

Instructional Leadership Overview (Core Practices 32-37)

The radical notion of EL Education is that **ALL students, of all backgrounds and social identities, deserve an education that is meaningful, challenging, and joyful**—an education that supports them to build a better world for themselves and others. **School leadership is a dynamic, collaborative effort to create the conditions where this kind of education is not just a dream but a reality for all students.** Two conditions are essential for transformative school improvement: a cohesive school vision and a positive professional culture that promotes high levels of trust and innovation. For this reason, this overview highlights a Cohesive School Vision and Positive Professional Culture as the bookends that support the other leadership core practices: Evidence-Based Strategic Improvement, Shared Leadership, Professional Learning, and Ensuring High-Quality Instruction.

Fostering a Cohesive School Vision

- » Create a vision for teaching and learning that aligns all domains of the school—curriculum, instruction, culture and character, student-engaged assessment, and leadership—to EL Education’s Dimensions of Student Achievement
- » Articulate an explicit and firm commitment to equally high learning outcomes for students of all backgrounds and identities
- » Regularly communicate the vision to all stakeholders (including external partners) and engage them in supporting the vision
- » Align human capital, schedules, and budgets to fulfill the vision

Leading Evidence-Based Strategic Improvement

- » Engage in ongoing strategic improvement based on evidence, analysis, and progress monitoring toward impact on student achievement
 - Use evidence to identify patterns of low achievement and/or inequity and create action plans to address them
 - Establish a clear, consistent, no-blame strategy for using data
- » Develop teachers’ understanding and skills to collect, analyze, and respond to data
- » Manage change by anticipating challenges, listening deeply to the perspectives of all stakeholders, and diagnosing the needs of the staff

Promoting Shared Leadership

- » Establish an Instructional Leadership Team that:
 - Includes representatives of multiple stakeholder groups
 - Leads improvement efforts focused on student achievement
 - Develops, implements, and monitors an evidence-based annual work plan
- » Establish and support teams that drive evidence-based improvement across grade levels, subject areas, or for specific subgroups of students
- » Build the capacity for others to lead and work collaboratively
- » Articulate, share, and follow a clear decision-making model

Leading Professional Learning

- » Champion a culture of adult learning in which all leaders and staff work to improve their practice
- » Connect professional development to work plan goals
- » Develop active, focused, and differentiated learning experiences for all staff
- » Provide frequent descriptive feedback based on focused classroom observations
- » Provide resources, structures, and systems needed for sustained adult learning, including coaching cycles

Ensuring High-Quality Instruction

- » Adopt challenging and engaging curricula and instructional materials
- » Guide teachers to align standards, targets, and assessments on comprehensive curriculum maps
- » Balance support and accountability by providing regular feedback to faculty and facilitating agreements about schoolwide consistencies among staff
- » Create systems and structures to ensure fair, relevant, and timely evaluation of teacher performance

Cultivating a Positive Professional Culture

- » Explicitly commit to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- » Model practices that foster mutual respect, integrity, and trust
- » Establish a growth-oriented culture based on productive, collaborative inquiry
- » Cultivate emotional intelligence through self-awareness, self-management, perspective-taking, and reflection
- » Address conflict productively, professionally, and proactively