

The First

100

days

in the Main Office

TRANSFORMING A SCHOOL CULTURE



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Alan C. Jones

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Alan C. Jones



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Contents

Preface: What Would You Do on the First Day in Your New Office?	ix
Acknowledgments	xvii
1 Strong Instructional Cultures.....	1
The Noise of School Reform.....	1
Strong Cultures Connect the Dots	2
Resources.....	4
2 The Perfect Fit.....	11
Have You Left the Classroom?	11
We Need Answers.....	12
“Dr. Jones, What Do You Think About Tracking?”	14
Strong Cultures Define Values.....	16
3 The Central High Way	17
Listening Tour.....	19
A New Vocabulary for Central High.....	22
Why Are We Here?.....	25
“Dr. Jones Being Dr. Jones”	29
Strong Cultures Change Conversations	32
Resources.....	33
4 Bad Habits	41
A Tale of Two Cultures	43
Walking the Talk.....	44

	Up Close and Personal	48
	Strong Cultures Enact Values	52
	Resource	53
5	We Are All Superior Teachers.....	55
	Central High Teaching Script.....	56
	Pockets of Incompetence.....	58
	Strong Cultures Define What Matters Most.....	60
	Resources.....	63
6	“Blindsided”	65
	“See Me”	65
	Two Cultural Frameworks	66
	Strong Cultures Leverage What Matters Most.....	71
	Resources.....	73
7	The “I” in Team.....	81
	The “I” in Team Matters	82
	The “I” in Meetings Matters	85
	Strong Cultures Restore the “I” in Team.....	89
	Resources.....	91
8	Thinking Outside the Box	95
	STARS.....	97
	Asking the Wrong Question.....	100
	Strong Cultures Find the Right Balance Between Leading and Managing	101
	Resources.....	103
9	Valued Ends of Schooling.....	107
	Why Are We Here?.....	107
	Strong Cultures Do the Right Things	109
	Resource	111
10	Cultural Levers.....	113
	Doing the Right Things.....	113
	Cultural Lever #1: Purposes.....	116
	Cultural Lever #2: People.....	118
	Cultural Lever #3: Processes	122

Cultural Orientations	127
Resources.....	129
11 Enacting a Strong Instructional Culture	139
3000 Days Later: Lessons Learned.....	139
Developing Strong Instructional Cultures.....	147
Resource	149
References.....	151
About the Author.....	153

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P R E F A C E

What Would You Do on the First Day in Your New Office?

The idea for this book originated from a question I asked a former student of mine who had just signed a contract to become the principal of a high school. We were discussing the complexities of changing a school culture when I asked him the following question: “What would you do on the first day in your new office to change your school’s culture?” Without any hesitation, he answered: “I would ask data processing to send me the state test scores for the last 3 years.” The conversation continued as follows:

“Steve, after you looked at the student scores, what would you do then?”

“Well, Al, you know, I would share the data with stakeholders and develop a plan of action to raise the test scores.”

“What would that plan of action look like?”

“Well, there are a lot of programs on the market I could use. A lot of schools are using Marzano’s *What Works in Schools*.”

“How would that change the culture of a school building?”

“It would send the clear message that data would guide decision-making in this school.”

Nothing in this conversation provided a compelling answer to the essential question of schooling: “Why are we here?” Do teachers enter the profession to study data and implement canned instructional programs? Do children enter schools with the goals of doing well on multiple-choice tests and mastering learning objectives in prescribed time periods? Do schools exist to raise test scores and purchase data management systems? With this conversation in mind, I made it a point in my formal and informal contacts with school administrators to always ask the question: “What would you do on the first day in your new office to change your school’s culture?” The most common responses involved reviewing district documents, touring facilities, meeting staff, listening to stakeholders, and managing systems. In each conversation, school leaders populated their responses with the current jargon of school reform: learning communities, data mining, standards-based curriculum, differentiated learning, common core standards, formative assessment, race to the top, continuous improvement, etc.

While these responses encompass reasonable behaviors on the first day in the main office, not one of these actions possesses the capacity to connect educational values expressed in school mission statements—why we are here—to daily organizational and instructional routines. Each activity gives the appearance of leading, but produces no connections between beliefs, values, and practices. Although none of these responses would make or break a school culture, they do represent a pattern of thinking and behaving that holds out little possibility of fundamentally changing a school’s culture.

A school culture is determined by the bond formed between the answers to the essential question of schooling—Why are we here?—and how that question shows up in daily organizational and instructional routines. Listening to stakeholders, reviewing strategic plans, touring a facility, or looking at 3 years of test data, all affirm what a culture is. The primary objective of instructional leadership is not to affirm what a culture is, but to make it what it *ought to be*. Changing a school culture is a process of enacting substantive changes to the goals, beliefs, values, and practices already established in organizational and instructional routines. Each chapter in this book presents a series of managerial situations that all administrators will confront when they first move into the main office. Each situation presents an opportunity to replace comfortable organizational and instructional routines with fundamentally different ways of connecting the cultural dots.

Chapter 1 presents a framework for transforming the clamor of a noisy school culture into the determined voice of a strong instructional culture. In noisy school cultures, teachers spend the first days of school unpacking new program boxes, paging through new teacher evaluation binders, attending in-service sessions on the program of the day, or practicing the operating procedures for the new data management system. School leaders remove the noise in a school culture when they connect the cultural dots: Why are we here? What do we value? How do we enact our beliefs and values? A noisy culture finds its strong and determined cultural voice when school leaders take an active role in making certain that announced values become realities in daily organizational and instructional routines.

Chapter 2 describes a new school leader's search for a school home that shares his goal of developing a strong instructional culture. What he discovers in central office conference rooms are administrators more interested in his ability to manage a building than lead an instructional program. After turning down job offers based on his ability to tell, allocate, and inspect, he sits across from a superintendent who begins the interview with the question: "What do you think of tracking?" After an hour-long discussion of topics related to curriculum and instruction, the new school leader realizes that strong instructional cultures are top-down creations. New school leaders committed to the role of instructional leadership listen carefully for the right fit between the instructional leadership role they desire to play and the role that district level administrators expect them to play. School cultures remain noisy when central and main offices are on different cultural pages.

Chapter 3 describes a new school leader's response to the vocabularies and behaviors of an entrenched school culture: "The Central High Way." A new tone is set at Central High when the new school leader redefines Central High's understandings of the values that will drive a new vision for Central High: teaching, learning, performance, professionalism, collaboration, and execution. The school situations presented in this chapter provide the vocabularies, the managerial strategies, and documents that move a school culture from talk of implementation to talk of self-examination.

Chapter 4 describes a new school leader's response to a pattern of professional and instructional bad habits that have become the goals, beliefs and practices of the Central High way. The hometown culture of Central High sees no problem with drinking coffee in classrooms, locking tardy students out of classrooms, reading a newspaper during class, making frequent public address announcements, or leaving students unsupervised in lunchrooms. Looking back on his pointed responses to the bad habits of Central High, the new school leader concludes that there is no cultural middle

ground between comfortable organizational and instructional routines and the goals and practices of a strong instructional culture.

Chapter 5 describes a process for assessing the overall quality of a school's instructional program. If teaching matters most in a strong instructional culture, then new school leaders observe first-hand the teaching scripts that students follow each school day. The dominant teaching script at Central High consisted of teachers spending most of their time standing in front of the classroom transmitting facts and procedures, students spending most of their time taking notes or completing worksheets, and most of the time on Fridays was devoted to test-taking, game-playing, or video-watching. The daily grind of Central High's bureaucratic teaching model was interrupted by pockets of excellence that exhibited the type of transformative teaching designed to develop the thinking and communication skills listed in state and national standards. All thoughts of expanding the pockets of excellence at Central High, however, were crowded out by a small number of teachers who were unaware that their classes were poorly informed, poorly organized, and poorly managed. Central High's uninspiring instructional program was a product of a school culture that paid a lot of attention to the managerial documents that filled inboxes on top of main office desks and little attention to the instructional documents that were stored in boxes underneath those desks. What a new school leader finds in the box underneath his desk are the documents and forms that offer the opportunity to transform the Central High teaching script: teacher evaluation plans, unread teacher observation reports, teacher evaluation schedules, a five-year curriculum review cycle, and last year's subscription to *American Research Journal* (unread). For the remaining 100 days, a new school leader proceeds to implement the contents of the box underneath his desk.

Chapter 6 describes a process for leveraging a perceived policy "blind-side" into an administrative tool for advancing the beliefs, values, and practices of a new instructional regime. Most schools view unexpected policy mandates through an organizational lens: comply, but don't disrupt. Schools with strong instructional cultures view unexpected mandates through an instructional lens: disrupt and redesign. A new school leader employs a managerial script composed of three leadership moves—framing, educating, and implementing—to navigate a course between the district goal of minimizing disruptive practices and his or her goal of redefining Central High's teaching script.

Chapter 7 describes the central role the "I" in team plays in enacting the beliefs, values, and practices of a strong instructional culture. New school leaders enter main offices with the belief that collaborative

processes and team structures are key managerial tools for achieving organization goals. This long-taught managerial principle holds true in organizations with agreed-upon beliefs, values, and practices. School leaders who disrupt the beliefs, values, and practices of the schools they enter call into question the collaborative processes and team structures that have dictated the direction of a school's instructional culture. A new school leader restores the *I* in team by chairing meetings designed to educate, coach, and monitor teams that possess the proper knowledge and skills to enact a new vision of schooling.

Chapter 8 describes the process a new leader follows to implement a truancy program that conflicts with state mandates and the institutional goals and values of the Central High way. Although the program proves to be a success, a new school leader questions the professional, institutional, and community hoops he and a resource teacher were asked to jump through to bring eighteen alienated teenagers back to school. Thinking outside the box in schools dominated by inside-the-box goals, values, and practices calls upon new school leaders to find the right balance between leading change and managing routines: management without leadership is a strategy for stagnation; innovation without management is a strategy for confusion.

Chapter 9 presents the five aims of schooling that serve as the foundation for connecting the cultural dots of schooling: Why are we here? What do we believe? How should we enact our beliefs and values? Throughout the situations described in the first 100 days of school, a new school leader translates his aims of schooling into the goals and practices of Central High. Most administrators see little value in philosophy talk in main offices consumed with managing the crisis of the day or implementing this year's strategic plan. However, without a coherent response to the what, why, and how of schooling, school administrators lack the intellectual tools to properly critique the instructional programs they lead or to gather together all the essentials of schooling (methods, routines, programs, and policies) into a coherent instructional worldview.

