Partners in School Innovation's three-year Leadership Development Initiative addresses the current gap in leadership development. We are creating a set of **Leadership Development Training Modules** to develop results-oriented, high-performing principals and other school leaders. Our leadership development training modules are designed to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of each school. They are not intended to be a sequence of trainings; rather, they are building blocks that can be used as stand alone trainings or in conjunction with each other based on the diagnostics of leadership competencies and defined areas of need.

The modules include:

- **Competencies:** to clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of leaders (principals, district leaders, leadership team members, instructional coaches, grade level team leaders) to lead a systemic improvement process.
- **Diagnostics:** to diagnose the competencies of leaders and their progress toward high performance.
- **Examples of Application:** to provide concrete examples of effective leadership actions that transform schools from low to high performing.

Dissemination

The Leadership Development Training Modules will be primarily disseminated through our Leadership Networks in partner districts. In addition to these direct channels of dissemination, we expect a broader reach through our partnerships with San Francisco Unified School District, the San Francisco School Alliance, UC Berkeley and E.L. Achieve (a leader in English Language Development and our key partner in a three-year, \$750,000 initiative to improve the quality of teaching for English learners). Through these partnerships we will reach additional school districts throughout California. Our goal is to disseminate our learning and the tools we've created to the education field at-large through the internet, conferences and publications.

The following chart details the specific products in the leadership development training modules.

Category	Product	Users	Outcomes
Competencies	Leadership qualities, knowledge areas and skills that lead to school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District leaders ▪ Principals ▪ Literacy coaches ▪ Grade-level team leaders 	Moves beyond the more conceptual leadership traits well covered in the leadership literature to specific mindsets, areas of knowledge and results-oriented behaviors that lead to school transformation.
Examples of Application	3-4 case studies and other examples of application (e.g., a vignette of a principal's data and coaching conference with a struggling teacher)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ District leaders ▪ Principals ▪ Literacy coaches ▪ Grade-level team leaders ▪ External support providers 	<p>Provides tangible examples of the trajectory of leadership growth, from emerging to proven effectiveness.</p> <p>Depicts concrete examples of effective leadership actions in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supporting teachers to develop equitable classrooms ▪ Conducting strategic school-level planning ▪ Creating leadership and collaboration structures for school improvement ▪ Establishing school-wide systems to support literacy coherence and school change ▪ Sustaining a healthy school climate and culture for teachers and students
Diagnostics	Rubric to assess the level of leadership effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Principals ▪ Literacy coaches ▪ Grade-level team leaders 	Enables PartnersSI to diagnose the effectiveness of leaders' actions before and throughout our partnership; enables leaders to assess areas for growth, set developmental goals and use qualitative data to monitor progress toward those goals; clearly outlines the development of behaviors and actions that leaders exhibit in a low- to high-performing school.