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# 13 TEACHERS TEACHING TEACHERS™

FOR A DYNAMIC COMMUNITY OF TEACHER LEADERS

## Meet a useful tool

### THE INNOVATION CONFIGURATION MAP

By Joellen Killion

When the Georgia Staff Development Council and the Georgia Department of Education was developing the statewide Coaches Academy, they wanted a way to communicate clearly to teachers, principals, coaches, and others what coaches' work involved.

Fairfax County (Va.) Public Schools, in its second year of an instructional coaching program to improve student learning, wanted to describe the work of coaches and create a performance evaluation system for coaches.

In NSDC's Coaches Academy, when coaches from across the country learn more about their role in facilitating effective professional learning, they use descriptions of the most effective behaviors.

Each of these groups used NSDC's Innovation Configuration Maps for School-based Staff Developers. The IC maps are a valuable source of information to define, strengthen, assess, and support

the work of teacher leaders serving as school-based staff developers, coaches, or instructional specialists.

Innovation Configuration maps are tools coaches and their supervisors can



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Coach Ginger Grant describes how she overcomes resistance.

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**SCHOOL-BASED STAFF DEVELOPERS**

## Learning Communities

Staff development that improves the learning of all students organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.

<b>DESIRED OUTCOME 1.1:</b> Initiates structures for learning communities that support teacher and student learning.					
LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
Provides information about the roles of team members and meeting protocols to ensure effective use of the time for team meetings. Serves as a skilled facilitator for learning teams. Suggests and provides resources to learning teams to assist them in meeting their goals. Attends team meetings to help members stay focused on goals.	Provides information about the roles of team members and meeting protocols to ensure effective use of time provided for team meetings. Suggests and provides resources to learning teams to assist them in meeting their goals. Attends team meetings to help members stay focused on goals.	Provides information about the roles of team members and meeting protocols to ensure effective use of time provided for team meetings. Attends team meetings to help members stay focused on goals.	Attends team meetings to help members stay focused on goals.	Conducts training on the value of and strategies for collaborative professional learning.	

▲ **Outcomes.** For NSDC’s Learning Communities standard, there are five desired outcomes.

The example here shows the first of those — *Desired Outcome 1.1: Initiates structures for learning communities that support teacher and student learning.*

▲ **Levels.** Variation is a key part of an Innovation Configuration map. Levels 1-6 describe the variations of behaviors related to each outcome.

The ideal variation for Desired Outcome 1.1 is in the column marked Level 1. The least acceptable variations are on the right, typically Levels 4 through 6.

use to clarify or define their work, set personal and professional goals for continuous improvement, assess their performance, and measure their success. Innovation configuration maps are tools that describe specific behaviors clustered around desired outcomes. NSDC offers innovation configurations for each of its 12 standards for staff development for school-based staff developers and 10 other educator roles.

### Background

Beginning in the 1970s and continuing through the 1980s, a team of researchers at the University of Texas at Austin conducted research on change in education. Focusing on its early stages on curriculum implementation and then in other areas, this body of research, led by William Rutherford, Gene Hall, Shirley Hord, and Susan Loucks-Horsley, was known as Concerns-Based Adoption Model, or CBAM for short. Four significant prongs of this research continue to be both practical and influential in education today. Among the four prongs, Stages of Concern, Levels of Use, change facilitators, and innovation configuration maps, the latter two have been less

well known and less frequently used until more recently. This article focuses on Innovation Configuration Maps (ICs) and how they are helpful to coaches.

### Innovation Configuration Maps

ICs are tools that describe what an innovation, something new, looks like in practice, or in behavioral terms. An innovation can be anything new, such as a new classroom management program, instructional program, curriculum program, or attendance monitoring system. When something new is implemented, researchers tell us, variation in its implementation can influence its success. “Studies of implementation of policies, programs, and processes have shown that innovations are typically implemented in a variety of ways,” says Hord (2006). “Just because authorities mandate, experts request, or colleagues agree to adopt innovations does not guarantee fidelity of implementation” (p. 157-158). To reduce variation that might diminish a pro-

**DESIRED OUTCOME 4.4:** Engages teachers in data analysis and interpretation to determine student and teacher needs.

LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5	LEVEL 6
Engages teachers in data analysis and interpretation to determine student and teacher learning needs. Adjusts educational programs and professional learning experiences based on these needs.	Engages teachers in data analysis and interpretation to determine student and teacher learning needs.	Engages teachers in data analysis and interpretation.	Provides teachers with analyzed data.		

gram’s success, program developers found that those responsible for implementing, managing, or supervising a program would benefit if they developed detailed descriptions of the program in action.