Chapter 10 describes the three cultural levers that either pull a school's culture toward the achievement of managerial goals or pushes a school's culture towards the goals and practices of a strong instructional culture. Each cultural lever prompts school leaders to decide upon the goals and practices of doing things right or the goals and practices of doing the right things. Whatever direction in which new school leaders decide to push or pull cultural levers in their schools, they must be mindful of the cultural orientation of the schools they lead. The failure to pay attention to how

school communities define schooling will jam the cultural levers a new school leader attempts to push or pull.

The final chapter in this book lists twelve managerial lessons that serve as vehicles for enacting the beliefs, values, and practices of a strong instructional culture. Each lesson is based on a cultural model that emphasizes the role organizational structures play in advancing or impeding particular beliefs about teaching and learning. Decades of failed school reform initiatives record the consequences of forcing good theories into incompatible organizational structures. School cultures change only when the theories and practices they endorse are fully integrated into the goals, vocabularies, and practices of the organizational structures they occupy. Each chapter in this book ends with a resource guide that presents examples of managerial artifacts that offer new school leaders documents and conceptual frameworks to translate organizational theory into real school world practices.

This book presents a series of cultural situations that could occur early in a school year—the first 100 days. Each cultural situation offers a new school leader the opportunity to redefine the goals, values, and practices of an entrenched school culture—the Central High way. Administrators who pick up this book may view 100 days as an arbitrary number picked out of administrative thin air. I argue that disrupting and replacing organizational and instructional routines is a race against time. Every school day that goes by without some sign of creative destruction is one more day that comfortable organizational and instructional routines live on in main offices and classrooms. If the intent of a new school leader is to transform weak instructional cultures into strong instructional cultures, then the instructional and organizational manifestations of that strong instructional culture must be in place by December. This does not mean that when the school closes down for holiday break, faculty and staff will have a full understanding of the relationship between a new vision of schooling and what they practice in classrooms and offices. What *should* be clear to all faculty and staff, however, are the beliefs and values they carried into classrooms in September are now very different than the beliefs and values they are expected to enact in January.

Before the 100 Days Begin

Administrators who are drawn to managerial books with recipe-like titles—100 days—should be forewarned that the principles and strategies described in this book will only succeed in main offices that are educationally prepared to offer and implement a new educational perspective.

Advancing the goals and processes of a new school culture assumes that school administrators possess a clear educational direction in their minds. The process for developing a personal instructional worldview requires private readings of educational minds that challenge dominant instructional worldviews (Jones, 2013) and public dialogues with school communities that articulate a clear and coherent response to the fundamental questions of schooling: How do children learn? What knowledge is of greatest worth? How should knowledge be organized? How should we assess what students understand? *How should we teach?*

Changing a school culture is hard work. Each day in the main office will be a contest between organizational and instructional routines that value seat time over performance, credits over mastery, conformity over critical thinking, speed over thoughtfulness, coverage over understanding, and telling over dialogue. No matter how thoughtful an instructional worldview may be, changing comfortable organizational and instructional routines will invite formidable opposition from parents, teachers, and students who are heavily invested in a way of schooling that they believe is working for them. This book was written for administrators who are willing to step into the middle of the daily disagreements that will inevitably occur between comfortable ways of doing school and uncomfortable ways of educating students. Administrators who win the culture war enter main offices with the educational preparation to articulate a clear vision of how children learn and the managerial skills to implement that vision in the organizational and instructional routines of the schools they lead.

A Note on the First Person Narrative

The intent of this book is two-fold: first, to bring back into the school reform conversation the vital role beliefs and values play in successfully implementing organizational and instructional changes; and second, to describe how a school leader would perform the complex task of translating a set of beliefs and values into daily organizational and instructional routines. I decided that the best approach for converting the abstractions of beliefs and values into the daily routines of main offices was to tell a story, in the first person, of how a new entrant into a main office carries out the daily tasks of redefining the goals, values, and practices of an entrenched school culture. The situations, the conversations, the decisions, and the characters in this story of cultural change are representative of what goes on in main offices during the first 100 days of a school year. The thinking and decisions of our new school leader, however, are not representative of the normal managerial response that emerges from most main offices. Our new school

leader, instead, pushes and pulls a series of cultural levers that both disrupt and redefine established norms of leading, managing, and teaching. Each cultural lever that is pushed or pulled, each decision that is enacted, and each conversation that transpires, brings to life a theory of cultural change. While the characters and situations in this cultural narrative will differ from school to school, the cultural levers described in each chapter in this book are present in all school settings. If I tell this story well, by the end of this book, school leaders will know what levers they need to push or pull to make fundamental changes to the beliefs, values, and practices of an entrenched school culture.

Acknowledgments

The *First 100 Days in the Main Office* describes a series of situations that a new school leader would encounter in the opening months of a school year. Each situation presents the new school leader with opportunities to redefine the beliefs, vocabularies, and practices of an entrenched school culture. The new leader must be educationally and managerially prepared to pursue the organizational and instructional strategies necessary to enact a new educational vision.

The educational vision described in this book is a product of my learning process involving a personal dialogue about teaching methods that were not working in my classroom and educators who informed me why those methods were not working with the children and adolescents we served. Among these educators are Harry S. Broudy, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Larry Cuban, Linda Darling-Hammond, John Dewey, Elliot Eisner, John Goodlad, Howard Gardner, Philip W. Jackson, Dan Lortie, Debra Meier, Dianne Ravitch, Seymour Sarason, and Ted Sizer.

I worked under three supervisors who mentored me with the managerial skills to organize a school to accommodate my educational vision: Maury Gladstone taught me that learning is more about emotion than intellect; George Bieber taught me that behind every great idea is a well-designed system; and Richard Kamm taught me that no matter how good an idea may be, politics will always have the last say. Along with these real-world mentors were organizational theorists who provided principles of management that supported the supervisory and managerial practices described in this book.

Among these theorists are Warren Bennis, Clayton M. Christensen, Jim Collins, W. Edwards Deming, Peter F. Drucker, Henry Mintzberg, Donald A. Schön, and Karl E. Weick.

Even with these educational and organizational fundamentals in place, changing an entrenched school culture, whether in 100 days or longer, would not be possible without the support of a board of education, a superintendent, and an administrative team willing to take a leap of faith into a new vision of schooling. Superintendent Richard Kamm, and Board Members Karen Costal, Larry Hapgood, Michael Mueller, Rich Nagel, Richard Sackett, Debra Skidgel, Joe Vavrek, and Norma Wienecke found the right balance between keeping a new principal grounded in the realities of the community they served and supporting the often emotional process of disrupting comfortable organizational and instructional routines.

The glue holding together the valued ends of schooling and the daily organizational and instructional routines was an administrative team who possessed the academic backgrounds to grasp the theories and practices of new pedagogies and the organizational abilities to translate those theories into every day routines of classroom instruction. Gail Aronoff, Maura Bridges, John Highland, Marianne Melvin, and Dick Waterhouse were instrumental in developing systems that ask only one question of staff and faculty: How can we make students successful in this school? Marjorie Appel, Joe Crickard, Paul Junkroski, Tom McCann, George Strecker, and Lee Yunker were department chairpersons who embraced the role of instructional leader and demonstrated the courage to act upon a culture of low expectations.

My motivation to continually write books on instructional leadership is driven by a professional responsibility to provide school communities with strategies to close the gap between school systems designed to implement institutional goals—accreditation and control—and school systems designed to implement educational goals—enlightenment and liberation. The personal motivation to think and write about instructional leadership and school reform is the continual dialogue I end up having with my editor-in-chief, Amy Daly. Not only is Amy an expert editor, but, more importantly, she writes comments in margins that often shift how I think about presenting the themes and strategies I propose in my books.

Finally, I have a wife, son, and daughter, who, over the years, have never been bashful about telling me how the real world of schooling works. Often, in the middle of expounding on strategies for transforming schools, Matthew would describe to me the fine art of how students “do school,” Amanda would describe to me how students “should do school,” and Linda, my

wife and school administrator, would describe to me what schools do not do for their students. Over the years, all three perspectives have kept me grounded in what schools are and what they could become.

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Strong Instructional Cultures

The Noise of School Reform

No school is a cultural blank slate. When school leaders enter their school buildings for the first time, their main offices are surrounded by classrooms, hallways, and common areas occupied with thick beliefs about teaching, learning, performance, professionalism, and school management. Most of these thick beliefs have been constructed over years to make sense out of the noise of countless legislative mandates, school reform ideologies, learning theories, community goals and concerns, and the managerial bents of the past and present administrative regimes. School cultures bring some semblance of order to the noise of reforms and techniques of the day by fitting yearly goals, methods, and managerial bents into standardized organizational and instructional routines: teaching becomes telling; learning becomes listening; performance becomes test scores; professionalism becomes compliance; and school leadership becomes telling, allocating, and inspecting. While getting through the school day is an understandable response to yearly changes in the goals and methods of schooling, the culture produced in these schools are thin on the attitudes, habits, abilities, and skills necessary to develop a strong instructional culture.

In noisy school cultures, teachers spend the first days of school unpacking new program boxes, opening up new teacher evaluation binders, or receiving a workshop schedule for the new data management system. Each new box, each new binder, and each new technology contain appropriate forms for documenting the implementation of the new reform initiative of the year. At the bottom of each form is a place for the signature of the administrator who will verify the correct implementation of programs in boxes, plans in binders, and data points in computer systems. What transforms the noise of opening day speeches into a distinct and strong instructional voice?

Strong Cultures Connect the Dots

Strong instructional cultures are composed of four cultural functions that replace the noise of announcing program initiatives, allocating materials, and collecting documents with the voice of purposing and enacting (see Figure 1.1). Each function plays a distinct role in connecting the valued ends of schooling to classroom instruction. Strong cultural voices are housed in schools where school leaders have connected the cultural dots: the agreed upon purposes of schooling are embedded in the beliefs, values, and practices of staff and faculty.

What should a school’s cultural voice look like? There is no one right answer to what purposes, beliefs, values, and organizational arrangements a school leader should pursue. Resources 1.1 through 1.4 illustrate several versions of the *why*, *what*, and *how* of schooling. The version of schooling that school leaders decide to endorse depends upon their educational and

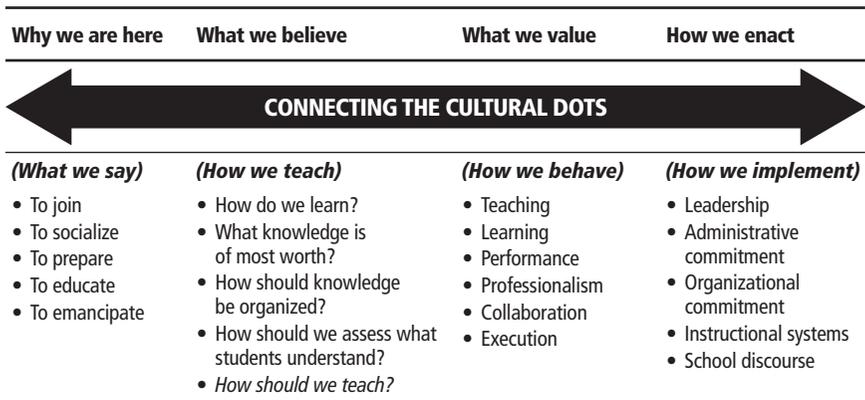


Figure 1.1 Strong cultural voice.

managerial preparation and the particular school circumstances that exist in the main offices they enter. What transforms the noise of school visions and situational variables into a strong cultural voice is the tight coupling of clearly articulated purposes and beliefs of schooling with a leader's personal participation in the enactment of those purposes and beliefs in main offices and in classrooms. Noisy cultures find their cultural voice when school leaders assume an active role in making certain that announced purposes and beliefs are enacted in daily organizational and instructional routines.

