

Four Instructional Leadership Skills Principals Need

There's no doubt that instructional leadership requires the school principal to wear many hats. At various times, principals must be administrators, managers, diplomats, teachers and curriculum leaders, sometimes all within one school day. It is definitely a balancing act, and principals must be proficient in all of these areas, as well as able to fluidly move from one role to another.



Principals and school leaders continue to strive for balance and proficiency in their roles as instructional leaders. Among the reasons cited for a lack of proficiency and emphasis on instructional leadership in schools is a lack of comprehensive training. A deficit of time for executing instructional activities, unrealistic community expectations and a glut

of paperwork were also cited as reasons for the shortfall.



Instructional leadership defined

Instructional leadership involves setting clear goals, managing curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, allocating resources and evaluating teachers regularly to promote student learning and growth. Quality of instruction is the top priority for the instructional principal. Instructional leadership is committed to the core business of teaching, learning and knowledge. Staff members should meet on a regular basis to discuss how to do their jobs better and ultimately help students learn more effectively.

4 instructional leadership skills principals must have

Four skills have been identified as essential for effective instructional leadership in principals.

1. Effective use of resources

It isn't sufficient for principals to just know their faculty's strengths and weaknesses. If specific resources can benefit the staff, the principal should be ready and prepared to provide them. They should also clearly recognize that teachers thrive on being appreciated and acknowledged for good performance.



2. Communication skills

Of course, instructional principals should be excellent communicators. Interpersonal or people skills are crucial to the success of a principal. They must be able to communicate their beliefs pertaining to education, including the conviction that every student is capable of learning. These skills inspire trust, spark motivation and empower teachers and students.

3. Serving as an instructional resource

Teachers rely on principals and other administrative officials to be sources of information related to effective instructional practices and current trends in education. Instructional leaders should be tuned in to all of the pertinent issues and current events related to curriculum, effective assessment and pedagogical strategies.

4. Being visible and accessible

Lastly, good principals should be a positive, vibrant and visible presence in the school. Modeling behaviors of learning, focusing on learning objectives, and leading by example are crucial to the success of an instructional principal.



In addition to these four qualities, a successful instructional principal should also have excellent planning and observation skills as well as proficiency in research and evaluation

of both staff and student performance.

Instructional leadership roles: always evolving

The role of the instructional leader should also be expanded to incorporate a shift away from just “management,” or working in terms of administrative tasks, and move toward an emphasis on leadership. In order to achieve this objective, a strong principal with solid ideas is not enough; success will require a redefinition of the role of the principal. Barriers to leadership must be removed by reducing emphasis on bureaucratic structures and procedures. Relationships must be reinvented.



The dramatically different role of the school principal as instructional leader has been described as one that must focus on building a vital community of learners. It also requires shared decision-making and, in a sense, getting back to basics. It will require the leveraging of time, the support of ongoing professional development for staff members, creating a

climate of integrity, using resources to support a diverse educational game plan and, lastly, plenty of room for inquiry and improvement.



For principals to truly thrive in the role of instructional leader, they will have to work to liberate themselves from being mired in the bureaucratic aspects of teaching. They'll have to redouble their efforts in improving learning and teaching methods. Needless to say, improvement in instructional methods is a goal worth seeking. When successfully implemented, instructional teaching and learning allows students as well as teachers to create a more meaningful learning environment. Ultimately, it enables them to better control their destiny.

<https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/leaders-link/four-instructional-leadership-skills-principals-need/>