

TEAM Lead and Partners To Lead Projects

What is the purpose of the TEAM Lead and Partners To Lead Projects?

The purpose of the two projects is to increase principal effectiveness in order to increase student achievement. Regardless of school type or location, the project aims to:

- Increase principal time spent on instruction improvement efforts;
- Improve instructional quality by engaging teachers in an on-going process focused on problems of practice; and
- Positively impact student learning, particularly with high-need students

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Both projects are funded by grants from the US Department of Education.

- **TEAM Lead** is a \$12.5M *Supporting Effective Educator Development* (SEED) grant involving a total of 99 schools.
- **Partners To Lead** is a \$4M *Education, Innovation and Research* (EIR) grant that is supplemented by grants from the Tracy Family Foundation and the Steans Family Foundation, and involves 56 schools

It is anticipated that both grants will run from FY18-FY22.

- **Partners To Lead** project was awarded a 5-year grant (2017-2022)
- **TEAM Lead** project was awarded a 3-year grant (2017-2020) with the potential for two additional years (2020-2022), based on performance and appropriation.

What is the commitment needed from the district?

The projects offer free principal professional development services to individuals selected to participate in the program. The projects also offer a unique opportunity to contribute to a national principal professional development impact study.

Districts, schools, and principals must voluntarily agree to join the project. In exchange, districts involved in the projects agree to:

- Publicly support the project and work with project staff to ensure fidelity of implementation in participating schools;
- Send district-level representatives to quarterly project meetings designed to increase understanding of the project's component parts (i.e. SAMs process, Leadership Framework, Cycles of Inquiry, etc.) and provide feedback on project progress;
- Administer the 5 Essentials School Climate and Culture Survey annually to all participating and comparison schools in the district;
- Do not intentionally move a principal from one school to another in the district during the life of the grant;
- Support non-evaluative classroom and other observations that may be conducted in your schools by the project's external evaluation team at American Institutes for Research (AIR);
- Discourage principals from sharing ideas, materials, or approaches pertaining to TEAM Lead or Partners to Lead with other principals; and,
- Protect principals' time to participate in the TEAM Lead or Partners to Lead program by avoiding scheduling meetings or other activities at professional learning times.

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What is the commitment needed from the school?

Some principals will be randomly selected to join the professional development program. Other principals and their schools will be randomly assigned to the comparison group, which will not receive the professional development.

All principals involved in the project, regardless of whether or not they are in the professional development are committing to:

- Administer the 5 Essentials School Climate and Culture Survey annually;
- Support non-evaluative classroom and other observations that may be conducted by the project's external evaluators at AIR;
- Complete a short, annual survey about professional development experiences; and,
- Avoid sharing ideas, materials, or approaches pertaining to TEAM Lead or Partners to Lead with other principals.

Principals in the professional development program will also:

- Publicly support the project and work with project staff to ensure fidelity of implementation within their building;
- Begin by gaining the support of staff, teachers, students and the broader community for the project through its common goals of improving teaching and learning
- Fully participate in all on-going professional development and coaching support provided by the project partners (e.g. SAMs, Cycles of Inquiry, Distributed Leadership, etc.) and funded by the project;
- Commit to increasing time for instructional leadership;
- Attend monthly principal network and training sessions hosted by the ROE and project partners, and provide feedback on progress with implementation;
- Participate in monthly time-track and leadership coaching sessions held at times convenient to you and completed in your school building;
- Develop and utilize a strong Instructional Leadership Team/Professional Learning Team in your school focused exclusively on improving teaching and learning;
- Facilitate monthly Instructional Leadership Team/Professional Learning Team meetings utilizing strategies, protocols, and/or tools provided by the project;
- Support the development and implementation of strong distributed leadership practices in your school;
- Create organizational conditions in your school that allow for twice monthly teacher team meetings focused on instructional improvements;
- Participate in make-up sessions offered, should professional development sessions be missed for some reason.

What is the commitment needed from the principal?

The **SAM process** consists of the following:

1. Willingness to commit to increasing time for instructional leadership.
2. Baseline Time/Task Analysis™ Data Collection. For 3 days, data collectors shadow the principals and record at various intervals how the principal spends their time (e.g. coding tasks as management, instructional, personal, etc.)
3. Engagement with a SAM. Daily, the School Administration Manager (SAM) meets with the principal to help the principal shift managerial duties to others and spend more time on instructional matters. The SAM is an existing staff member in the school (e.g. school secretary, assistant principal, teacher) with whom the principal

- has a good relationship.
4. External coaching. Monthly the principal and SAM also meet with a Time Change Coach to discuss progress and challenges and identify training needs with the principal/SAM team.
 5. Follow-up Time/Task Analysis Data Collection: annually, Time/Task Analysis data is collected and compared to the previous year's data to assess impact.