- If teaching is valued, then school leaders are actively involved in classroom supervision.
- If learning is valued, then school leaders do not permit intercom announcements to interrupt the school's instructional program.
- If collaboration is valued, then school leaders chair meetings that are goal-oriented and thoughtful.
- If implementation is valued, then school leaders design organizational routines that are competently performed.
- If performance is valued, then school leaders hold teachers accountable for weak teaching.

Each chapter in this book presents a situation that all school leaders will confront in the first 100 days of a school year. Each situation offers an opportunity for a new school leader to develop a strong cultural voice: the connection of the why, what, and how of schooling. There is no correct managerial answer to the problems each situation poses. Although an organizational outcome is presented for each situation, readers of this book should concentrate on the purposes, beliefs, values, and practices that they choose to develop and how the school leader participates in the implementation of each cultural function. Changing a school culture is a process, not a destination. Beginning a school year with a focus on raising test scores, reducing absenteeism, increasing graduation rates, or being number one at some school variable, directs thinking toward the noise of implementation and away from the voice of purposes, beliefs, and values. Developing an interesting and engaging curriculum that is taught thoughtfully by knowledgeable and caring teachers is the voice of a strong instructional culture. The sound and volume of a school's cultural voice is unimportant. The *clarity* of that voice is what matters most. A clear cultural voice grows out of the persistent enactment of the purposes, beliefs, values, and practices of a strong instructional culture (see Resource 1.4). School leaders who master the knowledge and skills necessary to maintain a school's strong cultural voice produce a quality of thinking and a sense of agency that positively impact all measures of schooling.

Resources

Resource 1.1 *Why Are We Here?*

Goals of Schooling	
To Join	How do I effectively participate in a democratic community?
To Socialize	How should I behave?
To Prepare	What do I want to become and how can I do it well?
To Educate	What is true, good, and beautiful?
To Emancipate	Who am I?

Resource 1.2 *What We Believe*

Fundamental Questions of Schooling	To Prepare	To Educate
What are our goals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prepare for an occupation • To become proficient with a skill • To follow directions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To pursue truth and rationality • To become an analytical thinker and problem solver • To question authority
How do children learn?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transmit • Take notes • Feedback • Memorize • Practice • Re-teach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquiry • Discovery • Model • Facilitate • Discuss • Stories • Projects
What knowledge is of most worth?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facts • Procedures • Definitions • Objective truths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big questions • Big ideas • Theories • Cultural tools
How should knowledge be organized?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Units (in textbooks) • Chapters (in textbooks) • Course objectives • Align with standards • Coverage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concepts • Themes • Interdisciplinary • Depth

Resource 1.2 *What We Believe (continued)*

Fundamental Questions of Schooling	To Prepare	To Educate
How should we assess what students understand?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice • Matching • How many rights and wrong • Grades • Ranking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performances • Projects • Exhibitions • Rubrics
How should we teach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives • Present information • Model • Check for understanding • Guided practice • Independent practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate • Model • Demonstrate • Simulate • Manipulatives • Question • Design • Discuss
What skills do we emphasize?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associative • Replicative • Means, methods, routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicative • Interpretative • Ends, perspectives, models, preferences
What should our students' dispositions be?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking for common sense solutions • What worked in the past • Follow directions • Avoidance of conflict • Value systems over human judgment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imaginative • Questioning assumptions • Awareness of complexity • Seeing other perspectives • Awareness of limitations of knowledge • Putting in proper context • Open-mindedness

Resource 1.3 *What We Value*

School Function	Beliefs	Principle	Practice
Teaching	<i>is</i> what matters most in schooling	Quality learning experiences are solely dependent on the employment, development, and supervision of quality teachers.	District/school has fully enacted the five instructional systems for employing, mentoring, and supervising teachers (see Resource 1.4)
Learning	<i>is</i> the full engagement of a child's social need to be known, the emotional need to be interested, and the intellectual need to understand.	All students look to schools to honor their diverse talents, abilities, and interests.	Organizational and instructional routines should be flexible, experimental, and do no harm.
Performance	<i>is</i> providing quality educational experiences based on students' expectations and needs.	The goal of all performance indicators and criteria is to close the gap between ideal models of teaching and learning and classroom realities.	School staff receives continuous feedback on agreed-upon criteria for effective teaching.
Professionalism	<i>is</i> reflection on practice.	Reflective practitioners employ purposeful methods of inquiry to resolve instructional problems and to continually improve classroom decision-making.	Administration provides the time, space, materials, and expertise for peer coaching and the design of professional development plans that reflect gaps in performance.
Collaboration	<i>is</i> intelligent participation.	Participants in meetings or conversations are respectful, flexible, informed, and thoughtful.	All meetings are problem-focused and outcomes-oriented.
Execution	<i>is</i> doing small things well.	School staff is efficient, competent, professional, and responsive.	All requests/questions by staff are answered in a timely, respectful, knowledgeable, and effective manner.

Resource 1.4 *How We Enact*

Fully Enacted

Function: Leadership

- **PURPOSE**
Provide a coherent response to the five fundamental questions of schooling: LEARN, WORTH, ORGANIZE, ASSESS, and TEACH.
- **FRAME**
Author a narrative that explains the relationship between an instructional problem, a theory-driven strategy for resolving the problem, and the organizational capacity to implement the strategy.
- **CHALLENGE**
Confront strongly held assumptions, beliefs, and practices about teaching and learning.
- **INTERPRET**
Apply theory-driven instructional initiatives to practical realities of the classroom: adopt, adapt, or ignore.
- **LEVERAGE**
Enhance prior knowledge and skills.
- **ALLOCATE**
Position the appropriate resources (personnel, space, time, materials, expertise) in the right place at the right time.
- **IMPLEMENT**
Link goals (purpose + frame) with objectives (challenge + interpret + leverage + allocate) to achieve desired outcomes.

Function: Instructional Systems: Curriculum Development

- Protocols conform to goals and content of school's instructional worldview.
- Protocols advance the goals and methods of transformative teaching within each system.
- *Protocols:*
 - ▶ Based on our agreed-upon instructional worldview:
 - What will be the source of curriculum content?
 - What knowledge is of most worth?
 - How should knowledge be organized?
 - How will we assess what students understand?
 - What pedagogies will we employ to teach our curriculum?

Function: Instructional Systems: Employment

- Protocols conform to goals and content of school's instructional worldview.
- Protocols advance the goals and methods of transformative teaching within each system.
- *Protocols:*
 - ▶ Employment process begins in a timely manner.
 - ▶ Job descriptions exist for all positions.
 - ▶ Process exists for screening candidates.
 - ▶ Interview protocols exist for all positions.
 - ▶ Process exists for verifying recommendations.
 - ▶ Process exists for observing candidates' performances.
 - ▶ Process exists for determining final employment decision.

Resource 1.4 *How We Enact (continued)*

<p>Function: Instructional Systems: Mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols conform to goals and content of school’s instructional worldview. • Protocols advance the goals and methods of transformative teaching within each system. • <i>Protocols:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Beginning teacher assignment reflects optimum working conditions. ▶ Mentor understands and has demonstrated the effective implementation of school’s instructional worldview. ▶ Mentor is qualified to assist beginning teacher with subject matter content. ▶ Mentor is qualified to assist beginning teacher with appropriate pedagogies. ▶ Mentor is qualified to conduct instructional conversations. 	
<p>Function: Instructional Systems: Teacher Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols conform to goals and content of school’s instructional worldview. • Protocols advance the goals and methods of transformative teaching within each system. • <i>Protocols:</i> 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Supervisors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are trained (Cognitive Coaching) • Are subject matter specialists • Have time to participate in continuous learning cycles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Different Standards of Performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectations, Timelines, Procedures • Novice → Expert
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Multiple Sources of Information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observations, Self-Assessments, Surveys (students) • Outcomes (student products → standardized measures)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Framework for Observing Quality Teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on classroom teaching (not employment duties) • Aligns with instructional worldview • Authored by school staff (in each subject area) • COHERENT: purpose → discourse → activities → subject matter representation → products
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common vocabularies • Continuous and timely • Reflection on practice
<p>Function: Instructional Systems: Professional Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocols conform to goals and content of school’s instructional worldview. • Protocols advance the goals and methods of transformative teaching within each system. • <i>Protocols:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Focused on student performance (not raising test scores) ▶ Teacher involvement (problem + experience + thinking) ▶ School-based (this is our problem) ▶ Collaborative problem-solving (purposeful) ▶ Continuous and supportive (duration) ▶ Requires theoretical and/ or content understanding ▶ Part of a comprehensive change process 	

Resource 1.4 *How We Enact (continued)*

Function: Administrative Commitment

- Focus on instruction.
- Participate in training regime.
- Deeply understand instructional worldview.
- Adeptly conduct instructional conversations.
- Regularly employ purposeful approaches to problem-solving.
- Redefine state/district mandates.

Function: Organizational Commitment

- Align instructional initiatives with instructional worldview.
- Align resource allocation with instructional worldview.
- Regularly adjust resource allocation.
- Participate in implementing instructional initiatives.
- Protect instructional time.
- Limit the number and type of instructional initiatives.
- Adapt school routines to goals and content of instructional initiatives.

Function: School Discourse

- Honor diverse abilities, talents, and aspirations of student population.
- Believe that parents are making best efforts to support the goals of schooling.
- Demonstrate deep understandings of curriculum and instruction.
- Demonstrate deep understandings of contemporary educational research.
- Remain open to differing models of curriculum and instruction.
- Ensure that meetings are deliberate and focused on teaching and learning.
- Use reflection on practice to evidence a purposeful approach to problem solving.

Function: Execution

- *Professional:* School staff is dedicated to continuous improvement of knowledge and skills.
- *Responsive:* Questions, information, and services are forwarded to the proper offices and personnel.
- *Competent:* School staff is knowledgeable and skillful.
- *Efficient:* Answers, information, and services are provided in a timely manner.

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2

The Perfect Fit

Have You Left the Classroom?