Developed to indicate a range of behaviors from ideal to minimal, an IC spells out what a program, practice, or standard looks like in action. An IC has several parts. One part is the program’s desired outcomes. Desired outcomes describe the focus for coaches’ work.

For NSDC’s Learning Communities standard, there are five desired outcomes:

- **Desired Outcome 1.1:** Initiates structures for learning communities that support teacher and student learning (see p. 2).
- **Desired Outcome 1.2:** Aligns the work of learning communities with school improvement goals.
- **Desired Outcome 1.3:** Sustains teacher collaboration during the school day to improve teaching and learning.
- **Desired Outcome 1.4:** Coordinates work among learning teams to assist members in accomplishing their goals.
- **Desired Outcome 1.5:** Participate with other coaches in learning communities, some of whose membership extends beyond the school.

An IC is helpful in a variety of ways.

- The IC helps those responsible for implementing an innovation understand what is expected and allows them to assess their own implementation behaviors.
- The IC creates a clear picture of the next step for refining implementation.

For example, in the sample IC on p. 2, if a coach notes that he is attending team meetings and not taking an active role in helping teams use their time productively, he can use the IC map to help him know various ways he can support teams.

- For those who manage or supervise school-based staff developers, an IC helps them assess learning needs for school-based staff developers.

If a principal notices that team meetings are not focused on student learning, she might recommend to the coach that he take a more active role in the team’s meetings to help members and help the coach gain the expertise to do so.

NSDC developed innovation configuration maps for school-based staff developers’ responsibilities related to NSDC’s 12 standards for staff development. With the support of state department of education and state affiliate representatives in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Virginia and the financial support of Wachovia Foundation’s Teachers and Teaching Initiative, the school-based staff developer ICs delineate the responsibilities of school-based coaches for each standard. For example, coaches can easily see the four desired outcomes related to the Data-Driven standard — Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement:

▲ **Actions.** For each cluster of behaviors, the IC specifies what coaches will do related to each standard.

The ideal school-based coach behaviors for Desired Outcome 4.4 are shown above.

▲ **Blank areas.** Levels 5 and 6 are blank because no other variation is possible for this desired outcome.

**NSDC developed innovation configuration maps for school-based staff developers’ responsibilities related to NSDC’s 12 standards for staff development.**

- **Desired outcome 4.1:** Prepares disaggregated data from multiple sources for teacher use.
- **Desired outcome 4.2:** Teaches data access and organization.
- **Desired outcome 4.3:** Teaches analysis and interpretation of data from multiple sources.
- **Desired outcome 4.4:** Engages teachers in data analysis and interpretation to determine student and teacher needs (see p. 3).

Coaches can use the IC to know how to strengthen or refine their work with colleagues by reading all levels and setting a personal goal for where they want their own practice to be. Supervisors of coaches can use the IC to determine aspects of coaches' work they might want to develop more and provide coaches with targeted skill development in those areas. Coaches and their principals can use the IC for school-based coaches to discuss the expectations for the coach's work. Together, they can study the desired outcomes and determine which are appropriate for the role of a coach in this school.

Coaches also can develop their own ICs for

areas of their work not described in NSDC's school-based coaches IC. For example, if coaches are supporting teachers on a specific science program involving inquiry instruction and the scientific method, coaches might engage teachers in developing an IC that describes each of these. By doing so, teachers gain a deeper understanding about what inquiry and the scientific method are.

Innovation Configuration maps are useful tools that have multiple purposes. Coaches will find them invaluable in their work. Whether for assessment, refinement, clarification, or description of their work, ICs help coaches understand fully their responsibilities and fulfill those responsibilities daily.