The **Leadership Framework** consists of the following:

- 1) Training in Cycles of Inquiry: 6 two-hour+ sessions delivered over the course of 9 months and aimed at increasing the principal's ability to conduct cycles and engage teacher teams in instructional improvement efforts.
- 2) Participation in monthly one-on-one coaching sessions that will be held in the principal's school at a time scheduled by the principal. The sessions will be focused on supporting the principal's efforts in leading the implementation of the organizational systems and cycles work within the school structure
- 3) Facilitating monthly Instructional Leadership Team meetings engaging teachers on efforts focused exclusively on instructional problems of practice.
- 4) Developing internal conditions and supports for twice weekly teacher team meetings facilitated by ILT/PLT members.
- 5) Developing a system to directly link teacher instructional improvement efforts to the school improvement plan
- 6) Routinely collect and review a wide variety of school, grade, and classroom data.

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How were the schools chosen to participate in the grant?

The schools were chosen to participate in this grant based on a randomly selected sample of schools in the ROE region. These two grants programs prioritize rural and high need schools, so schools that fit both of those two categories were given priority when our external evaluators at AIR selected the sample. The US Department of Education prioritized rural schools with these projects because they are disproportionately under-represented in national grant competitions. Due to geographic isolation, rural schools often do not have access to the kind of in-depth and job-embedded services and supports that will be offered through the *TEAM Lead* and *Partners To Lead* projects.

What does it mean to be selected as a comparison school? For every school selected to participate in the project, two comparison schools were selected. Outcomes in participating schools will be compared to schools with similar populations that do not participate. Selected and comparison schools were matched on the following characteristics:

- o PARCC ELA and math proficiency rates
- o % low income
- o % LEP
- o % with IEP
- o % non-white
- o Rural status
- o Enrollment

Comparison schools selected will receive a small annual stipend that can be used to support their school improvement efforts. However, they will not receive project-specific professional development or coaching support provided by the *Team Lead* and *Partners to Lead* projects.

It is important that comparison schools commit to participating in the project evaluation,

even if not selected for the intervention. There currently exists very little research on school leadership (particularly in rural areas), nor on the impact professional development has on school principals. These grants are designed to produce two qualifying studies that will meet evidence-based standards required by ESSA for use of Title I and Title 2 dollars, allowing those funds to be used for similar supports after the grant is completed.

What are the expectations (time, meetings, reflections, etc.) of the district?

The project expects that district representatives will participate in a limited number of project activities and provides the following:

- A district representative will be invited to participate on a regional project advisory committee aimed at ensuring the project meets the needs of the schools involved (quarterly, 2-4 hour each meeting);
- District representative(s) will be invited to participate in project meetings designed to build the capacity of the district to support participating schools (2-4 per year, 2-4 hours each meeting)
- District representatives will provide the project directors and/or external evaluators with financial reports and/or data necessary to complete project reports to the US Department of Education (two times per year)
- The District will enter into a contract with the ROE to distribute funds to schools for local project activities, and will provide appropriate documentation of expenditures with invoices for actual expenses.

What are the expectations of the school?

Although these projects began in FY18, the expectation is not that all schools and principals will immediately have all the organizational systems in place by a specific date. We will work with district officials and principals over time and at their own pace to build the capacity of the school's leadership team to implement the model. The projects were built with an understanding of the personalized learning needs of those working in schools. For that reason, the majority of the supports provided will be offered on-site in a one-on-one or small group setting.

Our hope is to begin offering training and supports in January to selected schools. Between January and September 2018, participating principals will take part in the following activities:

- 8 professional development events, totaling 22 hours of training, provided at the ROE (Jan – Sept)
- 6 (or more) on-site one-on-one coaching sessions, totaling a minimum of 12 hours at each school (Feb-Sept)
- 5 principal network meetings at the ROE to promote a regional professional learning community for principals (2 hours each)
- 3 days of on-site time track data collectors shadowing the principal

Therefore, over the span of 9 months only 32 hours total will be spent at off-site trainings and/or meetings. But a minimum of 116 hours will be provided on-site, through one-on-one and small group coaching within the specific school context.