All aspiring administrators reach a point in their careers when they feel they are ready to make the move into the main office. I possessed the right educational credentials and felt there was little left to learn in my apprenticeship next to the main office. As a relatively inexperienced administrator, I was surprised by the number of schools that took an interest in my thin resume. I assumed that my background in curriculum and instruction was the credential that drew attention to my application. As I advanced further in the application process, I realized that the teams interviewing me cared little about that.

All of my interviews followed a similar script. Upon entering, I was handed a thick, professionally-prepared folder containing spreadsheets, charts, local newspaper stories, and the district's strategic plan. I was ushered into a district conference room where I was introduced to district administrative teams and where I heard briefly from the superintendent about the district's commitment to excellence. I was asked scripted questions by a team of administrators, teachers, staff, and students. The content and pattern of questions sought the strategies I would employ to resolve

various problematic situations involving student discipline, underperforming personnel, and a variety of system failures. The focus of the morning interview session was clearly not the substance of my responses. Administrators around the conference table were most interested in whether or not I had made the transition from thinking like a teacher to thinking like an administrator. Based on the questions and scenarios I was asked to resolve, thinking like an administrator meant being willing and able to tell teachers and students what to do, how to do it, and what would happen to them if they did not do it (telling, allocating, and inspecting).

My experience as an assistant principal prepared me well for the morning session. Although I was never comfortable with the vocabulary and strategies of telling, allocating, and inspecting, I understood perfectly well what the administrators seated around the conference table wanted to hear. After the obligatory comments about diversity, collaboration, and walking the talk, administrators leaned forward in their chairs when I described managerial experiences that demonstrated my ability to implement programs, policies, and procedures. When I left the morning session for lunch, I understood the brutal reality of school administration: was I ready for the role of telling, allocating, and inspecting? The afternoon session would confirm my impression that leadership as defined in those conference rooms was more about implementing answers than asking the right questions.

We Need Answers

When I entered the conference room for the afternoon session, all that remained of the interviewing team was a small group of central office and building administrators. The superintendent then entered the room for what became the real purpose of the interview: what did I know and how would I address district problems that were really upsetting the school community. The problems that were presented to me fell into five categories: unruly student bodies, underperforming extra-curricular activities programs, underperforming academic programs, noncompliant personnel, or an unmanageable societal problem. Table 2.1 summarizes the problems the administrative teams asked me to solve. Recalling the lessons I learned next to the main office, I provided one or more of the following solutions to the problems that were posed by the administrative team: a new rule; a new consequence; a new program; a new system; a change in personnel; or a new strategy for telling, allocating, and inspecting. Along with each proposed solution, I included the appropriate organizational or educational terminology to lend legitimacy to my response. In the case of excessive absences, I proposed a new rule and consequence for nonattendance. I added

TABLE 2.1 Solve This Problem	
Area of Concern	The Problem
Unruly student bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gangs • Fighting • Food fights • Weapons • Student dress • Fan behavior • Tardiness • Absenteeism
Underperforming extra-curricular programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of school spirit • Underperforming athletic programs • Low student participation • Low community support
Underperforming academic programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low test scores • Educating diverse student populations • Underperforming teachers • Lack of course offerings
Underperforming personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low morale • Incompetent or burned out teachers/staff • Low engagement with staff development offerings • Resistance to changing traditional teaching strategies
Unmanageable social problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drugs • Bullying • Difficulty accommodating diverse cultures • Students distracted by electronic devices

to this solution the adoption of a data management program that would provide demographic information on students who were frequently absent from school. In the case of low morale, I proposed the adoption of the “FISH” program that would serve as a perfect introduction to my administrative interest in learning communities. I concluded my responses with a brief description of how I would reconfigure one or more systems in the school to accommodate the new rule, the new program, or the new change in personnel.

In each of these interview sessions, I made several attempts to move the conversation from talk of resources, rules, programs, and systems to talk of strategies to change the goals and practices of a bureaucratic model of schooling that was actually the root cause of these problems. Any talk of the shortcomings of outdated teaching methods and curriculum was abruptly stopped with the comment: “Our district’s instructional program is world-class.” The administrators I sat with in district conference rooms were uninterested in discussing the big educational goals espoused on the cover of their district’s public relations packet. They were only interested in the

implementation of small managerial answers to the spreadsheets, policies, and procedures that filled that packet. It became clear to me throughout these interviews that my movement to the main office would largely depend on my ability to solve the crisis of the day and manage the contents of the public relations packet.

“Dr. Jones, What Do You Think About Tracking?”

Early on in the application process, I was pleased to receive several phone calls from superintendents inviting me to become a principal of a school in their districts. Although they offered financially attractive contracts, the types of questions they asked me in those conference rooms did not fit with the reasons I wanted to lead a school. I left each of these interviews believing that I had the skills to solve the managerial problems posed to me. However, I was troubled that the conversations were focused solely on the implementation of short-term solutions for what I perceived to be deep-seated problems with the goals and practices of institutional schooling. Although my interview responses offered tried and true managerial strategies, I knew from my experiences next to main offices that these solutions were at best temporary stopgap measures, and at worst, measures that would deepen and prolong school-wide problems. I did not want to become a principal to solve the consequences of a model of schooling that worked for very few students. I was looking for a school home where central office administrators showed some hint of understanding that maybe the causes of absenteeism, low test scores, or anemic activities programs, might reside in organizational and instructional configurations of the schools they led.

I saw that hint of understanding in an interview process that was very different than the processes I had encountered so far. In this interview, there were no conference rooms, teams of administrators, or teams of any kind—just the superintendent and I sitting in his office for what he called a “morning chat.” After the typical questions about my background and family, the superintendent asked me the first in a series of unusual questions: “Dr. Jones, what do you think about tracking?” I held strong views on the practice that were in opposition to the practices of most high schools in the area. The superintendent noticed my hesitation and the conversation continued as follows:

“Dr. Jones, I read your resume closely. I would think that with your background you would have a position on this issue.”

“I do, Dr. Smith. I believe that tracking is harmful for lower ability students. Lower tracks, especially in a large high school like this, are filled

with too many worksheets and too little academic content. I would look at course configurations that would reduce the number of tracks in the curriculum without losing the academic rigor in targeted subjects. Students who struggled in these higher tracks would receive the instructional support they need to succeed in upper level academic course work.”

“What do you mean by instructional support? Does that mean some form of pull out program?”

“No, not all. I am not a big fan of remedial programs. A better strategy is to design a curriculum that seeks a balance between subject matter skills and the concepts that make a subject meaningful. Unfortunately, the basic skills tracks in most schools transform the richness of an academic discipline into a daily grind of worksheets, drills, and quizzes.”

“What do you think about weighted grades?”

At this point in our chat, I felt I had nothing to lose.

“I am opposed to weighted grades. Putting aside the arbitrary assignment of different point values to courses, awarding more credits for higher-level courses is based on the faulty assumption that students in upper level classes are working harder than students in lower level classes. In the classes I have observed, students in algebra are working every bit as hard as students in AP calculus. I am not interested in designing credentialing systems for higher education. My focus is to design courses that truly engage all students in the kinds of thinking and communication listed in this district’s mission statement.”

“What do you think of the common core standards?”

“Dr. Smith, I am always uncomfortable with any terminology that reduces the interpretative goals of educating to the production goals of training. Standards work well with cars, not children. However, I do believe that teachers with the proper academic backgrounds know what high levels of performance look like in their subject areas. The low levels of thinking and communication in our classrooms are not caused by the lack of high subject matter standards—high standards have always existed in our classrooms. Our classrooms do not yet have a way to make those high standards meaningful for diverse student bodies.”

The chat continued for about an hour with a full interrogation of my views on educational goals, teacher evaluation, curriculum organization, assessment, and models of teaching. Not one question was similar to those asked in the district conference rooms that were seeking short-term managerial solutions. The nature of the questions he asked me diverted my attention from how well I was performing to how well I was thinking. The other

indication that the superintendent and I were on the same instructional page was the additional educational questions he asked me as he escorted me to my car in the parking lot. It would take me several years in the main office of that school to understand that my effectiveness as an instructional leader was largely dependent on a perfect fit between my beliefs, values, and practices of schooling and the beliefs, values, and practices of schooling of my new superintendent.

Strong Cultures Define Values

Conflicts and misunderstandings over the goals and processes of schooling are the source of weak school cultures. Instead of a single-minded pursuit of a coherent strategy for improving student achievement, weak school cultures waste large amounts of time, energy, and resources on trying to make collective sense out of confused understandings of what goals schools should be pursuing and managerial sense out of the confused implementation of organizational and instructional initiatives. Superintendents begin the school year extolling the *educational* goals listed in school mission statements—critical thinking, child-centered; which are largely ignored in school buildings pursuing real world *institutional* goals—accreditation, high test scores.

All school cultures are developed around a continual contest between the goals and methods found in school mission statements and the goals and methods mandated in national and state policy documents. Mission statement goals play into the strengths of instructional *leadership*: educate, facilitate, and coach. Institutional and policy goals play into the strengths of instructional *management*: tell, allocate, and inspect. Any hope of changing a school culture will quickly evaporate in school districts where central offices want their new principal to manage. Developing and implementing a strong instructional culture requires a shared instructional identity between district visions and building practices.

New school leaders committed to the role of instructional leadership should listen carefully for the right fit between the instructional leadership role they desire and the role that district level administrators expect them to play. When new school leaders enter new superintendents' offices to sign their contracts, they must know that the educational vision at the top of the organization is fully committed to the instructional practices at the bottom of the organization. Months before their first day, new school leaders must be confident that their bosses in the central offices are on the same cultural page they will be on in the main office.

The Central High Way

THE SITUATION:

“Who is in charge of curriculum and instruction?”

The main office I walked into on the first day was hurriedly preparing for student registration. Before I could unlock the door to my new office, Mary, my new secretary, asked me if I could take time to meet with a teacher about his teaching assignment for the coming school year.

“Go ahead Mary, set up an appointment.”

“Dr. Jones, Mr. Silver said that it is urgent that he see you today. He is seated in the reception area.”

“Mary, just give me a few minutes.”

I walked into an office with an overflowing inbox, call slips covering the top of my desk, and multiple lights blinking from two phones next to my

desk. Before I could even clean off my desk for my meeting with Mr. Silver, the Director of Guidance walked into my office.

“Dr. Jones, welcome to Central High. Just an FYI, we are having major problems with the student schedules that were printed out this morning.”

“Bill, can it wait until this afternoon?”

“Well, we are already past the deadline to rerun the schedules. The business department has already started running payroll. The payroll run typically takes two days. Registration begins on Thursday.”

“I will come over in half an hour.”

I went out into the reception area to greet Mr. Silver.