**References**

**Hord, S. (2006).** Innovation configurations for school-based staff developers. In Killion, J. & Harrison, C., *Taking the lead: New roles for teacher leaders and school-based coaches*. pp. 157-159. Oxford, OH: NSDC. ♦

**GET THE ICs**  
**IC maps for school-based staff developers are included in *Taking the Lead* (see below) and also available separately on a CD-ROM. Available through [store.nsd.org](http://store.nsd.org).**

by Joellen Killion and Cindy Harrison

# Taking the Lead

## New roles for teachers and school-based coaches



JOELLEN KILLION



CINDY HARRISON

**T**his book explores the complex, multi-faceted roles played by teacher leaders and school-based coaches as well as examining district and school expectations, hiring practices, and deployment of these educators. NSDC, 2006



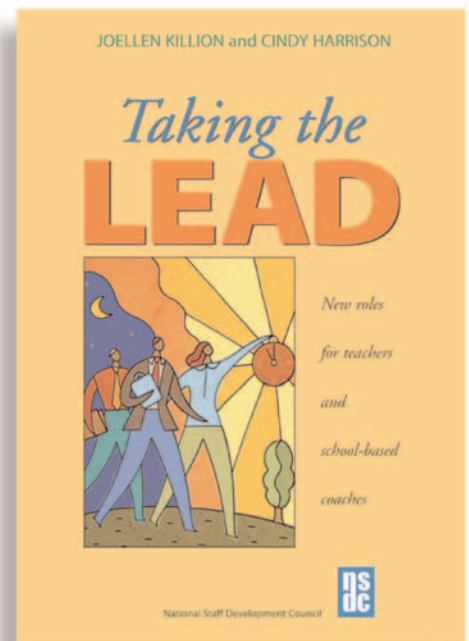
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## 'I look for opportunities to help'

**Q How do you overcome resistance when teachers have been assigned involuntarily to be coached?**

The whole stigma (of my job) is, "Oh, the state lady is coming in," so I really practice servant leadership.

First, I go into the school and observe. I make sure they know, "I'm not here to evaluate you. I'm here to support you." I also do a needs assessment. I ask, "What areas would you like more professional learning in?" That's a powerful piece because many of them say, "Nobody ever took the time to ask us what we needed."

I look for opportunities to actually physically serve them before I do anything like model. There was an instance where a teacher was pulled into an unscheduled meeting with a parent and she had things she needed to copy, but she

couldn't do it. I copied it. Simple things like that — look for opportunities to help them out.

I do walkthroughs every day in every class, so I go and take mental notes of what they're teaching and go back and find resources, whether it's Internet resources or something in my professional library, a book I can lend them. "I'm showing you that I'm here to support you."

After I have modeled a strategy and the teacher is observing me, next we plan for our co-teaching together — what we want the lesson to look like and how we want to divvy it up. And we'll fix it up so it's equal. It's showing them that, "I'm not just throwing it on you. I modeled it. Now we're going to do it together. We're going to make sure it's equal. And then you'll do it, and I'll give you some feedback and observe." And that has truly worked. ♦

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Bill Ferriter is a 6th-grade social studies and language arts teacher at Salem Middle School, Apex, N.C.

# Myth of the instructional leader

Never one to avoid a good row, I raised a few eyebrows in a meeting of administrators when I asked whether the “principal as instructional leader” was just a mythical creature. “Is it really possible for one person to provide instructional leadership to all of the teachers in a building?”

Needless to say, I touched a nerve. “The principal is the instructional leader of EVERY building!” one participant replied defensively. “It’s something we’ve been trained to do. We’re the experts!”

The conversation dwindled (thankfully), but my questions didn’t — and my mind hasn’t stopped thinking about instructional leadership yet!

In the best schools, instructional leadership is continuously changing hands because everyone accepts responsibility for leading. Individual passions become areas of expertise shared through formal and informal work with colleagues. Diversity of leadership allows influential ideas to spread throughout an entire organization. Collective knowledge and growth is valued regardless of its source.

