

# 2024 Professional Learning Roadmap



# CONTENTS

LETTER FROM SUPERINTENDENT BRUMLEY .....	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	3
School System Level ILT .....	3
School Level ILT.....	3
Teacher Collaboration.....	3
OVERVIEW .....	4
Vision and Purpose.....	4
<b>Louisiana's Educational Priorities</b> .....	4
Using the Roadmap.....	5
SYSTEM AND SCHOOL-LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING .....	6
Setting Instructional Goals .....	6
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS .....	9
Defining Instructional Leadership Teams.....	9
Understanding the Need for High-Quality ILTs.....	9
Implementing High-quality Instructional Leadership Teams.....	9
School System Level Instructional Leadership Teams.....	10
Steps for Success .....	10
School Level Instructional Leadership Teams .....	11
The Instructional Leadership Team's Role in Evaluations & Observations Using the Louisiana Educator Rubric (LER).....	11
TEACHER COLLABORATION.....	13
Understanding the Need for High-Quality Teacher Collaboration.....	13
Implementing High-quality Teacher Collaboration (TC) .....	13
Steps for Success .....	14
CALL TO ACTION .....	14
APPENDIX A: Instructional Leadership Team – Planning Before Implementation	
Guiding Questions.....	15
APPENDIX B: Instructional Leadership Team – Developing the ILT Long-range Plan	
Guiding Questions.....	17
APPENDIX C: Instructional Leadership Team – Planning for Each Meeting Guiding Questions.....	19
APPENDIX D: Teacher Collaboration Planning – Before Implementation Guiding Questions.....	21
APPENDIX E: Teacher Collaboration – Developing a TC Long-range Plan.....	23
APPENDIX F: Teacher Collaboration – Planning for Each TC Meeting.....	25
APPENDIX G: Stages and Aligned Support Actions for Instructional Leadership Teams and Teacher Collaboration.....	27
APPENDIX H: School System ILT Long Range Plan Template .....	28
APPENDIX I: LEADS Guidance .....	29
Guidance for School Leaders.....	29
Guidance for System Leaders .....	29

# LETTER FROM SUPERINTENDENT BRUMLEY

Dear Colleagues,

Teachers enter the classroom to make a positive impact on children. Improving student outcomes is more than simply the goal of educators, it's at the heart of why we do this work. Being an effective teacher is a difficult job. Louisiana's Professional Learning Roadmap was developed to identify a clear path for educators as they grow in their craft.

Whether you are a teacher, principal, or district administrator, this guide walks you through what high-quality professional learning looks like and the process to build this environment. This anchor document also sets a common language and consistent practices for collaborative professional learning across all Louisiana school systems.

I've been fortunate to serve the families of our state as a teacher, coach, principal, district administrator, and system leader. My experiences in all of those roles taught me that the most effective professional learning is peer-to-peer. Iron sharpens iron. Educators learn best from each other. Whether it's through instructional leadership team meetings or teacher collaboration, I've seen this strategy accelerate the growth of students and educators.

Louisiana PK-12 education has made remarkable progress since 2020. We've achieved our highest rankings ever on the Nation's Report Card and U.S. News & World Report. This wouldn't have happened without educators working together and committing to these structures. To move to that next level of success, we must maintain that mindset of collaboration and continuous improvement.

Although we are pleased with this progress, we know there is still much work to be done. We are excited to launch the new Louisiana Evaluation System. This improved system is named LEADS: Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System very intentionally. This name is consistent with the vision for the evaluation system as a key component of professional learning, which is focused on the growth and development of educators to ultimately grow students.

Collaboration was also key in the development of this roadmap. We partnered with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) to ensure every resource, sample plan, and guiding question meets our high-quality standards. We are grateful for NIET's partnership with us on this guide and their continued partnership with school systems across Louisiana.

Outside of the parent, nothing impacts student learning like an effective teacher. I encourage you to utilize this roadmap to help yourself or your educators engage with one another, grow in their craft, and continue writing that new story for Louisiana education.



**Dr. Cade Brumley**

**Louisiana State Superintendent**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Louisiana Professional Learning (PL) Roadmap provides a clear pathway for school systems and schools to align their priorities to improve instructional practice through three essential professional learning structures: school system level ILTs, school level ILTs, and teacher collaboration that follow the High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle and is based on cycles of continuous improvement. The roadmap describes the processes for these key structures.

---

## SCHOOL SYSTEM LEVEL ILT

The PL Roadmap recommends forming an instructional leadership team at the school system level that meets frequently, ideally biweekly, to continuously address instructional goal(s) through ongoing learning, planning, and decision-making. This team is essential for setting clear system-wide goals, communicating with all stakeholders, creating a strategic long-range plan, and allocating resources accordingly. This diverse team should include leaders with various capabilities that reflect all instructional priorities. First, this team conducts a comprehensive review of all of the system's key data, including recent student, teacher, and leader data, to determine its priorities. The team uses this analysis to create clear instructional goals that should be measurable, reflect specific student and/or educator needs, relevant to recent quantitative data, and include a timeline. The team also discusses best practices for high impact leader and teacher actions and how to provide school and school system leaders with regular, high-quality feedback and support.

---

## SCHOOL LEVEL ILT

Similar to the system-level ILT, every school has its own Instructional Leadership Team with clear instructional goals, a long-range plan, and consistent time to collaborate. This team includes school leaders as well as teacher leaders and counselors. The purpose of this team is to align the school's professional learning around a clear focus area, so that teachers and counselors are supported to make instructional improvements in their classrooms.

In creating its instructional goals and priorities, this team usually reviews these types of documents first: school improvement plan, annual school academic goals, Local Literacy Plan, and observation plans, and coaching plans. The team also analyzes recent significant data points, including summative student achievement data. Then it creates its ILT cycle goals and long-range plan to address it. These goals should be aligned to the school's goals and teacher collaboration goals, based on improving student achievement and measured by a curriculum-embedded assessment. This school ILT meets weekly to monitor the progress of its goal, learn together by sharing best practices, make adjustments to support teachers and counselors, and reflect on the effectiveness of its supports and practices.