“Dr. Jones, I know I should be talking to my department chair, but Mark (the department chairperson) will not budge on this matter. For the last 10 years, I taught honors level American history. Next year, Mark assigned me two honors classes, two regular classes, and one Introduction to Social Studies class. When I questioned my assignment, Mark said he wanted to spread course assignments more evenly amongst new and senior teachers. That is not how things are done at Central High. Seniority has always been the main criteria for course assignments.”

“Mr. Silver, let me talk with Mark before I make any decisions on this matter.”

“Dr. Jones, I know this is your first day on the job, but I want a decision today. I have been getting the run around on this issue for 2 weeks. I want to have this whole matter resolved before I leave school today. If I don’t receive an answer today, then I’m going to the union.”

I walked into the guidance director’s office in the middle of a heated exchange over a request to change a student’s schedule:

“Jeff, you can’t drop a course now. The deadline for dropping courses was in March. There are no exceptions. Even if I dropped this course, there is no guarantee I can fit a new course into your schedule without rearranging the schedule you signed off on in March. At this point in the registration process, your schedule is locked in.”

After lunch, I chaired the first meeting of my new administrative team. I went around the conference table asking each member of the team for a summary of his or her administrative responsibilities. For the next hour, I listened to team members describe the particulars of keeping hallways clean, making sure buses arrived on time, and enforcing the school discipline code. At the end of the hour, I asked members of the administrative team who was responsible for supervising the instructional program.

“Well, Dr. Jones, the department chairpersons pretty much handle that. Most of us do not have the subject matter backgrounds to be of much help to teachers. Even if we had the background, our administrative duties leave us with little time to deal with curriculum and instruction.”

“Who evaluates teachers?”

“Dr. Jones, that is a contractual matter. Each of us is assigned a certain number of teachers to evaluate each year. We use the Danielson model. The contract requires that we evaluate only half of the staff each year. We usually begin evaluating teachers after the holiday break. All evaluations must be completed before the March board meeting. I think we would all admit that it is a real challenge to complete all those write-ups in 2 months.”

Before leaving school on my first day in the main office, I walked over to the data processing office to get a better idea how the scheduling process worked at Central High.

“Bob, I’m Alan Jones, the new principal. I understand from the guidance department that we are experiencing some problems with student schedules.”

“Dr. Jones I have been doing this job for a long time. I wrote the scheduling program from scratch. Two principals and three superintendents before you have commended me on the performance of the scheduling program.”

“Bob, when you complete the first run of the program, how many students have complete schedules?”

“I would say approximately 75% have complete schedules. The remaining 25% are hand scheduled.”

“Bob, hand scheduling a school of this size must be very labor intensive.”

“It is, Dr. Jones. In fact, on the first day of school only about 80% of our students have complete schedules.

“What happens to the other 20%?”

“They sit in the guidance office for the first few days of school until one of the counselors can straighten their schedule out.”

Listening Tour

I spent the first 3 weeks at Central High sitting in department offices, administrative offices, the teachers’ lounge, the faculty cafeteria, and attending a number of school events. In each of these venues, I listened to how the

school community talked about Central High. The themes that emerged from those conversations are summarized below.

Teacher Talk

Teachers were most concerned with the organizational and community obstacles to achieving classroom goals. They began conversations with the assumption that they were all superior educators. They ended their conversations with the lament that their teaching skills could not be fully enacted until administrators and parents were ready to provide the proper human, organizational, and material resources to support their efforts in classrooms. The most frequent “if only” requests of the teachers at Central High centered on reduced class sizes, more planning time, and the swift removal of disruptive students. Even if these wishes were granted, teachers at Central High believed that the working-class community they served was unable to provide the necessary academic habits to match the achievement levels of neighboring upper-class communities.

There was little social or school spirit talk from the teachers at Central High. For the most part, they were able to wall off their classrooms from the extracurricular diversions of high school. What little professional talk I heard focused on managerial matters—scheduling and allocation of materials—and negative critiques of yearly staff development programs. The only semblance of a coherent educational philosophy was the school-wide belief that equated quality teaching with idiosyncratic teaching practices. Every Central High teacher I talked with recounted a story of a colleague with a special technique or personal trait that motivated even the most recalcitrant student.

An unexpected theme that emerged in teacher work areas was an almost missionary commitment to creating an inclusionary environment for our growing Hispanic population. The teachers I talked with appeared to see no contradiction between their expression of inclusionary ideals and their exclusionary instructional practices, which penalized Hispanic students for their weak language skills, poor academic preparation, and erratic attendance.

Administrative Talk

Administrators were most concerned with finding enough time to perform their assigned managerial duties. Administrators felt that they had little control over their calendars. Their daily “to do” lists were continually

being disrupted by an unhappy parent, an unhappy teacher, an unruly student, an underperforming system, or an unexpected crisis.

Although each administrator on my team expressed frustration with finding the right balance between managing interruptions and managing job responsibilities, every administrator possessed the organizational and interpersonal skills to do both well. There was no mention of instructional leadership in any of these administrative conversations. The administrative team I inherited viewed themselves as problem solvers and implementers. What went on in classrooms was rarely on their daily “to do” lists. The fires they put out were seldom extinguished for long.

Department Talk

Similar to members of my administrative team, department chairpersons lamented the lack of time to complete managerial duties. All department chairs were upset with the lack of administrative support for what teachers cared most about: small class sizes, more planning time, and stricter enforcement of the discipline code. Added to these structural frustrations were tiny budgets that left no money for quality staff development opportunities. Concerns about class size brought out real emotion in these conversations. Every department chairperson was upset with what they perceived as a steady rise in class enrollments: “Dr. Jones, it is almost impossible to give the kind of individual attention our students require when you have thirty or more students in your class.”

Except for the repeated concern with large class sizes and the worthlessness of staff development programs, there was no mention of the quality of teaching in their departments or how subject matter was treated in their departments. The responses I received from the few questions I asked about curriculum and instruction indicated that all the department chairpersons believed their instructional programs were in good shape. They viewed their administrative roles as managerial: preparing budgets, purchasing materials, allocating materials, inventorying materials, and maintaining the facility. In the course of our conversations, I determined that three of the twelve department chairpersons lacked the knowledge and skills to assume the instructional leadership role in their department.

Support Staff Talk

Support staff was most concerned about finding the right balance between performing their assigned job responsibilities and responding to the continual interruptions of teachers, parents, and students. All support staff

believed that being responsive to the school community was their number one priority. At the same time, however, they worried that these interruptions were compromising their ability to perform their assigned operational duties in a timely and accurate manner. The other concern, which was only voiced after some prompting, was the challenge of responding professionally to teachers, parents, and students who were rude and abusive.

Parent Talk

Parents were most concerned about whether their child would find his or her place in such a large high school. In the words of one parent: “I don’t want my son to become a number.” They felt that the best strategy for “not becoming a number” was to join an extracurricular activity that would develop a unique talent, ability, or interest. Few parents felt that our academic program could serve as a vehicle for developing a personal identity. Parents were most proud of residing in a school community that supported the number and kinds of facilities in and around our school: a small practice gym, a large performance gym, a dance studio, a fitness center, a media center, a multitude of computer labs, a field house, a swimming pool, a greenhouse, a large football stadium, and state of the art science labs. No parent commented on the quality of teaching or singled out any particular department or program for academic excellence.

A New Vocabulary for Central High

Listening to your school community is the prescribed managerial strategy for newly hired school leaders. The managerial script for these listening sessions recommends that the demeanor of the administrator remain non-judgmental and positive. The administrator’s responses should demonstrate a nodding agreement with the beliefs and opinions offered by school community members and should encourage the community to elaborate on their feelings about the school. I entered these conversations with a very different script. When I worked next to the main office, I learned that an organization pays a high cultural price when it considers all viewpoints to be legitimate inputs to the what, why, and how of schooling.

A school culture forms around a pattern of behaviors that reflects what leaders say and what leaders do. School leaders articulate the purposes of their schools through written and verbal communications. These communications convey a leader’s values to the school community and indicate how to realize those values in the daily operations of the building.

Although I was not in my office long enough to enact formal policies and procedures that would support a particular definition of a strong instructional culture, I used those first weeks of school to articulate goals and values that would serve as the foundation for a new vision for Central High. What follows are sample exchanges with school community members that transpired during the weeks before the start of school. Each exchange contains an instructional and organizational vocabulary that defined why I was there, what I believed, what I valued, and how I intended to enact my goals, beliefs, and values. After several years in the main office, I was reminded each day, both in words and actions, of how significant my initial responses were in redefining the purpose of Central High.

Mr. Silver

“Mr. Silver, I am opposed to using seniority as the sole criteria for course assignments. Not knowing all the details of the assignment, I support the efforts of your department chairperson to spread workloads evenly between new and senior teachers. So, in response to your request, I expect you to teach the courses Mark has assigned. I am more than open to discussions with the union on what we know about the relationship between teacher experience and student achievement.”

The Guidance Director

“Bill, I know you are under a lot of pressure to get schedules out on time. My goal for next year is to develop a registration process that will provide our students with the best possibility for a quality educational experience. That means we have a process in place that has the flexibility to address the changing circumstances of the students we serve.”

The Data Processing Manager

“Bob, I realize that I am new to your program and the registration process here, but having only 80% of our student body with complete schedules falls far short of what I would expect at this point in the school year. The scheduling programs I have worked with have the ability to provide 95% percent of the student body with a completed schedule before the school doors open. Bob, we will make changes to the current scheduling process to ensure that the only students sitting in the guidance office on the first day of school next year will be recent transfers to the district.”

Teacher Talk

“How well students achieve at Central High is wholly dependent upon on the quality of daily classroom instruction. It is my responsibility to deliver the organizational and pedagogical tools to provide our student body with an instructional program that is both interesting and intellectually engaging. While I understand the challenges posed by the diversity of our student population, I strongly believe that we can design curriculum and teach in a way that provides all of our students with meaningful ways of making sense out of the world around them.”

Administrative Talk

“It is clear to me that the exemplary condition of this building and the high quality of services we offer members of the school community are a testimony to the managerial skills of the team members seated around this table. I believe that a well-managed building is the foundation of a quality instructional program. Ultimately, however, we are judged not on how clean the hallways are, but how well our students perform academically. I know all of you seated in this room believe you do not have the time or expertise to supervise the academic program. But I firmly believe that the sole reason for occupying an administrative office is to lead and supervise our school’s instructional program. I am presently working on a reorganizational plan that will optimize both your managerial and subject matter expertise. I can assure you that I will not place any of you in a position where you do not have the knowledge, skills, or time to comfortably perform the role of instructional leader.”

Support Staff Talk

“The responsiveness of our support staff has impressed me most about this school. The public perception of how well this school runs largely rests with staff seated outside of main offices. I understand your frustration with the inability to finish a job laying on your desks. But those jobs are not what make this school special. What makes this school special is how school community members are treated in front of your desk. I will not tolerate a community member being rude or abusive to a staff member, but the only administrator charged with dealing with disrespectful behavior is me.”