My instructional leaders have always been those with high levels of professional credibility earned by demonstrating excellence as educators. They are the people in a school who everyone turns to for advice on teaching and learning. No topic seems to be beyond their grasp, and the ideas that they present are timely and provocative. Instructional leaders are constantly challenging the thinking of others.

Instructional leaders also have a high degree of personal credibility. They’ve built strong working relationships across grade levels and departments. They are widely visible, teaching model lessons, visiting classrooms, and offering

feedback during planning meetings. Valuing individuals and respecting the viewpoints of others, they seem to draw others in rather than drive them away.

The best instructional leaders aren’t heroic figures relying on appointed positions for prestige. Instead, they transcend their titles, refusing to see levels of authority in an organization and believing that every member of a team should have an equal voice. They encourage others to examine their practice. They provide practical advice and guidance, supporting efforts and stimulating change. Above all, the best instructional leaders engage others in powerful conversations about learning.

Most recently, the teachers of my learning team have served as my instructional leaders. Mike Hutchinson, a social studies expert, has introduced me to a new instructional practice that is highly engaging, incorporating elements from across our curriculum. Before that, Corinna Knight, Emily Swanson, and Marcy Clemmons challenged me to reconsider how I introduced collaborative dialogue in my classroom. Together, we have had lengthy conversations about teaching and learning that have changed the way we work as individuals.

If our schools are to become communities committed to learning, school leaders must shift from functioning as “instructional leaders” to functioning as “leaders of instructional experts.” By tapping into the expertise of their faculties and creating structures for collaboration, they will empower teachers in the truest sense. Individual and organizational growth will multiply exponentially when we realize that each member of a school community has something of value to contribute.

Is this view of instructional leadership possible? ♦



**Join the conversation with Bill by visiting [www.nsd.org/blog/](http://www.nsd.org/blog/) and offering your opinion. Bill posts his provocative ideas frequently — be sure to return often.**



Joellen Killion is deputy executive director of National Staff Development Council.

# Evaluation without trepidation

**S**chool-based coaches and teacher leaders are committed to improvement. They strive in their work to improve teaching and student learning. They work to improve the culture within their schools so that teachers work comfortably together to learn and hone their teaching practices. They seek ways to refine their own practices as coaches and teacher leaders by engaging in ongoing professional development with peers and by reflecting on their own work.

Another way teacher leaders and school-based coaches improve their practice and its results is through evaluation. The term alone sends chills up the spines of many who envision evaluation as a process of finding fault or inadequacies. This fear is most often related to early experiences with teacher evaluation and dredge up memories of administrators visiting classrooms far too infrequently and scrutinizing practice to find shortfalls rather than successes. However, evaluation that is done well is a productive learning process that offers evidence for streamlining and maximizing the potential of improvement efforts. In other words, evaluation improves improvement efforts.

In their role as learning facilitators, teacher leaders and coaches evaluate the professional learning in their school. In this role, teacher leaders coordinate and facilitate professional learning for their peers. For example, a grade-level chair or department chair organizes weekly meetings in which teachers examine student work. These sessions are designed to help teachers use student work as one source of information about the effectiveness of teaching practices. In another situation, coaches engage teachers in lesson study to design a common lesson for a tricky concept.

There are several ways to evaluate learning.

In 1975, Donald Kirkpatrick identified levels

of evaluation related to training, the predominant form of professional learning occurring in businesses and schools then. The levels suggest increased sophistication of the effects of the learning experience.

**Level 1** Participant reaction: Did you like the experience?

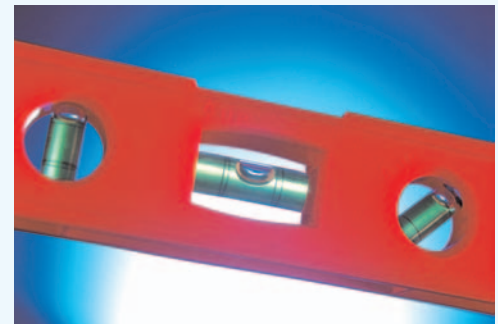
**Level 2** Participant learning: What did you learn?

**Level 3** Participant application: How are you using/Are you using what you learned?

**Level 4** Impact: Are students learning more?

## **EVALUATION**

Staff development that improves the learning of all students uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.



