


SCROLL DOWN TO START



---

Why distributed  
leadership?

6



## Why Distributed Leadership?

---

Contemporary educational reform places a great premium upon the relationship between leadership and school improvement. Effective leaders exercise an indirect but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and on the achievement of students (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000).

7



## Why Distributed Leadership?

---

Many believe and have written that:

“The days of the principal as the lone instructional leaders are over. We no longer believe that one administrator can serve as the instructional leader for an entire school without the substantial participation of other educators (Elmore, 2000; Lambert, 1998; Lambert et al., 1995; Lambert, Collay, Dietz, Kent & Richert, 1997; Olson, 2000; Poplin, 1994; Spillane, Halverson & Diamond, 2001).”

8



## Why Distributed Leadership?

---

The old model of formal, one-person leadership leaves the substantial talents of teachers largely untapped. Improvements achieved under this model are not easily sustainable; when the principal leaves, promising programs often lose momentum and fade away. This model suffers from what Fullan (2003) calls the individualistic fallacy.

9



## Why Distributed Leadership?

---

The process of change required to move to the next levels of reform will be incredibly demanding. What is needed is not a few good leaders, but large numbers to make the extraordinary efforts required (Fullan, 2003).

10



## Why Distributed Leadership?

---

Richard Elmore (2000) argues that the problem of scaling up school improvement, whether it is in a school or a school system, is one of capacity building and specialization. Building a broad base of capacity is not possible if control is limited to a few individuals. The solution, he argues, is the broader distribution of leadership.

11



## Why Distributed Leadership?

---

“At the Consortium of Policy Research in Education (CPRE) at the University of Pennsylvania, in their study of a broad range of school reform initiatives...they all hold one thing in common: They all implicitly distribute leadership across multiple individuals in schools” (Supovitz, 2000).

12



## Why Distributed Leadership?

---

MISE has learned over the past decade that distributed leadership—both in schools and in districts—works. It produces:

- good results (measured by the quality of the professional development and the curriculum and assessment tools produced)
- the successful recruitment of teachers into intensive professional development
- the emergence of teacher-led professional communities within and across the schools

*Riordan, CPRE, 2003*

13



---

## What is distributed leadership?

14



## Underlying Principles:

---

1. Instructional leadership is and must be a shared, community undertaking.
2. Leadership is the professional work of everyone in the school (Lambert, 2003).
3. The traditional model of formal, one-person leadership leaves the substantial talents of teachers largely untapped; and promising programs often lose momentum and fade away when the leader changes or leaves.

15




## Underlying Principles:

---

4. Instructional improvement requires that people must look to multiple sources of expertise to work in a context around a common problem.
5. This distributed expertise leads to distributed leadership (Spillane, et al, 2001).
6. Distributed leadership is characterized as a form of collective leadership, in which teachers develop expertise by working collaboratively.
7. "Powerful leadership is distributed because the work of instructional improvement is distributed" (Elmore, 2003).


16



---

Spillane's ongoing research in 13 Chicago schools suggest that the work of leading instruction is distributed among multiple leaders including the principal, assistant principal, teacher leaders and regular classroom teachers, and other specialists in the school.

17



## What is Distributed Leadership?

---

A distributed view of leadership also recognizes that leading schools requires multiple leaders (Spillane, 2006), though the number involved depends upon routine and subject area. Recent work in more than 100 U.S. schools shows that responsibility for leadership functions typically was distributed among three to seven people, including administrators and specialists (Camburn, Rowan & Taylor, 2003).

18

## What is Distributed Leadership?

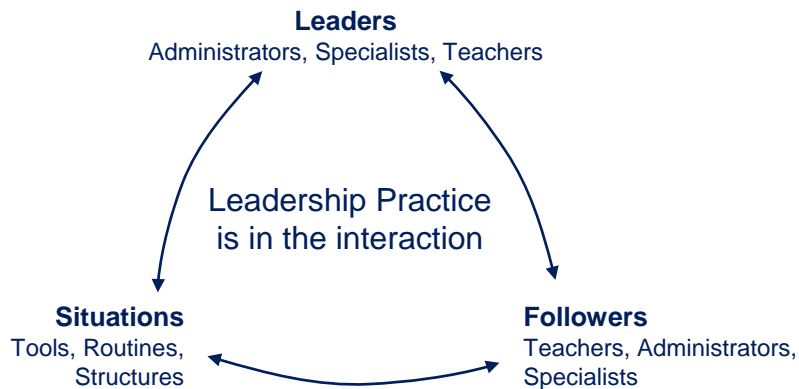
- The Leader-Plus Aspect (who)
  - Focuses on **who** is involved in leadership
  - “Leader-Plus” is short for “Leader-Plus Other Leaders”
- The Leadership Practice Aspect (how)
  - Addresses **how** leadership practice is enacted
  - Critical issue is not whether leadership is distributed but how it is distributed
  - Attention to **interactions**, not just actions.

*Spillane, 2006*

19

## What is Distributed Leadership?

### The Leadership Practice Aspect



20



## What is Distributed Leadership?

---

Leaders not only influence followers but are also influenced by them. Thus, leadership is not simply something that is done to followers; followers in interaction with leaders and the situation contribute to defining leadership practice (Spillane, 2006). The Distributed Leadership Study identified interdependence as the primary characteristic of interactions among leaders.

21



## Design Plan:

---

- Spillane's work at Northwestern University will guide the training and development of distributed teams (3-5 teachers and the principal) in this project.
- All will be comprehensively trained as instructional leadership teams, using modules designed and based on Spillane's work. Many will be adapted from Penn's Mid-Career Doctoral Program, the Aspiring Principal's Program and Academy for Leadership in Philadelphia Schools (ALPS).

22



## Design Plan:

---

Distributed leadership teams will receive training to lead buildings in instructional improvement and student achievement. Some key aspects of this work are:

- Developing a shared vision of informed practice and supplemental training in best practices in instruction.
- Developing professional learning communities (focused on instructional improvement) in each building.
- Developing capacity for analysis and understanding of student work and data.

23