Parent Talk

“I agree with you that the size of a large high school can be intimidating for students. I intend to create classroom and extracurricular experiences

that honor the diverse abilities, talents, and interests of the students that come through our school doors each day. I have made a special point to my entire staff that knowing their students well, and responding to parent concerns, are our biggest instructional priorities. We know that students learn best in environments where they are known, respected, and cared for.”

Why Are We Here?

A school culture is defined as much by what is left unsaid as by what is said. The Central High community expressed practical concerns related to the condition of the building, the amount and quality of resources available to faculty and staff, and having more time to fulfill their job responsibilities. The only comments that could be interpreted as a stated educational value were parents’ fears over their son or daughter becoming lost in a large high school and teachers’ fears over perceived threats to their professional autonomy. No comments addressed the educational goals written into Central High’s mission statement:

- “Life-long learner”
- “Critical thinker”
- “Understanding and compassion for others”
- “Courage to act upon beliefs”
- “Caring and creative environment”
- “The social, emotional, physical, intellectual development of the child”
- “Communicate effectively”
- “Deep learning”
- “Working collaboratively”

While school mission statements are specifically designed for inspiration, not elaboration, they do provide the answer to the essential question all cultures ask of themselves: “Why are we here?” Central High’s mission statement provided answers to this essential question. These answers, however, remained disconnected from the organizational and instructional routines of Central High. My meeting notes documented vocabularies and practices completely detached from the goals and values expressed in Central High’s mission statement. Page after page in my notes reflected talk of resources, facilities, administrative support, technology, time, class sizes, and discipline codes. My notes made no mention of organizational configurations or instructional routines that would nurture “deep learning” or the

“courage to act upon beliefs” or “critical thinking” or a “caring and creative environment.”

The all-important connection between “why we are here” and “what we do” only occurs when school leaders participate with faculty in a process of embedding goals and values in the daily workings of main offices and classrooms. If pursued in a purposeful manner, vague expressions of educational goals and values become codified in discourse patterns, in organizational configurations, and in classroom practices. Throughout my listening tour, I began the informal process of using vocabularies, describing practices, and supporting principles that would redefine the Central High way. My intention in each conversation was to both disrupt accepted goals, values, and practices and offer an alternative educational vision for Central High.

Why We Are Here

“I agree that a well-run building is important, but not the purpose of your job. Our job is to develop a quality instructional program.”

“I agree that we should pay attention to how students are doing on standardized tests. But I strongly believe that if we offer students a meaningful curriculum and quality instruction, the test scores will take care of themselves.”

What We Believe

“I agree that knowing facts is important, but facts without a concrete social context become meaningless lists to be memorized, tested, and quickly forgotten.”

“I agree that homework is important, but the failure to hand in homework often reflects a weak preparation for the assignment rather than a student’s unwillingness to complete the assignment.”

What We Value

“I agree that one of our primary jobs is teaching students to be responsible. The question becomes how one defines responsibility. Is it inventing punishments for not following orders or is it teaching processes for deciding upon meaningful courses of action?”

“I agree that reading research would appear to be a low priority when considering all that we have to accomplish during the school day. The

learning we accomplish during the day, however, is largely determined by our latest understandings of how children learn.”

What We Do

“I agree that open-ended discussions are difficult to manage, but such discussions generate the kind of discourse that is the source of critical thinking.”

“I agree that cutting classes is a problem. In addition to looking for better strategies for catching and sanctioning class-cutting, we need to take a hard look at how well our curriculum is serving the diversity of interests, abilities, and talents of our student body.”

The formal translation of educational goals and values into organizational and instructional realities took place in my opening day comments to the faculty. Opening day talks are traditionally a mixed assortment of mission statement jargon (“world-class thinkers”), the mandate of the day (“race to the top”), the program of the day (learning communities), and the goal of the year (raise test scores). Having sat through these talks as a teacher, opening day visions usually come across as an incoherent mix of undefined goals, failed programs, foreign mandates, and unrealistic achievement goals. I decided to dispense with any mention of goals or programs or mandates or techniques. I replaced “new initiatives talk” with values talk: “Why we are here.” My appeal to the philosophical side of schooling was designed to change Central High’s conversation from one focused on tasks and functions to one focused on goals and values. My message was a simple one to understand, but difficult to implement: before doing things right, we must understand whether we are doing the right things.

The presentation itself lasted 10 minutes (see Resource 3.1). The narrative I authored translated the noise of mandates, programs, policies, and mission statements into six pedagogical and organizational values: teaching, learning, performance, professionalism, collaboration, and implementation (see Resource 3.2). For each value, I described how the school organization would enact the value and my responsibility for translating that value into an organizational and classroom reality. I knew that my words, especially talk of educational values, would require some form of organizational application to begin the process of connecting valued ends of schooling to instrumental means of schooling. I decided that there was no better way to operationalize a new vision for Central High than reworking the opening day’s agenda. Last year’s agenda was dominated by meetings and presentations focused on achieving compliance with state mandates. The

means of achieving these institutional goals was the introduction of a new software package that would document compliance with state mandated testing goals. The agenda did not allocate time for teachers to prepare their classrooms for the first day of school or to communicate with each other about subject matter goals and content. The not so subtle message conveyed in last year's opening day agenda was the unimportance of what teachers do and the importance of what administrators do.

The opening school agenda I designed reversed the priorities of last year's agenda. Instead of a focus on managerial goals, this year's agenda focused on what teachers do (see Resource 3.3). Each activity in the opening day agenda was designed to enact the goals and values of a new vision for Central High (see Table 3.1). Teachers were given the time and venues to talk about curriculum and prepare their classrooms for the first day. Department chairs were given the managerial tools to enact their new roles as instructional leaders. Administrators were put on notice that teaching matters most at Central High.

Walking to my car at the end of opening day, the social studies department chair commented to me: "Well, that was certainly a different start to the school year." I asked him what was different about it.

Value	Position in Opening Day	Resource	Activities
Teaching	Opening Day Address	Resource 3.1	"Teaching matters most"
	Opening Day Agenda	Resource 3.3	2 hours classroom preparation
Learning	Opening Day Address	Resource 3.1	"Relationships matter" What knowledge is of most worth?
	Curriculum Inventory	Resource 3.4	How should knowledge be organized?
Performance	Opening Day Address	Resource 3.1	"What we control"
Professionalism	Opening Day Address	Resource 3.1	"Competence matters"
	Curriculum Calendar	Resource 3.5	Determine gaps between program goals and course offerings
Collaboration	Opening Day Agenda	Resource 3.3	Department meetings Subject matter meetings
Implementation	Opening Day Address	Resource 3.1	"Doing small things well"
	Curriculum Calendar	Resource 3.5	Curriculum review cycle

“Well, Al, for better or worse, the staff knows what you care about and where you are headed.”

“What could be worse about that?”

“My department feels good about what you care about, but are somewhat concerned about where you are headed.”

“Where do they think I am headed?”

“Into the classroom.”

“Dr. Jones Being Dr. Jones”

Parents and school boards are willing to give wide latitude to changing a school’s instructional culture of teaching and learning as long as the basic services offered are delivered in a professional, responsive, competent, and efficient manner. Changes to instructional routines are quickly overshadowed by poorly functioning organizational routines: “Why is my daughter sitting in the guidance office for 2 hours on the first day of school?” I learned from my experience next to the main office that when opening day arrives, parents want to be assured that their sons and daughters board the right bus, have the right schedule, have enough money for lunch, have help finding the right rooms, and have lockers that work. I focused my attention on the six building systems that were essential for addressing those opening day concerns of parents and students: transportation (buses), lunches (food services), lockers (facilities), finding rooms (administration), and schedules (guidance and data processing). I looked for four qualities in each system that would determine how parents and students would talk about their first day at school:

1. Did system operators deliver services in a timely and professional manner?
2. Did system operators possess the requisite knowledge and skills to optimize the outcomes of the system?
3. Did system operators work cooperatively with other building systems?
4. Did the system evidence continuous improvement?

A negative response to one or more of these performance questions meant, for me, that this system might become the topic of first day household dinner conversations. Four of the six systems I surveyed possessed all of the qualities that would make parents and students feel good about their first day of school. Two systems were operating well below what I considered quality performance. I was particularly concerned with a scheduling

software program that lacked the capacity and sophistication to handle the variety and volume of student course requests. The data processing manager and head of the guidance department appeared to be satisfied with using personalized off-line programs to hand schedule long lines of students waiting at their doors on the first day of school. The peculiarities of the off-line scheduling programs produced large numbers of class imbalances, large numbers of wrong course assignments, and large numbers of students wandering the hallways. I was not highly concerned about the inadequacies of a software program. That was fixable. However, it would not be easy to fix a culture that appeared to be comfortable with delivering schedules that were late, inaccurate, and incomplete.

My approach to the poor performance of these systems was partly rational and partly emotional. The rational component was composed of an ad hoc process that reoriented how staff thought about and enacted their job responsibilities. In long hours spent sitting in the data processing office and the guidance suite, I modeled habits of thought and methods of implementation that required staff members to examine the what, why, and how of the systems they managed (see Figure 3.1). The theme of every office conversation was organizing inputs, tasks, and job sequences in ways that would best meet the performance expectations of the school community we served. Sometimes that meant adding or modifying an input, sometimes

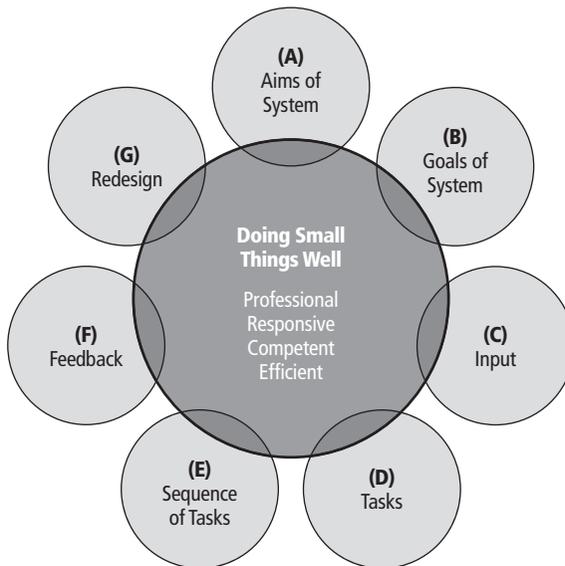


Figure 3.1 Doing small things well.

that meant rearranging tasks, sometimes it meant adopting a new procedure, and sometimes it meant retraining staff. For each modification, I documented the realignment between the system's aims, goals, and functions of the targeted service (see Resource 3.6).