In 1997, Jack Phillips added another effect of training: Return on investment. Was there a positive financial return on the investment in the learning?

In 2000, Thomas Guskey contributed another effect of professional development: Organizational change. How did the organization change?

NSDC's Evaluation standard speaks to the critical importance of evaluation of professional learning and stresses two points.

- First, evaluation uses multiple sources of information.
- Second, evaluation has two purposes: to guide improvements and demonstrate impact.

**For more information about NSDC's Standards for Staff Development, see [www.nsd.org/standards/index.cfm](http://www.nsd.org/standards/index.cfm)**



In evaluating professional learning, teacher leaders collect data from participants both throughout the process and at the end of learning experiences to know if the learning process, such as in the examples above — looking at student work or writing, observing, and revising common lessons — provides opportunities for teachers to learn about how students learn, how to modify instruction to improve student learning, and how instructional practices need to be modified to accommodate various learning styles of students.

In the examples cited, teacher leaders have access to several sources of information about the effectiveness of examining student work and lesson study.

1. The chair might make notes about teachers' participation in the conversations.
2. Chairs might analyze the content of teachers' conversations and note the topics that were addressed.
3. Teachers can share their perceptions about the value of the learning experiences.
4. Teachers can report on how the conversations helped them think differently about their teaching.
5. Teachers can bring examples of student work to the table as evidence of how students responded to the use of particular strategies.
6. In the lesson study, as each teacher teaches the lesson and others observe, the observing teachers can note how students respond to particular teaching strategies and instructional materials or resources.

The data collected provides both the teacher leader and teachers with information for evidence-based decisions about the effectiveness of their collaborative learning experiences.

For example, after an experience with lesson study, teachers may find that they spent insufficient time discussing the complexity of the examples teachers use in the lesson. They might have

discovered that the examples were on the easy end of the scale and that the lesson did not include more challenging ones that would have provided some differentiation for students who mastered the concepts more quickly. These data give them information to improve their next lesson study — including a consideration of the complexity of examples embedded in the lesson and preparing a range of simple to complex examples to use in the lesson.

Collected observation data on how students respond to the lesson, the work students produce during the lesson, and data on how students perform on the next classroom or benchmark assessment that incorporates this concept provide both the teacher leader and teachers evidence to determine the impact of teacher learning and practice on student learning.

Through an evaluation process such as this, teacher leaders can assess the impact of their leadership on teachers as well as on students. This evaluation process can also strengthen the learning experiences they facilitate and demonstrate the impact of their work on both teacher and student learning.

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**In their role as learning facilitators, teacher leaders and coaches evaluate the professional learning in their school.**

*For ideas, visit [www.nsd.org](http://www.nsd.org)*

# Study finds a mouse that roars

WEB-BASED SOFTWARE HOLDS PROMISE FOR THE TEACHING OF WRITING TO THOSE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

By **Carla Thomas McClure**

**R**esults of a quasi-experimental study published in *Learning Disability Quarterly* demonstrate the potential benefits of using appropriate technology to help students with learning disabilities develop their writing. Study participants who received classroom instruction supported by a web-based software program increased the length and quality of their writing and outperformed students who received similar instruction supported by print products.

## Why was the study conducted?

Writing happens at a high cognitive level and requires students to use various skills and processes to create a unique product. When Bloom's Taxonomy was revised in 2001, scholars reversed the order of the two highest levels of cognition, placing "create" higher than "evaluate" (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Results of the 2002 NAEP writing assessment show that many students are not performing well in writing — among those tested in Grades 4, 8, and 12, fewer than a third scored at or above the proficient level.

For students with learning disabilities, the cognitive demand associated with writing can have a negative effect on performance. Organizing and developing ideas in a structured and coherent manner can be especially challenging. Past research has established that effective instructional strategies include direct instruction on expository text structures, provision of organizational frameworks, such as graphic organizers, and the use of procedural facilitators, such as

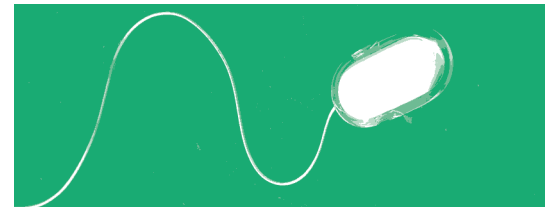
prompts or simple outlines to scaffold the writing experience. Researchers at Michigan State University decided to investigate "the potential of web-based programs to support and scaffold the writing performance of students with disabilities."