---

## TEACHER COLLABORATION

The PL Roadmap emphasizes the importance of meaningful teacher collaboration to improve instructional practice and student outcomes. The planning for teacher collaboration meetings should be directly aligned to the school and school system goals. Effective teacher collaboration meetings include the analysis of student work; unpacking, planning, discussing, and annotating units and lessons from high-quality instructional materials; planning for and addressing the needs of diverse learners; and addressing unfinished learning through acceleration. It should provide teachers the opportunity to come together to review data, learn best instructional practices, and walk away with clear next steps for implementing high-quality instructional materials in their classrooms.

In summary, the PL Roadmap provides specific guidance for establishing effective ILTs and Teacher Collaboration that mobilize diverse stakeholders to focus change efforts on shared priorities. Through these aligned and repeated actions, school systems and schools can meaningfully collaborate to keep focus on instructional improvement.

# OVERVIEW

## VISION AND PURPOSE

School Improvement is a systematic approach by which schools employ evidenced-based best practices to increase educator effectiveness and student achievement. This work is grounded in the LDOE's six educational priorities. We are confident through these priorities, Louisiana's students will attain the highest levels of academic success.

## LOUISIANA'S EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES

1. **Early childhood leading to kindergarten readiness**
2. **Literacy instructional aligned to the Science of Reading**
3. **Foundational math instruction advancing from conceptual understanding**
4. **Opportunities ensuring a meaningful high school experience**
5. **An effective teacher for every student**
6. **Expand educational choice for students and families**

Teachers need to lead high-quality teaching and learning every day grounded in standards. It is the responsibility of school systems and school leaders to support teachers. School systems can support teachers with intentional planning for improvement and continuous improvement cycles.

A key component of overall school system strategic planning is the implementation of a comprehensive professional learning plan. This Professional Learning Roadmap intends to guide and support school system and school leaders in their implementation of essential professional learning structures: school system instructional leadership team, school instructional leadership team, and teacher collaboration. It includes guidance on how a career pipeline can best contribute to the structures with vital roles. The Professional Learning Roadmap also serves as an anchor document for implementation of these structures state-wide and establishes a common language for all partners and practitioners.





## USING THE ROADMAP

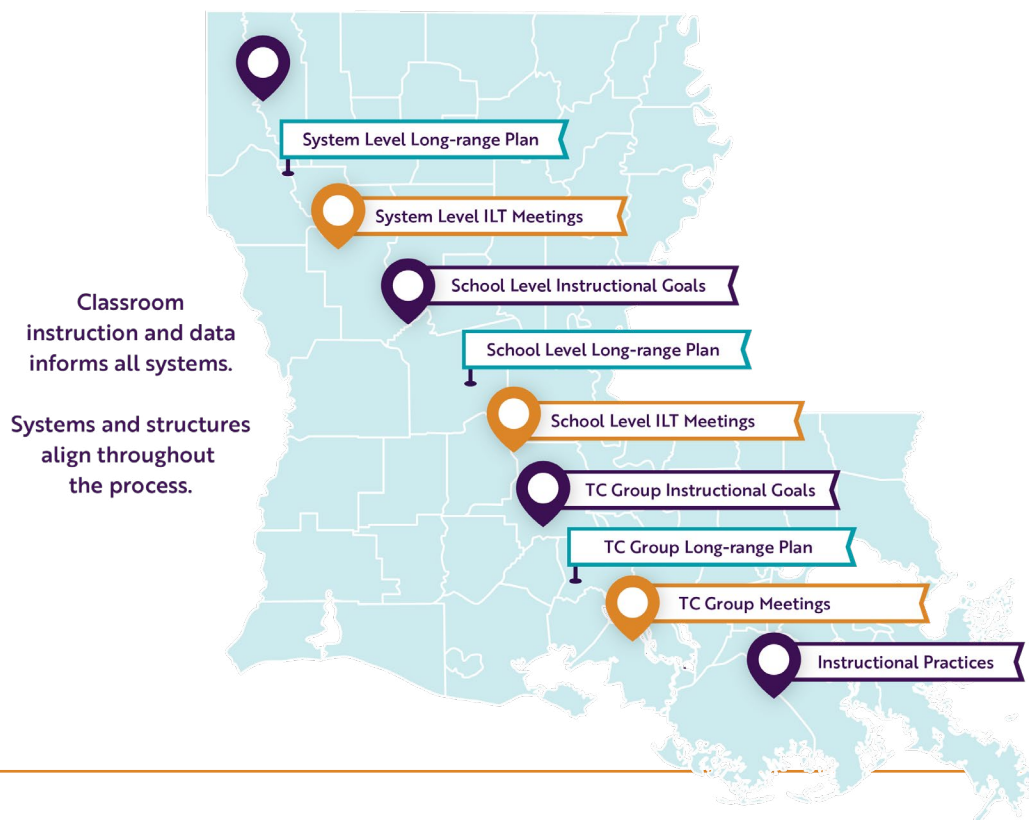
The LDOE's Professional Learning Roadmap describes the journey that school systems and school leaders travel to ensure success for all students. This Roadmap is designed to define and support the implementation of systems and structures for school systems and school level leaders to plan for and implement high-quality professional learning opportunities that best support the improvement of instructional practices (see Figure 1).

When leaders work to improve instructional practices, students have an increased opportunity to attain academic success (Robinson, 2012). Louisiana's definition of high-quality professional learning is: an intentional capacity-building and decision-making process that is led by experts (internal or external to the system or school), is relevant to the learner and educator, and supports effective teaching and learning that is aligned to research and best practices. It leverages high-quality instructional materials and includes systems of ongoing coaching, support, and feedback. Additionally, high-quality professional learning occurs in a safe environment and provides shared learning experiences between teachers and leaders that are relevant and transferable to various contexts.

This Roadmap supports instructional leaders at classroom, school, and school system levels to identify current needs that inhibit the academic growth of students. Subsequently, this Roadmap honors and leverages existing plans, provides guidance on setting instructional student-centered goals, and supports student-centered instructional leadership. Generally, the instructional goals referenced within this Roadmap should come from a school system level strategic plan, annual school goals, or some other long-term, instructionally-focused goals. Depending on those goals, leaders should plan to differentiate engagement opportunities for instructional stakeholders. Though differentiated engagement is supported through the specific structures of Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs), school-based Teacher Collaboration (TC) meetings, and Career Pipeline.