While the system redesign of Central High's data processing office provided the necessary procedures for complete and accurate student schedules, the right procedures alone were not sufficient to change the low performance expectations of staff members. Unlike the rational planning model I employed to make the student scheduling process more efficient and responsive, I entered the main office with no formal understandings of how to raise the concern level of faculty and staff. An unplanned pattern of behavior emerged out of those first weeks in the main office, named by one staff member as "Dr. Jones, being Dr. Jones." Being Dr. Jones, in the eyes of the staff I worked with in those opening weeks of school, meant being present, being demanding, being supportive, and being persistent. My personal formula for changing both the hearts and minds of faculty and staff included the following:

- the disposition to challenge comfortable organizational routines,
- the capability to provide the necessary resources to improve the performance of systems, and
- the persistence to stay in offices until the system did small things well.

Although I could not know how faculty and staff were thinking about the redefinition of the Central High way, I did hear faculty and staff using new vocabularies to describe the operations of the building and classroom instruction. I could also point to tangible products of *Dr. Jones, being Dr. Jones*: no lines in the guidance offices, no students wandering hallways, and no inaccurate information on staff computer screens. When I first walked into Central High, I encountered a data processing and guidance department that valued compliance over service, routines over performance, and tradition over innovation. Two months later, staff members in both departments were making a genuine effort to be more professional, responsive, competent, and efficient. As I moved through the next 90 days, I would return again and again to a managerial routine that included the essential habits of *doing* (see Table 3.2). Resource 3.7 specifies the changes to the data processing system that were implemented in the first months of school. Each change to a system function answered an essential question of doing.

TABLE 3.2 Essential Habits of Doing	
Habit	Essential Question
Clarity of purpose	What level of service do parents and students expect?
Right people on the bus	What knowledge and skills do system operators need to deliver expected level of service?
Appropriate resources	What materials, expertise, and organizational arrangements are required to deliver expected level of service?
Success criteria	How will we know we are delivering expected level of service?
Administrative involvement	What must I learn about this system to support the implementation of expected level of service?

Strong Cultures Change Conversations

How administrators, teachers, and staff talk about their jobs signifies how they perform their jobs. In most schools, administrators, teachers, and staff have three distinct conversations. The first conversation is *procedural* talk aimed at enforcing rules to bring some semblance of certainty to environments populated by the uncertainties of children and adolescents. When rules fail to bring the level of conformity expected by teachers and staff, conversations turn accusatory. *Blame* conversations begin with the phrase, “if only,” and end with requests for more support, more resources, more rules, or more time. The third conversation, which rarely transpires in main offices and teacher workplaces, occurs when administrators and teachers reexamine deeply held beliefs, values, and assumptions about teaching, learning, and institutional schooling. These *reflective* conversations begin with questions, not answers.

Central High’s conversations followed the same pattern found in most schools: the conversations began with procedural concerns related to the management of resources, time, and rules. Each procedural conversation ended with an “if only” request. In those first weeks of school, I participated in a number of conversations that offered the opportunity to counter the *managerial* vocabulary of rules, programs, and resources with a *reflective* vocabulary of goals, methods, and responsibilities. Reflective conversations were closely followed up with managerial moves that translated values into modes of professional practice. Mr. Silver will teach an introduction to social studies class (professional). The guidance director will change student schedules (implementation). Students will not be waiting for their schedule on the first day of school (implementation). Teachers will receive an honest critique of classroom instruction (performance). Administrators will become instructional leaders (teaching and learning). Teachers will spend

opening day focusing on classroom instruction (teaching). School staff will make sure the first day of school will be uneventful (implementation).

None of these managerial moves alone results in a school-wide cultural conversion. Changing a school culture is a gradual process that begins with a changed conversation and ends, years later, with the substance of those conversations fully enacted in main offices and in classrooms. The elaboration of the norms of the new culture is created on a firm foundation of vocabularies and practices that clearly define what a faculty stands for, what a faculty values, and how a faculty performs. A new school leader must lay that foundation early—in the first 100 days. The following chapters describe a series of administrative moves carried out in the first 100 days that cemented cornerstone beliefs, values, and practices into the cultural foundation of the new Central High way.

Resources

Resource 3.1 *Opening Day Talk*

Value: <i>Teaching Matters Most</i>	
What I Believe	My Goal
<p>What we do not control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The community we serve • State and national mandates • The reform movement of the day • Media <p>What we do control</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our instructional worldview • Who we employ • How we train teachers • How we mentor teachers • How we evaluate performance • How we develop curriculum 	<p>My obligation to you and the students of this school is to provide teachers with the instructional systems to develop and implement what we determine to be our definition of quality teaching.</p>

Resource 3.1 *Opening Day Talk (continued)*

Value: Relationships Matter	
What I Believe	My Goal
<p>How do children learn?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unfortunately, the tired comment that “in high school we teach subjects, not students,” still remains the Achilles’ heel of secondary teaching. • Students are not solely intellectual machines waiting for information to be poured into their minds. They are also social beings wanting respect and emotional beings wanting autonomy. Without our students having the feeling of being known and being in control, our intellectual goals will not gain any traction in our classrooms. 	<p>My obligation to you and the students of this school is to develop a school environment that teaches students first and subject matter second.</p>

Value: Competence Matters	
What I Believe	My Goal
<p>What is a professional?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As all of you know, the profession of teaching has been under siege from a number of private and public groups that have questioned the overall competence of the profession. • Unfortunately, legislative bodies have translated these unsubstantiated claims into mandates that attempt to control the vocabulary, methods, and knowledge base of our profession. • Our ability to provide students with quality instructional programs requires that we control the what, why, and how of our profession. 	<p>My obligation to you and the students of this school is to protect your classroom from unschooled ideas about teaching and learning and to maintain performance standards that define our profession.</p>

Value: Doing Small Things Well Matters	
What I Believe	My Goal
<p>How do we serve the community?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since arriving at Central High, I have been most impressed with how quickly and professionally our support staff responds to requests from various school community members. • The public’s perception of a good school is how quickly a phone call is returned, how clean a building is, how well a student is known, and how clearly information is communicated. 	<p>My obligation to you and the students of this school is to provide teachers with the instructional systems to develop and implement what we determine to be our definition of quality teaching.</p>

Resource 3.2 *What We Value*

Values	Talking Frame	Expectations	Accountability
Teaching	Matters most	Continuous improvement	Teacher evaluation
Learning	Social–Emotional–Intellectual	Optimize diverse abilities, talents, interests	What students produce
Performance	Pursuit of excellence	Narrow gap between best practice and classroom realities	A purposeful approach to staff development
Professionalism	Reflection on practice	Acknowledge and address performance gaps	Professional growth plans
Collaboration	Intelligent participation	Respectful, flexible, informed, and thoughtful	Valued contributions
Implementation	Doing small things well	Efficient, competent, professional, and responsive	School community feedback

Resource 3.3 *Opening Day Agenda*

Agenda in my file cabinet		
8:00–8:30	Coffee and rolls	Cafeteria
8:30–9:00	Message from the Superintendent <i>“Meeting Performance Goals”</i>	Thomason Auditorium
9:00–9:30	Message from the Principal <i>“Common Core Standards”</i>	
9:30–11:30	Dr. Susan Johnson <i>“Data-Driven Teaching”</i>	

My opening day agenda		
8:00–8:30	Coffee and rolls	Cafeteria
8:30–9:00	Message from the Principal <i>“What is a Good School?”</i>	Thomason Auditorium
9:00–9:30	Review and Revision of Building Procedures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Chavez: Dean’s office • Ms. Jefferson: Guidance • Ms. Samuels: Special Education 	
9:30–10:30	Department meetings	Determined by department

Resource 3.5 *Curriculum Calendar*

Month	Goals	Tasks/Questions
April– November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To examine gaps between program goals and course offerings 	<p><i>Is there a gap between present course offerings and:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lifestyles of our student body? Social, Economic, and/or Political changes in our community? Contemporary scholarship in area of study? State and National policies related to program areas? The Instructional Worldview of Central High? Valued Ends of Schooling? Fundamental Questions of Schooling?
December– January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop curriculum proposals that reflect GAPS in courses of study. To provide feedback on the content and format of course proposals. 	<p><i>Central High Curriculum Committee Review</i></p> <p>School programs will provide Central High Curriculum Committee with the following information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Catalogue description What programs gaps are being addressed How will these course changes address identified program GAPS?
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department chairpersons meet with school administration to write curriculum proposals for Board of Education. 	<p><i>Board of Education Curriculum Template</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of proposal Rational for proposal Course Description Number of credits awarded Prerequisites Capital and operating costs to support proposed changes Impact of proposal on other programs
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board of Education Review 	

Resource 3.6 *System Redesign*

Component		System Redesign
A	AIMS	Services that would make our school community member feel good about this school: Pupil Personnel Services, Building and Grounds, Transportation, Food Services
B	GOALS	Standard of performance that school community members expect from this service: timely, accurate, appropriate, complete, feasible
C	INPUTS	Required services to meet school community expectations: processes, tools, personnel, materials location, budget
D	TASKS	Functions required to perform to school community expectations: procedures, routines, methods
E	SEQUENCE	Order of functions to perform to school community expectations: stages, phases, steps
F	FEEDBACK	School community responses to system performance: surveys, complaints, observations, performance indicators (e.g., due dates, benchmarks, budgets)
G	REDESIGN	Adjustment of aims, goals, inputs, tasks and sequence to resolve gaps between actual performance of the system and school community expectations for performance of the system

Resource 3.7 *System Redesign Data Processing*

System: Data Processing		Date:
Function and Timeline	Performance Goals	Plan of Action
Personnel Days 1–45	Acquire knowledge and skills to manage new scheduling program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write performance improvement plan • Enroll in training program • Monitor completion of performance goals
Materials Days 1–45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise all forms for registration and scheduling • Revise all forms for development of master schedule 	Review, edit, and revise forms for registration, scheduling, and development of master schedule
Tools Days 1–20	Align scheduling program with registration–master schedule calendar	Purchase new scheduling program
Processes Days 1–60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align data processing calendar with new scheduling program • Align data processing calendar with registration program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise master schedule calendar • Revise registration calendar • Revise scheduling calendar • Revise curriculum development calendar • Pilot master scheduling program
Location Days 1–45	Design collaborative learning environments	Move data processing facility to office space adjacent to pupil personnel services
Budget	• \$45,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program purchase • Annual maintenance • Conversion, Installation, and configuration • Training

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4

Bad Habits

THE SITUATION:

Walking tour, day one

My attention to the essential opening day systems paid off. After the tardy bell rang on the first day of school, there were no lines in the guidance office, no students in the hallways, and no parents standing in the main office. With the closing of classroom doors, I now had the opportunity to directly observe Central High's instructional culture in action. I spent the next few weeks of the school year walking hallways, peering into classrooms, supervising common areas, and sitting in teacher work areas.