## How was the study done?

Participating in the study were 35 students who received writing assistance in six special education classrooms in five urban elementary schools. In the experimental group, 20 students produced

expository papers after instruction supported by TELE-Web software. In the control group, 15 students wrote papers after receiving similar instruction supported by traditional scaffolding that paralleled that offered by the software. Before the experiment, researchers had confirmed that there were no significant differences between the two groups on measures of reading levels and prewriting performance.

Teachers in both groups followed identical instructions and processes. The main difference between the two groups was that the TELE-Web teachers "guided and modeled the process using the TELE-Web software." This software included interactive mapping tools, as opposed to paper-and-pencil concept maps. It allowed students to click and drag details from their maps to an organizer. Also, pop-up prompts, as opposed to oral directions and written reminders in the form of posters, were used to structure the writing process. The TELE-Web group also had access to



## EDVANTIA™

Carla Thomas McClure is a staff writer at Edvantia ([www.edvantia.org](http://www.edvantia.org)), a nonprofit research and development organization that works with federal, state, and local education agencies to improve student achievement.

a spelling checker and a text-to-speech function that enabled the computer to “read aloud” what the student had written.

Students’ final products were typed, and each product was scored by two trained raters on six primary writing traits related to organization and development. On each trait, the writing was rated as underdeveloped, emerging, developing, or proficient. Students’ use of writing conventions, such as spelling and punctuation, were also rated.

#### What were the results?

Students who used the web-based software to plan and organize their ideas produced longer, more coherent pieces than students who used paper-and-pencil tools, and their writing received significantly higher ratings on the primary traits associated with writing quality.

#### Why did the software make such a difference?

Students with learning disabilities often have difficulty recognizing text structures, remembering instructions, and applying strategies. The software used in this study “seemed to allow students to offload some of the strategic requirements of the writing process onto the machine”

and acted as “a cognitive anchor or training wheels” that helped students follow the pattern of expository writing.

#### Can good software replace good teaching?

No. “It is important to realize that TELE-Web did not teach,” say the researchers. Rather, it supplemented effective instruction. The research team also cautions that such aids must match the developmental needs of individual students. For example, instructional scaffolds or technologies may constrain rather than help students who are already familiar with text structures.

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#### Teachers Teaching

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# How to develop a shared vision

One of the key concepts undergirding the creation of a shared vision is that a mental picture is created that describes what the change would look like when fully implemented. The Innovation Configuration maps can be used to help every role group in the district see what they would be doing when implementing one of the standards. The following activity can be used to accomplish that goal.