### (Figure 1) The Roadmap is organized to support system leaders in:

1. Defining and setting instructional goals.
2. Understanding and defining the purpose of Instructional Leadership Teams and Teacher Collaboration.
3. Strategically planning how to leverage Teacher Leaders to achieve instructional goals.
4. Planning for System and School Level Instructional Leadership Team meetings.
5. Planning for Teacher Collaboration meetings.
6. Reflecting and refining professional learning structures.



# SYSTEM AND SCHOOL-LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL PLANNING

Prior to implementing strategies related to either Instructional Leadership teams or Teacher Collaboration it is important to first:

1. Review school system and school level data to determine strengths and needs (e.g., statewide assessment results, student cohort growth patterns over time, teacher effectiveness data, curriculum walkthrough data).
2. Set internal instructional goals connected to the implementation of high-quality instructional materials.
3. Identify which instructional stakeholders (e.g., system leaders, school leaders, teacher leaders, teachers) could best be leveraged to reach those outcomes.

Instructional planning is the iterative, cyclical process by which data, high-quality instructional materials, and high-quality professional learning coalesce to result in creating goals that meet the diverse needs of children and educators. Instructional planning is a key lever of instructional leadership and begins with system and school leaders reflecting on current data and existing initiatives. Reflection on data allows leaders to identify the purpose of their work and influences the setting of instructional goals that meet needs of children and educators. Instructional goals serve as the foundation of instructional plans. Subsequently, high-quality ILTs develop an instructional plan inclusive of relevant goals that ensures the work is focused on building capacity and making decisions.

## SETTING INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

Similar to the [Five Steps for Effective Learning](#), the High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle is a process in which a purpose is defined, and then teams receive new learning, internalize and practice the new learning, implement the new learning, and assess the impact. Setting data-driven, measurable school goals that target improved instruction is a reflective, cyclical process that allows ILTs to maintain a narrow focus while determining the amount of growth and impact on stakeholders. Moreover, setting yearly and cycle goals prioritizes the work of the ILT members as they collaborate to address current instructional needs. Once goals are set, ILTs determine what learning and action steps are needed to ensure goal attainment. After implementing the learning, the ILT reflects on what impact the learning had on meeting identified needs and determines the purpose of the next learning cycle (see Figure 2).

(Figure 2) LDOE High-quality Professional Learning Cycle

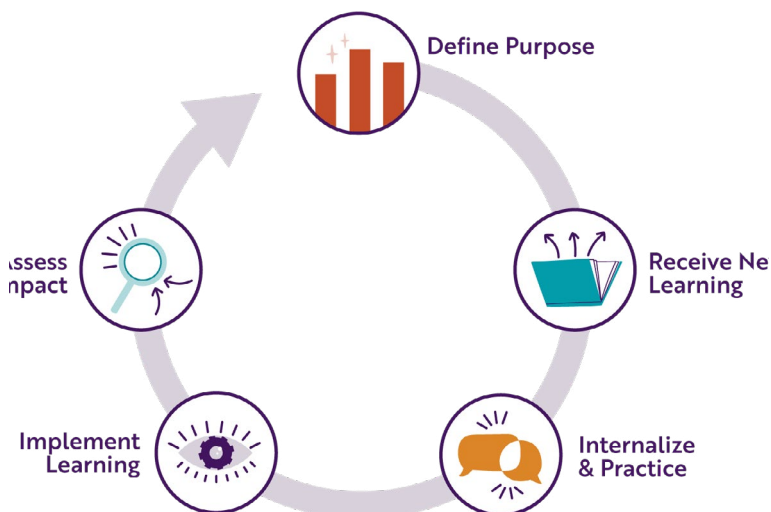
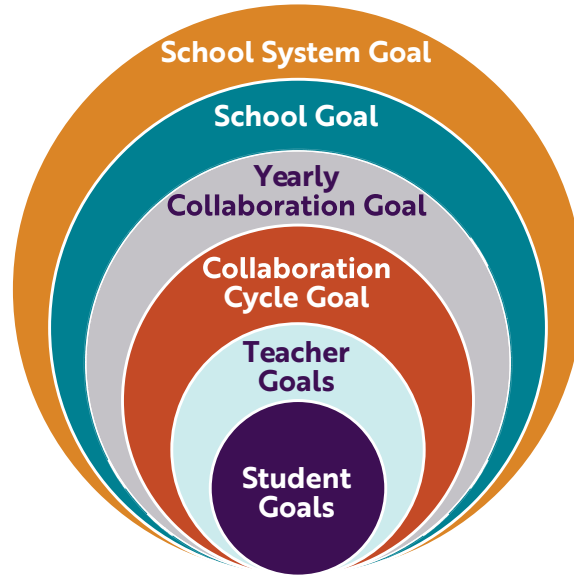




Figure 3 represents the alignment of goals at all levels. Systems should develop a plan that supports the improvement of identified needs. A holistic, comprehensive system-level strategic plan includes 3 to 5 years of goals and actionable steps. These actionable steps should be monitored on a regular basis each time new data sets are available. The school system level ILT utilizes this strategic plan to determine short term goals to be met over the course of each academic year.

**(Figure 3) Goal Setting Alignment**



School system leaders are an essential component of the goal setting process and influence goal attainment at all levels. Through goal-setting, the school system charts a clear and coherent course that supports capacity building by providing necessary supports inherent in the high-quality professional learning structures of ILTs and TC sessions. These efforts align to ensure that the entire range of conditions and incentives in the system fully support teaching, learning, and improved educational outcomes for students.

- A school system ILT looks across system-wide data and determines a cross-system goal to set the focus for priority work for the year.
- The School Goal is usually based on summative student achievement data and sets a clear focus to guide the school's ILT through their own long-range planning in how to support teachers as they achieve their own goals.
- Goals for Teacher Collaboration are set by the school-level ILT with the support of school system leadership and are based on cycles or chunks of new learning.
- All Teacher Collaboration cycle goals align to a yearly collaboration goal, a bigger picture goal of what a school wants to achieve in terms of teacher learning and growth over the course of a year. A cycle can last for an iterative amount of time, usually spanning several weeks, and is based on a need or a set of needs. During each cycle, a goal is set for transfer of the new learning into classroom practices and ultimately student achievement.
- Teachers are supported through the Teacher Collaboration structure, and a teacher sets goals for his or her students based on their own individual data and needs along with professional goals for their own learning and growth.

