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REFERENCES

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- Hord, S., Rutherford, W., Huling, L., & Hall, G. (2006).** *Taking charge of change*. Austin, TX: SEDL.
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Navigate the fluctuating undercurrents of change

Why would I intentionally ask teachers about their concerns? I hear enough of them as it is! I overheard a district administrator make this comment recently as I worked with central office staff in Arkansas. The statement summed up what many others think when first exposed to the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) developed by a team of researchers at Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (Hall & Hord, 2005). But the concerns this administrator was used to are **not** the same kind focused on in CBAM.

CBAM resulted from exploring how teachers responded when new innovations were introduced and defines concerns as each individual's feelings and perceptions about the use of an innovation. In their study and research, Hord and Hall found patterns of concerns and identified strategies to address the needs expressed, resolve issues inherent in each stage, and support educators in taking the next step in implementing new classroom strategies.

Hord and Hall describe seven stages of concern. The first three stages focus on *self* concerns — describing how the new practice impacts the individual. The second category of concerns focuses on managing new classroom processes or procedures — on the how-to's, as well as efficiency and productivity. The last set of concerns focuses on the impact or results for students and colleagues.

Many teachers, when asked about using a specific instructional practice such as differentiated instruction or about participating in learning teams, comment that there is not enough time to accomplish everything that the new practice requires. Using CBAM as a lens, this comment would be classified as a *management* concern. Management focuses on the processes and procedures involved

in implementing an innovation. Educators' primary concern at this stage is time demands.

CBAM also lists possible interventions to resolve the major issues inherent in each stage. For example, interventions for the management stage include:

- Clarify the steps and components of the innovation. Information from an innovation configuration will be helpful here to describe steps and components.
- Provide answers that address the small, specific “how-to” issues that cause management concerns.
 - Demonstrate exact and practical solutions to the logistical problems that contribute to concerns.
 - Help teachers sequence specific activities and set timelines for accomplishing these activities.
 - Attend to the immediate demands of the innovation, not what could be in the future. (Hord, Rutherford, Huling, & Hall, 2006, p. 45).

CBAM is a tool that central office staff can **use to identify teacher feelings and concerns as one of several factors when designing professional learning experiences** (Roy & Hord, 2003, p. 145). Learning to use CBAM helps central office staff learn to constructively **solicit teacher and administrator feelings and concerns about implementing new practices and learn to design staff development to address and resolve those concerns**. Resolving implementation issues supports teachers in their use of new practices. A single professional development event, no matter how well designed and executed, is not sufficient to cause a majority of staff to change their daily practices immediately or effectively. Change takes time; CBAM can help central office staff navigate the fluctuating undercurrents of change and support educators in using new practices.

Learning: Staff development that improves the learning of all students applies knowledge about human learning and change.