**PURPOSE:** To develop a shared vision about the implementation of one of NSDC’s Standards for Staff Development

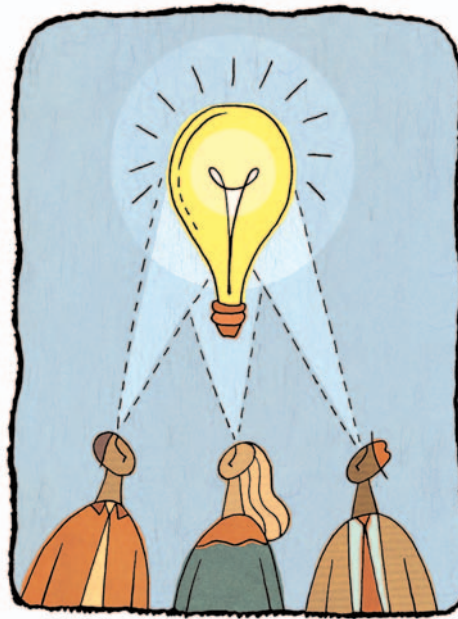
**GROUP SIZE:** 4-5 people

**TIME:** 50-60 minutes

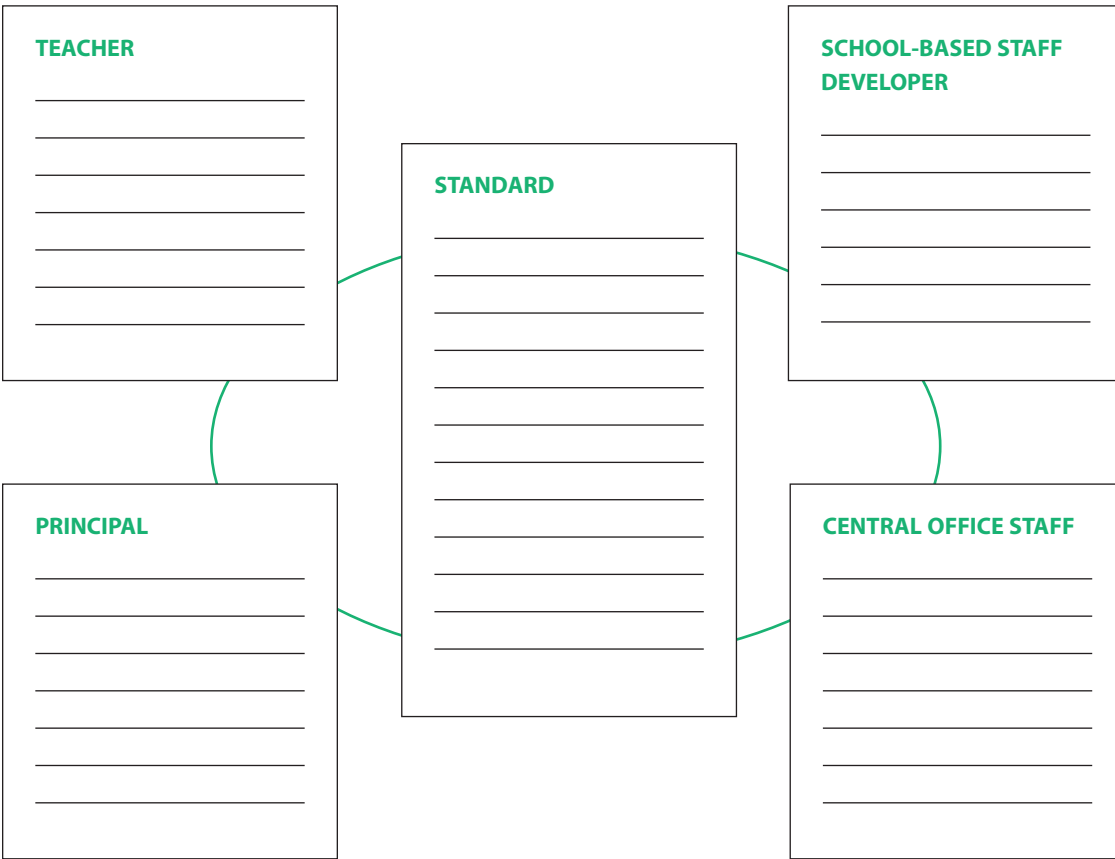
**MATERIALS:** Copies of the IC maps for each of the role groups for one standard (group decides which standard to work on), rationale for the selected standard

## DIRECTIONS

1. Each group selects one of the 12 staff development standards to learn more about.
2. Group members divide and read the IC maps for all of the role groups as well as the rationale for the selected standard.
3. Divide the readings among group members.  
For example:
  - a) Person 1 reads the Teacher IC map — Learning Communities
  - b) Person 2 reads the School-Based Staff Developer IC map — Learning Communities
  - c) Person 3 reads the Principal IC map — Learning Communities
  - d) Person 4 reads the Central Office Staff IC map — Learning Communities
  - e) Person 5 reads the Rationale — Learning Communities
4. Each person reads the Desired Outcome statements and Level 1 variation and prepares to explain the tasks and responsibilities required of this role group.
5. Share the information within the group. Each person can use the following page for notes on what he or she has heard.



This tool can help a group develop a shared vision about the implementation of one of NSDC’s Standards for Staff Development.



**RATIONALE:**

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Each person can use this page for notes on what he or she has heard.