These needs allow the ILT to then set aligned instructional goals with limited priorities and engage in specific actions to meet goals. Student needs indicate teacher needs. Teacher goals indicate leader needs and provide a focus for collaboration meetings. Setting goals helps the ILT to minimize confusion, establish coherence, and foster a shared commitment to improving instructional practices (Dewitt, 2022).

## **Critical Elements of Instructional Goals**

- Reflect on specific student and/or educator needs
- Measurable and indicate specific growth
- Based on most current quantitative data and the implementation of high-quality instructional materials
- Contain specific window for goal attainment

## **Critical Elements of Instructional Leadership Team Cycle Goals**

- Aligned to and supports the school goal and yearly teacher collaboration goal
- Measurable in terms of student achievement
- Based on improving student achievement by addressing specific instructional areas of need that are aligned to the school goal.
- Based on summative assessments and measured throughout a cycle by curriculum-embedded assessments to monitor student progress toward the goals.

## **Critical Elements of Teacher Collaboration Cycle Goals**

- Aligned to and supports the school goal and yearly teacher collaboration goal
- Measurable in terms of student achievement
- Grounded in effective implementation of high-quality instructional materials
- Based on improving student achievement by addressing specific instructional areas of need that are aligned to the school goal and yearly collaboration goal.
- Based on summative assessments and measured throughout a cycle by curriculum-embedded assessments to monitor student progress toward the goals.

Consequently, it is vital that all instructional stakeholders set instructional goals that reflect student needs at the school system, school, and collaborative group levels. All goals originate from student needs and ensure goal alignment. Once that alignment is established through observations, classroom data, data from the implementation of high-quality instructional materials, and other data points, then classroom instructional practices can be discussed and supported across Instructional Leadership Teams and Teacher Collaboration.

# INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

---

## DEFINING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

**Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs)** are research-based, school improvement best practices that focus on building capacity and making decisions. ILTs consist of leaders who serve in various capacities across the school or school system. ILT members consistently engage in collaborative actions to identify and meet student, teacher, and leader needs. Such actions will result in improved teaching and learning experiences. Instructional Leadership Teams meet regularly (ideally weekly at the school level and at minimum bi-weekly at the system level). School level instructional leadership teams need to deeply understand the high-quality instructional materials teachers are using to ensure school level plans attend to the specific content teachers are teaching. Meeting time should be prioritized and held sacred as essential time to learn, plan, and make decisions. Throughout this Roadmap for both versions of ILTs, you will answer a series of guided questions designed to provide support from the conceptual building of the ILT to planning and facilitating high-quality meetings.

### An established ILT meets regularly to discuss

- improving educational outcomes through **analysis of student, teacher, and leader data**;
- incorporating best practices for **high-impact strategies to support implementation of high-quality instructional materials**; and
- providing school and school system level leaders with **regular, high-quality feedback** and support through an observation/coaching cycle.

---

## UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR HIGH-QUALITY ILTS

- Student-centered leadership requires that Instructional Leadership Teams focus on
  - › goal setting,
  - › strategic use of high-quality resources,
  - › creating a safe learning environment,
  - › observing how high-quality curricula is applied to classroom instructional practices, and
  - › providing high-quality learning experiences (Dewitt, 2022).
- High-quality instructional leadership teams prioritize student learning and the development of instructional staff by
  - › setting clear, student-centered goals,
  - › identifying and using high-quality resources to attain goals, and
  - › determining how to check for progress on goal attainment (Robinson, 2012).
- Collaborative learning structures influence and prioritize a focus on human capital to result in continuous improvement of instructional practices and implementation of high-quality curriculum.
- Intentional collaboration through Instructional Leadership Teams and Teacher Collaboration drive student, teacher, and leader growth (Dewitt, 2022) and are the core of student-centered leadership (see Figure 2).

---

## IMPLEMENTING HIGH-QUALITY INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

There are multiple Instructional Leadership Teams within a school system, at least one for the school system and one for each school. This section of the Roadmap will focus on the process of implementing School System and School Level Instructional Leadership Teams. While these will have very similar structures and goals, each must exist to allow both to be as successful as possible.

High-quality ILT meetings begin with the development of a plan that is focused on meeting current needs. The ILT **long-range plan** (see [Appendix H](#)) is a systematic and consistent plan of action for monitoring and supporting the goal instructional processes in a school system or on a school campus. It is used to sketch out or identify major areas of focus for weekly leadership team meetings. It is modifiable and tailored to the instructional needs

of a school system or individual school. The work of a high-quality ILT should be reflected in a plan that details in which actions ILT members will engage to meet student and teacher needs. It illustrates the learning and decisions made by the ILT to address needs aligned to the school system strategic plan or school plan. Both the school system and school ILT directly support the structure of Teacher Collaboration. The needs of teachers are highlighted in the ILT structure and this informs the planning for and implementation of Teacher Collaboration.

Both school system and school level Instructional Leadership teams follow the high-quality professional learning cycle. Meetings are always focused on school, leader, teacher, and/or student needs to define the purpose and frame the meeting. ILT members receive new learning from the leader(s) of the ILT and together collaborate on plans for how to implement the new learning in a way that is thoughtful of the group of individuals they represent and support. Following the meeting, ILT members are empowered to implement their new learning as they support schools, teachers, and students in a way that is very intentional and planned during the ILT meeting. They assess the impact of their implementation and are prepared to bring back into a subsequent ILT meeting their impact data and evidence.

---

## SCHOOL SYSTEM LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

System-level ILT members engage in continuous improvement and model this for school leaders. As system-level ILT members are learning and applying their learning, they must ensure that their learning reaches school-based Instructional Leadership Teams. While the participants in Instructional Leadership Teams will likely mirror those of other regular meetings (e.g., cabinet meetings, budget planning), ILT meetings must have a singular focus on instruction. This intentional and purposeful focus on curriculum-based instructional improvement will take effective planning and meeting facilitation, but for the School System ILT to be effective, the focus on instruction must remain unchanged.

**School system level** planning is a key element of the school system ILT. For many school systems, this will be in the form of **instructional goals within the school system's strategic plan** while for others it may be tied to school specific instructional improvement plans. Regardless of the name, the instructional goals with the school system plan are vital to determining the focus of the School System ILT. A few plans that would be useful to reference and align to are the

- [Accelerate: High Dosage Tutoring Plan](#),
- EL/Lau Plan,
- [Local Literacy Plan](#),
- Pupil Progression Plan,
- Ready Start Network Blueprints, and
- School System Strategic Plan.

