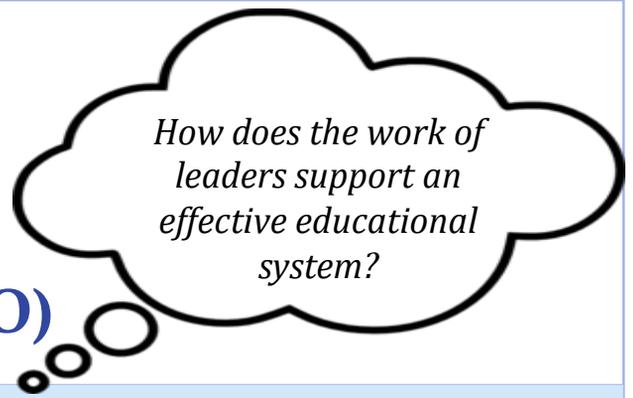


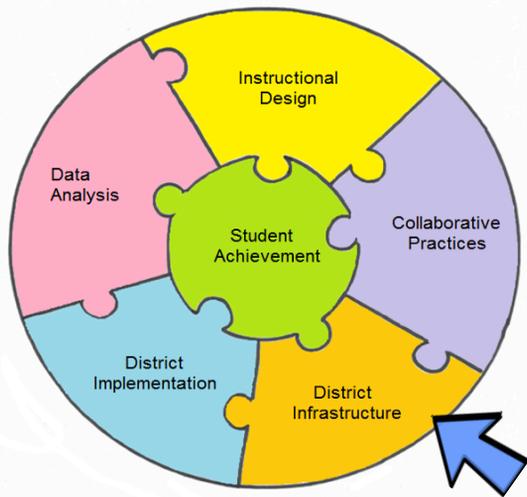
Critical Question #2

How do we teach effectively to ensure students are learning? (DO)



Fundamental Practice 4. The district's guaranteed and viable curriculum is consistently and equitably taught to mastery.

Districts and schools need clear policies and procedures as well as systems of accountability to ensure adopted standards and grade-level expectations are taught to mastery. This does not imply that teachers should not use their creativity to design engaging or innovative instruction or assessments in their classroom. It does, however, imply that through district policies, expectations, and accountability measures, every child should be assured access to the district's guaranteed and viable curriculum.

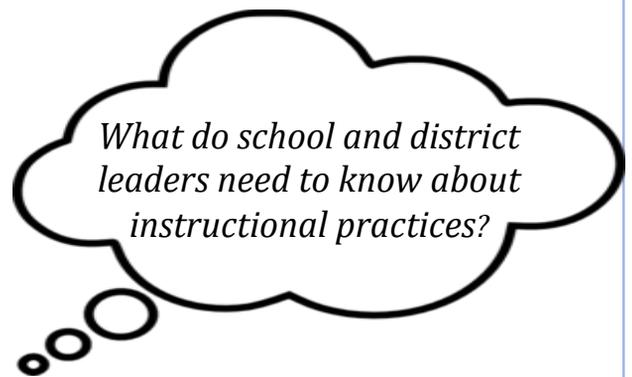
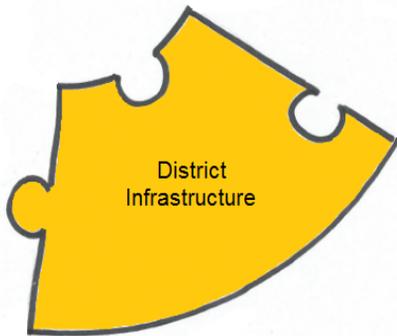


Guiding Questions:

- What policies and accountability systems are in place to ensure all students are provided access to a guaranteed and viable curriculum?
- How does the district communicate and monitor the expectation that all teachers teach the grade-level expectations and evidence outcomes identified in curriculum documents?
- What strategies are used by district and building leaders to monitor the implementation of district curriculum?

Reflections:

1. As a leader, what is my role in ensuring this fundamental practice is taking place in my district and schools?
2. What are current barriers that are getting in the way of successfully implementing this fundamental practice systemically in my district and schools?
3. When I return to my district/school, I will complete the following three action steps to begin enhancing our (my and my staff's) application of this fundamental practice:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____



What do School Leaders Need to Know About Instructional Practices?

Gene Bottoms, Senior Vice President of the Southern Regional Education Board and Founding Director of *High Schools That Work*, the Nation's Largest School Improvement Initiative for High School Leaders and Teachers answers the above question:

- School leaders should have a working knowledge of research-based, student-centered instruction, such as the Socratic method, project-based learning, cooperative learning, research studies, integration of technology into instructional strategies, and integration of academic and career/technical studies. They need to understand the conditions that will enable teachers to use these methods.
- Leaders must be able to recognize whether teachers are using instructional strategies effectively.
- They should know how to help teachers learn new instructional methods, how to gauge the amount of time it will take for teachers to master new techniques, and how to “network” teachers as they implement new approaches.
- They need to understand the amount of time it takes to plan effectively. Good instruction requires good planning. Teachers who are expected to teach higher-level content to more students need time to devise ways to connect what they are asking students to learn with what these students have learned or experienced in the past.
- School leaders should know enough about teaching and learning to be able to identify teachers who are doing the best job of raising student achievement. Why do students learn more in these teachers' classrooms? Exemplary teachers can deliver “model” lessons and invite other teachers to observe instruction in the classroom.
- School leaders must understand the school and classroom conditions that contribute to higher expectations. They need to be able to recognize whether such a “culture” exists in a classroom and to assist teachers (through mentors or other approaches) to expect more of students.

To read the entire article by Gene Bottoms and to learn more about *High Schools That Work* go to:

<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/district-policy-and-practice/Documents/What-Principals-Need-to-Know-About-Curriculum-and-Instruction.pdf>

The Florida Standards provide specific grade-level expectations that challenge students to reach their full potential. The Bureau of Standards & Instructional Support (BSIS) houses resources, guidance, and professional development to ensure access to rigorous academic content at: <http://www.fldoe.org/academics/standards>.

There are state agencies and discretionary projects that provide assistance for effectively implementing the FL Standards for ALL students, including specific resources for students with disabilities:

Florida Diagnostic & Learning Resources System

<http://www.fdlrs.org/>

Florida Inclusion Network

<http://www.floridainclusionnetwork.com/>

Project 10 – Transition Education Network

<http://project10.info/>

Professional development and technical support for implementing a Multi-Tiered System of Support is available from the:

Problem Solving/Response to Intervention (PS/RtI) Project

<http://www.floridarti.usf.edu/>



CPALMS (www.cpalms.org) is an online toolbox of information, vetted resources, and interactive tools that helps educators effectively implement teaching standards. It is the State of Florida's official source for standards information and course descriptions and is located at: www.floridastandards.org

Connect to Resources

For additional resources on this topic, visit the critical question 2, fundamental practice #4 section of the toolkit.