AIR is the external evaluator for the projects. School-level activities pertaining to the study include:

1. Coordination of 5 Essentials Survey implementation annually.
2. Completion of the 5 Essentials Survey with a 75% or better teacher response rate on an annual basis.
3. Coordination of non-evaluative and anonymous classroom observations for a random selection of English language arts and mathematics classes (for TEAM Lead only)

Both the **TEAM Lead** and **Partners To Lead** projects involve the participation of partnering principals in:

- on-going professional development and coaching
- implementation of time utilization and distributed leadership system (**SAM process**)
- engaging teachers in focused instructional improvement efforts (**Cycles of Inquiry**)

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The projects assist school leaders with utilizing existing school structures and establishing on-going routines and processes designed to institutionalize effective practices and support a professional community with collective responsibility for student learning.

AIR is the external evaluator for the projects. School-level activities pertaining to the study include:

1. Completion of end-of-session and annual surveys about professional development experiences;
2. Possible completion of a 1-hour interview by AIR staff during the academic year;
3. Review and analysis of Time Track data submitted by the principal and analyzed by AIR; and,
4. Occasional observation of professional development activities.

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What are the benefits of this project?

Benefits to the District - The projects are designed to provide supports, not pile on more work. The benefits to the districts that participate include:

- The ROEs will coordinate the scheduling and logistics of the training, support and participation of schools in the project –in consultation with district officials.
 - *These projects should complement what districts are doing, not compete for time or complicate existing systems of support.*
- The ROE will be responsible for developing or strengthening the partnership and collaboration with your local university.
 - *Through the project, more districts will be able to develop or strengthen a partnership with their local university, ensuring faculty have a better understanding of the needs of a variety of districts within their area. That new understanding will be reflected in their programs, making the programs more relevant and responsive to your local context and needs. Further, these new or stronger partnerships can result in the identification of new placement sites for candidates in preparation programs.*
- The ROE will establish a local leadership network for participating District and School leaders in your area.
 - *The idea is to reduce the isolation felt by many principals and district leaders by creating a local, multi-district professional learning community.*
- The ROE will work with program staff to align training with IAA credit offerings, whenever possible.
- The ROE will work with local districts to build an accurate forecast of local supply and demand and to build a strong regional pipeline of school leaders that can be accessed by districts to fill vacancies.

Benefit to the School - We realize that school leaders are being asked to do more and more. Therefore, this project is not going to require some big new initiative that supersedes all the other work going on in schools. Rather, the project is designed to help principals capitalize on existing common structures and processes and make them more effective and efficient.

There are significant resources that will be provided to support this work, including:

- The cost of training will be provided by the grant. On-going training will be providing by local and national experts on SAM and Cycles of Inquiry as well as other differentiated PD opportunities based on local need;
- The cost of on-going coaching support will be covered by the grant and will be provided by university faculty that will be extensively trained in SAM and Cycles of Inquiry;
- ROEs will develop professional learning communities for school leaders in their area that provide on-going support and give participants exposure to practices in other schools and districts;
- Funds will be provided to each participating school to be used to engage teachers on ILTs and/or support SAM efforts;
- Training, tools, protocols and other resources will be provided to districts, principals, and/or ILTs to help facilitate the instructional improvement work; and
- Registration and travel stipends will be provided by the grant for participating schools to attend the National SAM Conference.

What resources are available to schools selected to participate?

Annually, the project will invest the following resources in each of the participating schools:

- Roughly \$20,000 per principal will be provided by the project for SAMs & Cycles of Inquiry training; one-on-one/on-site leadership coaching support; and differentiated professional development as needed.
- \$5,000 per participating school to provide release time or incentives to teacher leaders engaged in instructional improvement work
- \$1,000 training stipends for each participating principal and SAM to attend the NSIP annual national conference, designed to cover the cost of travel.
- On-going regional professional learning community meetings of participating principals, facilitated by project partners from the ROE, university partner, and/or professional development provider.
- Optional differentiated PD offerings (IAA credits when available).

What is the timeline for the project?

See complementary timeline

How do I find out more about the projects?

The following link (<https://education.illinoisstate.edu/csep/centerinitiatives/leadership.php>) includes four 10-minute pre-recorded webinars on the following topics:

- Project Overview
- Leadership Framework
- SAM Process

- Cycles of Inquiry

Who do I contact about the projects?

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What is SAM? SAM is a professional development process using a unique set of tools to change a principal's focus from school management tasks to instructional leadership—activities directly connected to improving teaching and learning. Over 900 school leaders in twenty-two states contract for SAM services.

Does it work? Yes. Independent and external research has determined that principals gain the equivalent of 27 extra days of instructional leadership time in their first year using the SAM process. (PSA, 2011) By the third year the gain of instructional leadership time exceeds 55 days. The process is designed to help the principal be reflective about how to best work with teachers to improve teaching and learning.

How do you know how a principal spends time? The SAM process uses a unique data collection process called Time/Task Analysis™ to determine how much instructional, management and personal time a principal uses. The principal is “shadowed” for five days with data collected every five minutes. This creates a time use baseline. The principal then uses TimeTrack™ to begin increasing instructional time each day. The shadowing is repeated annually as an external check on progress.