---

## STEPS FOR SUCCESS

There are three critical steps to ensure a successful launch of both the school system level and school level Instructional Leadership Team professional learning structure.

1. [Planning before Implementation](#)
2. [Developing an ILT Long-range Plan](#)
3. [Planning for each ILT Meeting](#)

Each step links to guiding questions for system leaders to complete as they plan for implementation of a system-level ILT. These serve as a tool to support system leaders in thinking through the tactical elements that will help a system begin implementation that will evolve to transformation change.

---

## SCHOOL LEVEL INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAMS

Schools should use their own local context to determine leaders who should be a part of the school's Instructional Leadership team. A school-level ILT will generally include members of the leadership staff, but the inclusion of Teacher Leaders and counselors in an ILT is equally as essential. Teacher Leaders and counselors are a unique subset of instructional stakeholders that, when leveraged well, can help ensure that the collaborative learning system being implemented is most effective. To that end, leaders should take time to consider how to utilize their Teacher Leaders and counselors prior to planning their ILT or TC structures. Teacher leaders are a group of teachers whose practice promotes teacher development that includes but is not limited to Mentor Teachers, literacy coaches, Master Teachers, and instructional coaches. Teacher Leaders who participate in the Instructional Leadership Team should play an active role in representing and supporting a group of teachers on their campus. School level instructional leadership teams need to deeply understand the curricular materials teachers are using to ensure school level plans attend to the specific content teachers are teaching.

Instructional Leadership Teams engage in continuous learning themselves as the lead learners in the school. ILT members facilitate teacher collaboration meetings to ensure ongoing learning and feedback cycles are in place from staff to ILT. **School level** planning is a key element of the school ILT. These plans can come from a variety of documents, but it is vital that all ILT planning is aligned to the overall instructional vision, implementation of the high-quality curricula and embedded assessments, and goals of the schools. A few plans that would be useful to reference and align to are the

- Annual school academic goals,
- Coordinated observation plan,
- Implementation plans for high-quality instructional materials,
- [Individual Academic Support Plan](#) (IASP),
- [Individual Accommodation Plan](#) (IAP, Section 504 plan),
- [Individualized Education Programs](#) (IEPs),
- [Local Literacy Plan](#), and
- School Improvement Plan.

---

## THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TEAM'S ROLE IN [EVALUATIONS & OBSERVATIONS](#) USING THE [LOUISIANA EDUCATOR RUBRIC \(LER\)](#)

### Purpose of the ILT Process

The Louisiana Educator Advancement and Development System (LEADS) is the new state educator and leader evaluation system. LEADS is designed to drive professional growth and student achievement across Louisiana systems and schools. The ILT works collectively to improve the instructional practices in the school to have a positive impact on student achievement. Observation and evaluation of teachers is most effective when it gives accurate information about performance in the classroom, with a focus on improving instructional practices, and ultimately students' performance.

### Build and maintain inter-rater reliability.

For evaluation results to be accurate and useful, the LER should always be used by evaluators in a reliable manner. The work of the Leadership Team toward developing inter-rater reliability will impact important dimensions of a school's efforts for improved student achievement.

- Inter-rater reliability of the scores on LER affects the integrity of the school,
- The credibility of the evaluators and their ability to provide feedback, and
- The trust of teachers in the instrument, which is critical for success.

ILTs should plan to build inter-reliability as part of their ILT Long Range Plan so that teachers can truly focus on professional growth with the purpose of increasing student achievement in their school.

Ways to build inter-rater reliability:

- Conduct paired and/or teamed evaluations to continually monitor the consistent and reliable use of the rubric within the evaluation system. Some teams arrange observation teams as part of the formal evaluation schedule, while others use this monitoring strategy less formally.
- Use resources from the LDOE's Professional Learning Platform to view lessons together and practice capturing evidence. Discuss evidence and ratings within the Leadership Team meetings to strengthen inter-rater reliability.
- Invite system leaders who are certified evaluators to share in observation and scoring sessions.

**Develop and monitor the school's evaluation schedule and review it often.**

**Prevent inflation in the ratings provided to teachers.**

The ILT must build a common understanding of each of the performance levels as they observe classroom lessons and provide feedback and ratings to teachers. Over time, it will be important for the ILT to revisit those common expectations. Scores must continue to accurately reflect the school's teaching practices. Score inflation can happen as a result from the desire to recognize teachers' hard work and even evidence of changes in classroom instruction. But evidence and ratings should align with student achievement growth. If evaluators are using the LER accurately, higher evaluations of teacher performance should only be the result of clear growth in student achievement.

**Review pre- and post-conference plans regularly to strengthen quality.**

ILT members will have varying levels of expertise in conducting effective conferences. Part of the responsibility of the Leadership Team is to build capacity among all team members. School leaders should utilize the ILT meeting structure to allow team members with strong conferencing skills to model the pre- and post-conference process. An administrator might carry out an actual pre- or post-conference with another member of the Leadership Team, and members of the team could provide feedback to the conference leader. Another consideration for the team is to watch pre- and post-conferences that are recorded and work together to identify areas of reinforcement and refinement in those conferences.

**Regularly review observation reports from the Louisiana Evaluation System (LES) to inform professional learning opportunities within teacher collaboration and other staff development opportunities.**



# TEACHER COLLABORATION

---

## UNDERSTANDING THE NEED FOR HIGH-QUALITY TEACHER COLLABORATION

Professional development, which “happens to” teachers, is often associated with one-time workshops, seminars, or lectures, and is typically a one-size-fits all approach. Professional learning, by contrast, is typically interactive, sustained, and customized to teachers' needs. It encourages teachers to take responsibility for their own learning and to practice what they are learning in their own teaching contexts (Scherff, 2018). Effective professional learning via a Teacher Collaboration structure not only has the potential to improve both teaching and student outcomes, but can also be effective in recruiting and retaining teachers as it leads to both improved classroom practices and strong relationships of mutual respect and trust by the adult learner participants. To involve teachers in high-quality Teacher Collaboration, leaders must also consider teacher agency, which is the power for teachers to act decisively and positively to better ensure their own professional growth (Calvert, 2016). High-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials are at the heart of meaningful collaboration as teachers work together to analyze student work and make decisions for how to best meet the needs of each individual student and research has shown that professional learning connected to high-quality instructional materials result in greater improvement in practice and learning than professional development on strategies or content alone. (H. Hill).

