

Unit 5, Activity 5: Reflect

Purpose	To reflect individually and in a group about the practices and conditions necessary for managing people, data, and processes. Finally, to apply the management of people, data, and processes in a culminating planning activity that incorporates all five effective school leadership practices.
Time	165 minutes
Required roles	Participants; facilitator

Individual consideration

Approximate time: 15 minutes

Independently, reflect on the research you have read, the clips viewed, and the group discussions you have had about managing people, data, and processes.

1. In particular, review the practices and questions in the chart on the following page.
2. Individually take notes for each practice on the chart on page 2. Complete the chart as a first step toward developing a plan to implement the principal leadership practices at your school.

Group reflection

Approximate time: 50 minutes

After participants have finished reading and taking notes, the facilitator will organize them into small groups. Each participant contributes notes about a practice of his or her choice. Depending on the size of the groups, each group will work through as many of the five principal leadership practices as possible. Collectively, the groups should be able to complete all five practices.

After the groups have completed their practices, the facilitator will focus participants on a single practice at a time, allowing all members an opportunity to respond before moving to the next practice. Using the chart on page 2, enter and modify notes as others share.

School principal leadership practices	How does this practice affect student learning? What needs to change?	How does this practice affect teacher practice? What needs to change?	What data do we need to explain what we see? To monitor progress?	What processes and structures will support this practice?
Shaping a vision of academic success for all students				
Creating a climate hospitable to education				
Cultivating leadership in others				
Improving instruction				
Managing people, data and processes				

In this culminating activity participants will apply the practice of managing people, data, and processes to the development of a plan. The facilitator will organize participants to work on this exercise individually or in small groups. An ideal group configuration would include members from the same school. Reviewing the results of the preceding exercise on pages 1–2, participants will begin to outline a plan for implementing the five principal leadership practices to lead the improvement of teaching and learning at their respective schools.

Shaping a vision of academic success for all students

1. First, consider the following:

Researchers agree that effective principals are responsible for establishing a schoolwide vision of commitment to high standards and the success of all students.

a) Do the leadership, staff, students, and members of the broader school community share a vision of academic success for every student? Are they working toward clear goals focused on student learning?

b) Is there a culture of learning, cultural responsiveness, and high expectations for every student and adult?

2. Does something need to change?

a) If so, what will be the goals to bring about that change?

b) What will be objectives to meet those goals?

3. What evidence do we need to explain what we see? What data will help monitor change?

4. What processes (e.g. planning, implementing, supporting, monitoring), resources (e.g. time, funding, space, expertise), and systems (e.g. data systems, professional learning systems, continuous improvement cycle), do we need in place to facilitate this practice?

5. What will be your first steps when you return to the school?

Creating a climate hospitable to education

1. First, consider the following:

Research suggests effective principals ensure that adults and children can focus on learning every day.

a) Is the school environment a “healthy environment”? That is, is it safe, orderly, and managed so that adults and youngsters can “put learning at the center of their daily activities?” (*The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning*, 8, The Wallace Foundation, 2013.)

b) Do the faculty and staff feel that they are colleagues working together to strengthen instructional practices? Do they collaborate to collect and analyze student data to examine instructional practices and refine them to address students’ learning needs? How do they engage family members and other members of the broader school community to develop relationships that will have a positive impact on student learning?

c) As principal, how do you create and maintain a results-focused learning environment of continuous improvement for students and adults? Does the environment respond to students’ needs and to the diversity among students?

d) As principal, how do you create supportive working environments that give teachers time and space for professional learning opportunities such as collaborative inquiry or professional learning communities?

2. Does something need to change?

a) If so, what will be the goals to bring about that change?

b) What will be objectives to meet those goals?

3. What evidence do we need to explain what we see? What data will help monitor change?

4. What processes (e.g. planning, implementing, supporting, monitoring), resources (e.g. time, funding, space, expertise), and systems (e.g. data systems, professional learning systems, continuous improvement cycle), do we need in place to facilitate this practice?

5. What will be your first steps when you return to the school?

Cultivating leadership in others

1. First, consider the following:

Research tells us that when principals share leadership, workplace settings and relationships improve and student achievement increases.

a) Does the principal, with other school leaders, exhibit a commitment to shared leadership within the school?

b) As principals how do you reconsider the roles of various faculty and staff members, such as lead teachers, coaches, or department chairpersons, so that can make meaningful contribution to the instructional leadership at the school?

c) As principal, how do you encourage and build leadership within and among other members of the faculty and staff?

2. Does something need to change?

a) If so, what will be the goals to bring about that change?

b) What will be objectives to meet those goals?

3. What evidence do we need to explain what we see? What data will help monitor change?

4. What processes (e.g. planning, implementing, supporting, monitoring), resources (e.g. time, funding, space, expertise), and systems (e.g. data systems, professional learning systems, continuous improvement cycle), do we need in place to facilitate this practice?

5. What will be your first steps when you return to the school?

Improving instruction

1. First, consider the following:

We know from research that learning-focused principals help teachers improve their practice directly or with the aid of other school leaders such as department chairpersons.

a) Do you insist that other school leaders use a research-based instructional framework of observation, inquiry, and individual and shared professional learning to continually improve instructional practices?

b) Do the school leadership and faculty collect student data and other evidence to examine and improve teaching and leadership practices?

c) Do the school leadership and faculty collect data on student learning and use it to provide teachers with timely feedback?

d) As principal, how do you engage other faculty and staff members (e.g. lead teachers, department chairpersons) in meaningful roles to help observe teacher practices and provide timely feedback?

2. Does something need to change?

a) If so, what will be the goals to bring about that change?

b) What will be objectives to meet those goals?

3. What evidence do we need to explain what we see? What data will help monitor change?

4. What processes (e.g. planning, implementing, supporting, monitoring), resources (e.g. time, funding, space, expertise), and systems (e.g. data systems, professional learning systems, continuous improvement cycle), do we need in place to facilitate this practice?

5. What will be your first steps when you return to the school?

Managing people, data, and processes

1. First, consider the following:

Researchers who studied effective principals found they are prudent managers who make the most of their resources, including data, expertise, facilities, technology, and time.

a) Does the school leadership recruit, hire, induct, retain, and support qualified staff? Do they provide for development, career progression?

b) Do school leaders use expertise, financial resources, facilities, partnership, time, and technologies fairly and creatively to accomplish goals focused on strong teaching and learning?

c) Does school leadership use data to make fair and reasoned decisions about resource allocation?

d) As principal, how do you establish and follow critical processes such as planning and implementing, monitoring, supporting, advocating, and communicating in fulfilling all leadership and instructional responsibilities?

2. Does something need to change?

a) If so, what will be the goals to bring about that change?

b) What will be objectives to meet those goals?

3. What evidence do we need to explain what we see? What data will help monitor change?

4. What processes (e.g. planning, implementing, supporting, monitoring), resources (e.g. time, funding, space, expertise), and systems (e.g. data systems, professional learning systems, continuous improvement cycle), do we need in place to facilitate this practice?

5. What will be your first steps when you return to the school?