What is a SAM? A SAM is a person or team of staff members who meet with the principal each day to schedule instructional leadership time, reflect on impact and develop a First Responder™ structure in the school. Some schools elect to hire a new staff member for this role. Many use existing staff, usually a secretary, principal or teacher leader. Most schools use a team approach, for example: a secretary and assistant principal. *SAM: School Administration Manager*

First Responders™? The life of most school leaders is interrupt driven. The SAM process identifies staff members who should be the first to try to deal with management issues instead of immediately pulling the principal from instructional work. The SAM team works to create management systems within the school to manage the management so the principal can stay engaged in activities designed to improve teaching and learning. NSIP surveys of parents, students and staff at

SAM schools reveal that the management is better accomplished when the First Responders™ system is in place and the principal increases instructional engagement.

What is *TimeTrack*®? TimeTrack is a cloud based calendar that the principal uses like a lesson plan. The calendar tracks the time the principal spends with individual and groups of teachers and provides specific detail of the interactions. TimeTrack records and charts are used in a daily meeting with the principal and SAM team to determine next steps and track time use.

How was the SAM process created? The Wallace Foundation funded the initial work. Mark Shellinger, a former teacher, principal and superintendent, created the process and tools. The initial pilot showed promising results and a positive correlation with student achievement. The Foundation supported replication, development and research for nine years. Mark now directs the National SAM Innovation Project (NSIP), a non-profit corporation providing SAM implementation and support services for more than 900 school leaders in twenty-two states on a fee for service basis.

Is the SAM process expensive? No. NSIP contracts with districts and schools at an annual rate, or fee, that usually declines each year as capacity is developed locally. SAM is not a program. It is a professional development process a principal uses to do the good work the school and district has determined will best help students. The first year fee for a school is \$12,900 and includes services for the principal, assistant principals and SAM team members. This fee can decrease by up to 30% each year as capacity is developed at the school and district level.

What services are included? NSIP starts with a readiness training workshop for the principal and SAM team. Once the school community and principal have completed the readiness steps, Time/Task Analysis™, or shadowing, is conducted for one week. NSIP then provides two weeks of on-site training and support to implement TimeTrack, the daily meeting and First Responders. NSIP continues this support with monthly visits by a Time Change Coach and professional development support. The annual service fee also covers all expenses for the SAM team, except airfare, to attend the NSIP annual national conference.

How can my school or district begin the SAM process? Start with a visit to the NSIP website, www.SamsConnect.com Then, view video interviews with SAM principals and teams and take a look at the research reports. Click on the **Contact Us** link to schedule an implementation planning session.



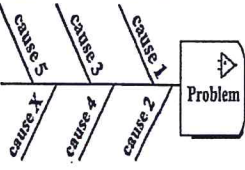




Leadership Framework

The Leadership Framework is a set of organizational routines designed to institutionalize effective practices for engaging and collaborating with teachers on instructional improvement. The framework includes the following school-based activities:

- Monthly meetings with principal and LEAD Coach
- Monthly Instructional Leadership Team/Professional Learning Team meetings
- Twice monthly grade-level or content area teacher team meetings
- On-going and differentiated professional development
- Multiple feedback loops to inform the school's continuous improvement process
- Technical assistance provided to District Leaders, Principals, and/or school-based teams, on an as needed basis.

Cycles of Inquiry

The Cycles of Inquiry process capitalizes on roles traditionally found in schools (e.g. principals, assistant principals, teachers, etc.) and utilizes common structures or elements (e.g. professional learning teams, teacher teams, school improvement plan, etc.). It provides tools, routines, and practices that increase both efficiency and effectiveness. It is a five-step action/analysis process, that can be continuously refined to address the needs of the specific school, grade level, content area, or classroom.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
				
Diagnose student learning problems and various root causes through exploration of a wide variety of data – including instructional data.	Engage all teachers in developing instructional response(s) that address(es) the root causes of the identified student learning problem(s)	Define success for the strategies selected to address the student learning problem, ensuring both process and outcome goal(s) are included.	Enact a plan that includes on-going feedback loops and monitor progress toward both process and outcome goal(s)	Make corrections, as needed, to the strategy /strategies applied and/or the process used to achieve the goal(s).

Connection Between the Leadership Framework and Cycles of Inquiry

The project is a change process whereby the Leadership Framework provides the platform from which the Cycles of Inquiry approach is applied by leadership and teacher teams to focus their efforts on diagnosing student learning problems and improving instructional practice and student outcomes.