---

## IMPLEMENTING HIGH-QUALITY TEACHER COLLABORATION (TC)

The needs of students and teachers drive the new learning that is provided during TC meetings. These meetings are facilitated in cycles of structured professional learning. Effective meetings include the analysis of student work from high-quality instructional materials; unpacking, planning, discussing, and annotating units and lessons from High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM); planning for and addressing the needs of diverse learners; and addressing unfinished learning through acceleration. Ideally, collaborations occur amongst small groups of teachers in grade levels or content areas around the high-quality materials they are using. Each school system/school leadership team has the autonomy to determine what the best configuration is for their school. School system leadership teams should support school leadership teams in best situating schedules that allow for this sacred, job-embedded time for teachers to hone their craft and effectively collaborate.

Similar to both school system and school level ILT meetings, Teacher Collaboration should always follow the High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle. This cycle allows for a clear purpose to be set for the meeting that is driven by teacher and student need, for teachers to receive new learning from a skilled facilitator (a member of the school-level ILT), and to internalize the new learning as they collaborate with peers based on their own student needs and upcoming lessons. Following the Teacher Collaboration, teachers are asked to implement their new learning from the session and collect student work to determine the impact of that implementation. This impact informs the next set of instructional decisions that a teacher makes to best serve the needs of all students.

Teacher Collaboration is designed to enable teachers to embrace collective teacher efficacy, thus creating the “collective self-perception that teachers in a given school make an educational difference to their students over and above the educational impact of their homes and communities (Hattie, 2016).” Teacher ownership of the Teacher Collaboration structure will ensure teachers enter meetings prepared to plan, discuss, and truly engage in purposeful conversations about how to best address the needs of all students.

The planning for TC meetings for the year should be directly aligned to the school and school system instructional goals. This allows for constant growth and feedback across all levels of the school and school system. Meetings should be organized around units from the high-quality instructional materials, so that teachers are studying and planning for upcoming units and lessons based on the needs of all students. Planning for new learning by cycles of study that are focused and intentional will help to avoid a weekly “topic-hopping” approach and rather reinforces that the five steps of the High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle build an arc of learning that enhances practices over time.

---

## STEPS FOR SUCCESS

There are three critical steps to ensure a successful launch of the Teacher Collaboration professional learning structure.

1. [Planning before Implementation](#)
2. [Developing a TC Long-range Plan](#)
3. [Planning for each TC Meeting](#)

Each step links to guiding questions for system leaders to complete as they plan for implementation of a system Teacher Collaboration. These serve as a tool to support system leaders in thinking through the tactical elements that will help a system begin implementation that will evolve to transformation change.

## CALL TO ACTION

The Roadmap provides clear guidance on the implementation of high-quality professional learning which is necessary to ensure the children of Louisiana receive an education that prepares them to graduate on time to enter college or the workforce. The LDOE professional learning structures provide systems with the elements that are integral to establishing and maintaining a culture rooted in making instructional decisions that build educator capacity, valuing teachers and leaders for their expertise in a way that nurtures ongoing collaboration.

As systems prepare to use this guidance to enhance or create climates focused on high-quality professional learning, use [Appendix G](#) to determine at what stage your system is utilizing these structures.

### **Then, reflect on the following:**

1. **What is the academic vision of my system?**
2. **What beliefs about children and educators exist at the system level?**
3. **How will the system utilize the structures of ILT, TC, and career pipeline to maintain a focus on learning and teaching?**
4. **What can school system leaders model for school leaders in the planning and implementation of ILT?**
5. **What are the expectations for implementation of Instructional Leadership Teams at the system and school level?**
6. **How will system level Instructional Leadership Teams influence the direction of TC sessions?**
7. **What data will be collected to determine the needs of children and educators?**

# APPENDIX A: Instructional Leadership Team – Planning Before Implementation Guiding Questions

These questions should be answered by the **leader of the ILT** to best prepare for the planning needed to determine the general outlines, parameters, and structures of the ILT **prior to inviting the full ILT**.

ILT: PLANNING BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION	
Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>Who might participate in the ILT meetings?</b></p> <p><b>School System Recommendation:</b> Members should be those within school system cabinet leadership who directly or indirectly impact instructional practice. (e.g., Superintendent/Executive, academic leader(s), financial leader, Human Resources leader, Special Education leader, English learner leader, Early Childhood leader).</p> <p><b>School Recommendation:</b> Members should be those within school leadership who directly or indirectly impact instructional practice (e.g., principal, assistant principal(s), Mentor Teacher(s), special education leaders, teacher leaders, counselors).</p>	
<p><b>When will the team meet (date/time)?</b></p> <p><b>School System Recommendation:</b> Weekly meetings are ideal, but they should not meet less than bi-monthly.</p> <p><b>School Recommendation:</b> These should be held weekly.</p>	
<p><b>How long will the team meet?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Approximately 60 minutes each week. Extend time if meetings are less frequent.</p>	
<p><b>Where will the team meet?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> A designated space for regular meetings is encouraged.</p>	
<p><b>Who will be responsible for creating the agenda?</b></p> <p><b>School System Recommendation:</b> One member of the core leadership team who works in tandem with the superintendent that is responsible for planning.</p> <p><b>School Recommendation:</b> This should be the principal or one member of the core leadership team that is responsible for planning.</p>	

## ILT: PLANNING BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION

Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What will drive the agenda or be the focus of the meeting?</b></p> <p><b>School System Recommendation:</b> The needs of leaders, teachers, and students will drive the areas of focus and align to the goals of the school system. The system will consider the needs of schools in high-quality instructional materials implementation.</p> <p><b>School Recommendation:</b> Determine what new learning the members need to meet the school instructional goals. Refer to the long range plan.</p>	
<p><b>What procedures, processes, or protocols will be used?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Determine procedures, processes, or protocols to be used prior to planning individual meetings (e.g., High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle, 5 Steps for Effective Learning, ILT protocols).</p>	
<p><b>What will be the group norms?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Dedicate time to setting norms specifically around engaging in and framing instructional conversations.</p>	

# APPENDIX B: Instructional Leadership Team – Developing the ILT Long-range Plan Guiding Questions

These questions should be answered in **consultation with the full ILT prior to the first ILT meeting** in order to ensure that all perspectives and stakeholders are considered.

DEVELOPING THE ILT LONG-RANGE PLAN	
Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What data will be used to determine school system, school, leader, teacher, and student needs?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Current student data, classroom evidence, and evaluation data can be used to determine needs.</p>	
<p><b>What school system, school, leader, teacher, and student needs exist?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Current stakeholder data will be analyzed to determine how the ILT will meet the needs.</p>	
<p><b>Based on stakeholder needs, what will the ILT accomplish?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Use identified needs to narrow the focus to a single stakeholder group. This will support the work of setting a short-term goal that will drive the work of the ILT.</p>	
<p><b>What school system-, school-, leader-, teacher-, and student-level data will be analyzed?</b></p> <p><b>School System Recommendation:</b> Data should be inclusive of multiple measures (e.g., observations, curriculum-embedded assessments, student work samples, literacy screener progress monitoring, behavior, attendance) most appropriate for the content area and not limited to state-level data. The school system’s strategic plan outlines key data aligned to the plan’s goals and can be used here.</p> <p><b>School Recommendation:</b> Use multiple measures (e.g., observations, curriculum-embedded assessments, student work samples, literacy screener progress monitoring, behavior, attendance) and consider looking at student group data, particularly if the school has a label for a specific student group.</p>	
<p><b>How will the highest level instructional needs based on that data be determined?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Instructional decisions should be directly informed by the school system and school level instructional goals.</p>	
<p><b>How will plans address the needs throughout the year using data, growth plans, collaboration, and/or teacher evaluation?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Determine a cadence of meetings aligned to the demonstrated instructional needs incorporating the listed items.</p>	

## DEVELOPING THE ILT LONG-RANGE PLAN

Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What goals have, or can, be set for the areas of need throughout the school year?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Determine milestones and goals aligned to the school system instructional goals through the year to monitor.</p>	
<p><b>How will the ILT create regular, high-quality observation and coaching cycles that reflect the identified needs of the leaders, teachers, and students?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Identify who will conduct the cycles, how often they will occur, what tool and process will be used, and when the data will be used in an ILT meeting.</p>	
<p><b>How will the team monitor instructional goals throughout the school year to ensure progress?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Determine milestones and goals through the year to monitor aligned to the school instructional goals.</p>	
<p><b>How can the ILT align the focus of meetings' overall instructional goals?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Align meeting foci across the long-range plan to ensure timeliness throughout the year and opportunities for sustained learning over time.</p>	
<p><b>How will members collaborate in establishing the meeting's agenda?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Determine collaborators based on meeting topic and scope.</p>	
<p><b>How will the desired outcomes be determined?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Set meaningful expected outcomes aligned to the overall goal that can be progress monitored through the year.</p>	



# APPENDIX C: Instructional Leadership Team – Planning for Each Meeting Guiding Questions

These questions should be **completed by the full ILT** in the facilitation of the planning for the first ILT meeting.

PLANNING FOR EACH ILT MEETING	
Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What will the focus of this meeting be and who will determine it?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Directly align the meeting’s focus to priorities from the long-range plan.</p>	
<p><b>What data source will be used to establish the need during this meeting?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Rely on the most appropriate data source (e.g., curriculum-embedded assessments, student work samples, attendance) for the goal at the time of the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>What will the members of the leadership team know or be able to do as a result of this meeting?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Align the meeting focus to the overall goal of the ILT.</p>	
<p><b>Who will lead the meeting or sections of the meeting and will this require any additional members to be present?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Ensure that the person with the most knowledge around the outcome facilitates the new learning.</p>	
<p><b>What materials or artifacts are needed for the meeting?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Provide any materials needed to meet the outcomes of the meeting (e.g., data, schedules, high-quality instructional materials, rubrics, school system plans)</p>	
<p><b>What will leadership team members develop as a result of the new learning?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Align development to meeting outcomes.</p>	
<p><b>What new learning will be presented and how will it be presented?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Consider how to align the learning with the relevant data and ideal outcomes from the meeting.</p>	
<p><b>Who is the best person to present this new learning?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> This may not be a regular member of the ILT, but the best person to present the learning.</p>	

## PLANNING FOR EACH ILT MEETING

Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>How will the ILT be asked to apply the new learning prior to the next team meeting(s)?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Delineate clear next steps for each member aligned to new learning and the meeting focus.</p>	
<p><b>How will the ILT use data from regular, high-quality observation and coaching cycles?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Identify trends across observations to drive the need for Teacher Collaboration or identify specific supports for one or a group of teachers based on data.</p>	
<p><b>How and when will team members evaluate the application of the outcome?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Request documentation or evidence that the application was implemented. This can serve as a foundation for the next meeting and help determine if any additional follow-up is needed.</p>	

# APPENDIX D: Teacher Collaboration Planning – Before Implementation Guiding Questions

These questions should be answered by the **school leader or coordinator of collaborative learning** to best prepare for the planning needed to determine the general outlines, parameters, and structures of the TC **prior to communicating the system to teachers**.

PLANNING BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION	
Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What makeup or structure for TC teams makes the most sense in the school context?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> TC teams should be made up of small groups of like teachers (e.g., pre-K-K, 1-2, 3-5, or by grade level or content area).</p>	
<p><b>When will the team meet (date/time)?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> These should be held weekly during the school day at a time specifically designated for TC.</p>	
<p><b>How long will the team meet?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Approximately 60 minutes each week.</p>	
<p><b>Where will the team meet?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> A designated space for each TC is encouraged.</p>	
<p><b>Who will be responsible for creating the agenda?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> A teacher leader, grade level leader, Mentor Teacher, instructional coach, or other designated facilitator should create the agenda.</p>	

## PLANNING BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION

Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What procedures, processes, or protocols will be used?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Determine procedures, processes, or protocols to be used prior to planning individual meetings (e.g., High-Quality Professional Learning Cycle, 5 Steps for Effective Learning, ILT protocols).</p>	
<p><b>What will drive the agenda or be the focus of the meeting?</b></p> <p><b>School System Recommendation:</b> Leader, teacher, and student needs based on school system instructional goals and stage of implementation of high-quality instructional materials outlined in the school system’s strategic plan and aligned learning needs of members of the ILT.</p> <p><b>School Recommendation:</b> Determine what new learning the members need to meet the school instructional goals. Refer to the long range plan.</p>	
<p><b>What will be the group norms?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Dedicate time to setting norms specifically around mindsets and ongoing learning.</p>	

# APPENDIX E: Teacher Collaboration – Developing a TC Long-range Plan

These questions should be answered in **consultation with the full TC group prior to the first TC meeting** in order to ensure that all perspectives and stakeholders are considered.

DEVELOPING A TC LONG-RANGE PLAN	
Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What school, teacher, and student level data will you analyze?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Data should be inclusive of multiple measures, including curriculum-embedded assessments, and not limited to state-level data.</p>	
<p><b>How will the highest level needs based on that data be determined?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Should be directly informed by curriculum-specific, school instructional goals.</p>	
<p><b>How will the needs be addressed throughout the year using data, growth plans, collaboration, and/or teacher evaluation?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Determine a cadence of meetings aligned to the demonstrated instructional need incorporating the listed items.</p>	

## DEVELOPING A TC LONG-RANGE PLAN

Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What goals can be set for the areas of need throughout the school year to check for progress?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Determine milestones and goals through the year to monitor aligned to the school instructional goals.</p>	
<p><b>What cadence of meetings meets the instructional needs of the TC?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> TC should have a cadence in which cycles focus on a topic, learning, or module for a set number of meetings.</p>	
<p><b>How can the TC align their meeting outcomes to those named in the goals?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Align outcomes within the cadence to align to timeliness of milestones and goals, ensuring a continuum for learning and development.</p>	



# APPENDIX F: Teacher Collaboration – Planning for Each TC Meeting

These questions should be **completed by the full TC group** in the facilitation of the planning for the first TC meeting.

PLANNING FOR EACH TC MEETING	
Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>What data or evidence has been gathered related to the instructional goals?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> This evidence should align with the long-range plan and can be student data, classroom evidence, evaluation data, or anything that may inform TC learning.</p>	
<p><b>Based on the data, what identified instructional needs will be addressed during the meeting?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> This should be based on the long-range plan as well as the real-time data collected between TC meetings.</p>	
<p><b>What materials or artifacts are needed for the meeting?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Provide any materials needed to meet the outcomes of the meeting (e.g., student work, student data, schedules, high-quality instructional materials, rubrics).</p>	
<p><b>What new learning will be obtained by TC members to address the identified need?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> This new learning should be formatted for classroom application, be based on credible sources, and have a proven application showing student growth.</p>	
<p><b>What will be developed by TC members to demonstrate their understanding of the new learning and readiness to apply in the classroom?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> This should support classroom instruction through demonstration, modeling, practice, and peer coaching with analysis of student work.</p>	

## PLANNING FOR EACH TC MEETING

Guiding Question	Response
<p><b>How will TC members apply the new learning in the classroom?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Evidence of application should be seen through observation, peer coaching, and self reflection applied to student work within specific learning of TC and be shared at the next meeting.</p>	
<p><b>How and when will the group evaluate the impact of learning on student performance?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> This could include analyzing student assessment data aligned to the new learning.</p>	
<p><b>How will the TC group be asked to apply the new learning prior to the next team meeting?</b></p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> Delineate clear next steps for each member aligned to new learning and the meeting focus.</p>	

# APPENDIX G: Stages and Aligned Support Actions for Instructional Leadership Teams and Teacher Collaboration

STAGE 1: IMPLEMENTATION	STAGE 2: APPLICATION	STAGE 3: EVALUATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining meeting logistics (day, time, frequency)</li> <li>• Including key team members who serve as instructional leaders in various capacities</li> <li>• Using current plans as well as student and teacher data to identify needs</li> <li>• Setting goals to meet needs</li> <li>• Determining timeline for goal attainment and progress monitoring</li> <li>• Creating agendas/plans to identify actions that will be taken to meet needs</li> <li>• Communicating implementation actions to key stakeholders</li> <li>• Soliciting feedback from key stakeholders regarding implementation efforts</li> <li>• Determine what feedback to apply and finalize regarding implementation efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining actions needed to attain goals</li> <li>• Distributing leadership by assigning specific tasks to ILT/TC members</li> <li>• Identifying resources needed to support goal attainment</li> <li>• Using agendas/plans to conduct classroom, ILT, and/or TC observations to               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› determine what high-quality coaching and feedback will be provided;</li> <li>› ensure identified needs                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» are still relevant,</li> <li>» contextualized to a specific campus, grade level, or leader, and</li> <li>» are addressed through the ILT/TC.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Providing numerous opportunities for members to collaborate around a common need</li> <li>• Collecting relevant data</li> <li>• Reflecting upon relevant data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using relevant data to monitor progress towards goal attainment</li> <li>• Using relevant data and work samples from students and teachers to provide high-quality coaching and feedback to key stakeholders regarding instructional practices and use of HQIM</li> <li>• Using relevant data to identify any gaps in plans and/or support actions</li> <li>• Using qualitative and quantitative data to adjust plans and inform goals and agenda items</li> <li>• Using relevant data to determine whether ILT/TC sessions increased members' capacity to make instructional decisions</li> </ul>

# APPENDIX H: School System ILT Long Range Plan Template

Long-range plans detail the short term goals and actions in which ILTs engage to attain rigorous and realistic goals centered on improving learning and teaching. High-quality plans include a measurable goal, aligned, cycle of learnings, the resources utilized, and what actions occur after the meeting.

## Long Range Plan 20XX-20XX

### SYSTEM GOAL:

### CYCLE 1 TIMEFRAME:

Priority:

Short Term Goal (STG):

Week/Date	Topic/s	Outcomes	Objectives	Materials/ Resources	Progress/Next Steps

### CYCLE 2 TIMEFRAME:

Priority:

Short Term Goal (STG):

Week/Date	Topic/s	Outcomes	Objectives	Materials/ Resources	Progress/Next Steps

### CYCLE 3 TIMEFRAME:

Priority:

Short Term Goal (STG):

Week/Date	Topic/s	Outcomes	Objectives	Materials/ Resources	Progress/Next Steps

# APPENDIX I: LEADS Guidance

[GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS](#)

[GUIDANCE FOR SYSTEM LEADERS](#)