"I Need Some Coffee"

On the morning of my first walking tour, I noticed a teacher leaving her first period classroom with a coffee cup in her hand. She looked up at me, pointed to the coffee cup, and silently mouthed, "I need some coffee."

Reading a Newspaper

At the beginning of third period, I observed a teacher sitting at his desk reading a newspaper while watching a baseball game on the classroom TV monitor. When I stopped at the door for a closer look, the teacher jumped up from his chair and proceeded to walk around the classroom.

Locked Door Policy

In the middle of fourth period, I found a student on the verge of tears standing outside his classroom. The student sheepishly told me that he was locked out of his classroom. I knocked on the door of the classroom. The teacher who answered the door looked impatiently at me while he stated his locked door tardy policy.

“Go, Cats”

At the end of fifth period, I heard the intercom system click on. For the next five minutes, classrooms listened to the activity director’s spirited announcement of the theme and planned activities for this year’s homecoming week. The announcement ended with a recording of lion roaring.

Cafeteria Duty

At the beginning of sixth period, I entered a large cafeteria with 600 students streaming into food lines. For the first 5 minutes of the period, I was the lone adult in the cafeteria. After 10 minutes of a 25 minute lunch period two teachers joined me. One of the teachers left before the end of the period. When the lunch period ended, I walked with students through hallways that were void of adult supervision.

Bus Duty

At the end of the school day, I walked outside the building to assist with bus supervision. Standing in the bus-loading zone, I was the lone adult supervising over one thousand students streaming onto buses. While I was running up and down the bus lane helping students locate their buses, I observed my entire administrative team seated in the dean’s office for what appeared to be an end of the day chat session. When one of the deans noticed me on the front lawn, the entire team rushed out of the front door as the buses departed.

A Tale of Two Cultures

All schools have a unique feel to them. After a week of walking hallways, looking into classrooms, and supervising common areas, I would characterize the student body as relaxed, friendly, and respectful. Similar to the student body, I found a teaching staff that was relaxed, friendly, and respectful. While there was a nice hometown feel to the Central High way, the laid-back attitude of administrators, teachers, and students revealed a lack of passion and singularly of purpose that is the foundation of a strong instructional culture. While the relaxed attitude of staff and students was an issue, I was more concerned about a set of beliefs and practices that were in direct opposition to the values I announced at the beginning of the school year. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 summarize a tale of two school cultures: the bureaucratic culture of the Central High way and the learning culture of a redefined Central High way. Schools with bureaucratic orientations value rules, procedures, compliance, and documentation. Schools with strong learning orientations value principles, frameworks, reflection, and performance. Walking through hallways, peering into classrooms, talking with teachers and administrators, and participating in the normal routines of a day at Central High, I beheld a school with a strong bureaucratic culture. Although I had announced a different set of values on opening day,

TABLE 4.1 The Central High Way

Value	Beliefs	Principle	Practice
Teaching	We are all superior teachers	You don't bother me and I won't bother you	Drive-by evaluations
Learning	Listening, taking notes, being quiet, and doing well on tests	Remove or fail non-compliant students	Strong discipline code and strong special education program
Performance	Is solely dependent on the amount of support from administration and community	We need more of . . .	Small class sizes
Professionalism	Should honor the distinctive behaviors of faculty	Teaching is an art, not a science	Drinking coffee in classrooms & locking students out of classrooms
Collaboration	Should be more bottom-up than top-down	All theories, ideas, practices, and participants are equal	"Gotcha" faculty meetings

TABLE 4.2 Redefining the Central High Way			
Value	Beliefs	Principle	Practice
Teaching	Quality teaching comes from a purposeful process of reflection on practice	Knowledgeable feedback is essential for improving your craft	Continual observation and coaching
Learning	Is developing knowledge and skills to expand perceptions of the world	Organizational and instructional routines are flexible, experimental, and do no harm	Engaging curriculum and pedagogy
Performance	Is solely dependent on closing the gap between intentions and achievements	Observed and documented relationship between ideal models of teaching/learning and classroom realities	Professional development plans
Professionalism	Ability to articulate and share the rationale for classroom pedagogies	Provide time, space, materials, and expertise for peer coaching and teaming	Learning communities
Collaboration	Achieving a balance between agency and authority	What gaps exist between beliefs and evidence	What → Why → How

the process of redefining the school culture began in real time with my responses to a series of bad cultural habits that I encountered during my walking tour.

Walking the Talk

Coffee Break: Response to Teacher in Hallway

“Ms. Lofton, putting aside the potential liabilities incurred when leaving a class unattended, we were asked by faculty to enforce the rule prohibiting students from bringing food and beverages into the classroom. Justifying that rule to students becomes difficult when teachers model a different set of expectations.”

Coffee Break: Response to Union Representative

“Dr. Jones, it has come to my attention that you now have a rule against drinking coffee in the classrooms?”

“No, Jim, I haven’t sent out any rule on coffee drinking in classrooms. I merely reminded Ms. Lofton of the level of professionalism I expect from teachers when they enter their classrooms.”

“So, I assume, Dr. Jones, that you believe having a cup of coffee in the classroom is unprofessional.”

“Yes, Jim, I would define leaving a classroom unattended and drinking coffee in front of students as unprofessional.”

“Dr. Jones, are you going to write-up Ms. Lofton?”

“No, Jim, I expect a conversation amongst professionals is sufficient.”

Student Locked Out of Classroom

“Dr. Jones, you appeared upset with my tardy policy.”

“Mr. McGrath, I directed Mr. Lopez to work with you on some strategies for addressing tardiness.”

“Dr. Jones, so you have a problem with my policy.”

“Mr. McGrath, public humiliation, whether working with adults or students, is never an effective discipline strategy.”

“I have used this strategy for years and found it very effective. In fact, some of my colleagues have copied the strategy.”

“Mr. McGrath, let me be clear: under no circumstances is locking a student out of a classroom an effective strategy for tardiness.”

“Are you going to send out a memo on the practice?”

“No, I will continue with the assumption that all of us in the building are on the same page when it comes to how we treat students.”

Teacher Reading Newspaper

“Dr. Jones, I know this note you sent me is about what you observed in my classroom today. First, I want you to know that the students were working on a review sheet at their desks. In my role as head baseball coach I was just checking on local scores in the newspaper.”

“Mr. Johnson, when students are completing worksheets at their desk the appropriate instructional strategy is guided practice. That strategy requires that you walk around the room monitoring student understandings of the lesson objective. The information you gather in this guided practice

mode would assist you in making a decision on whether to re-teach the objective or move on to the next learning objective.”

“So, Dr. Jones, if I understand what you are saying, there would be no time a teacher would be seated at their desk.”

“Mr. Johnson, I am uncomfortable with absolutes, but it would be difficult for me to think of how a teacher seated at their desk could actively engage students. I would add that under no circumstances should a teacher be reading a newspaper or watching a baseball game while a class is in session.”

“Dr. Jones, I can assure you that I rarely sit down in my classes. I also apologize about the TV and the newspaper.”

“Before you leave, Mr. Johnson, I just have a comment about your extracurricular duties. While I support a strong extracurricular program, please understand that the district has employed you to teach first, and coach second. Your professional responsibility to the district is to continually improve your teaching skills. If for any reason your coaching responsibilities interfere with your teaching responsibilities, I would strongly recommend that you rethink how you are meeting your extracurricular responsibilities.”

Intercom Announcements

“Tom, I understand that one of your jobs is raise school spirit. I also appreciate the high levels of participation in our extra-curricular program. However, I believe that instructional time is sacrosanct. With the exception of emergency announcements, there will be no intercom announcements during the school day. We have allocated 10 minutes at the beginning of second period for public address announcements. Beyond that, there will be no other classroom interruptions during the school day.”

“Dr. Jones, we always make some announcements at the end of seventh period for changes in times and places for after school activities and practices.”

“Tom, seventh period class is as important as first period class. I will work with the athletic and activities staff to refine their scheduling systems so there is no need to make those last minute changes that concern you.”

Administrators in Main Office

“Al, we all feel bad about what happened at the buses today. We also heard that you were doing cafeteria duty. Supervising these areas had never

been a big deal with Dave (the former principal). But we know it is a big deal with you.”

“Matt, it is a big deal to me. Maintaining a safe school environment is the number one priority for me. Without teachers and students feeling safe, nothing happens academically. I know all of you have a lot of demands on your time during the school day, but no tasks should decrease our visibility in commons areas.”

“I would like you to work up a schedule for supervising hallways, the cafeteria, bus duty, and for home and away athletic events. Include me in whatever schedules you make. At our next faculty meeting I plan to address the hallway supervision issue.”

“Al, that is a touchy issue with our faculty.”

“I know, Matt. But I believe that maintaining a safe learning environment is everyone’s business.”

“I agree, Al. We have been too relaxed in that area. That will change. By the way, you should know that your coffee policy is all over the building.”

“I suppose my new policy on reading newspapers in classrooms is out there also.”

“Oh, yes, it is. That was really stupid. But what really has everyone shaken up is your comment about teaching first, coaching second. A lot of our coaches don’t see it that way.”

“Matt, our primary job is what happens in classrooms, not what happens on football fields.”

Faculty Meeting: Supervision of Hallways

“As you know, I have made several changes to meeting schedules with the goal of increasing the amount of time you have for planning, working with students, and calling parents. I am currently reviewing all school-wide forms to decrease the amount of time you spend on managerial duties. But there is an area of responsibility that concerns me. Rarely in my walks around the building have I observed an adult presence in hallways or common areas. I know that this has not been a priority in the past, but school safety is my number one priority. Adult supervision plays a central role in maintaining a safe and orderly environment. I have already directed Matt to draw up a supervision schedule for administrators that will place the entire administrative team in hallways, cafeterias, and campus areas throughout the school day. But administrators alone cannot make this building safe—we need your help. I am requesting that faculty make every effort to stand

in hallways before and after class. I also have asked department chairpersons to draw up some form of supervision schedule for bathrooms in their departmental areas. However, I believe that the students in your classroom should always come first. When you get caught up working with a student before or after class, your priority should be working with that student. If we all work together on this, there will be more than enough adults in the halls to cover other teachers working with students in their classroom. I will put out a more detailed memo on supervision responsibilities tomorrow.”

Up Close and Personal

After a week of walking through hallways and looking into classrooms, I was troubled by a pattern of bad instructional and organizational habits that went unnoticed and unaddressed by building administrators. In the impromptu conversations that developed from my encounters with the Central High way, it became clear to me that my administrative team saw nothing wrong with what I defined as sloppy instruction and sloppy management. The red flags that were so visible to me in hallways and office conversations were invisible in Central High’s main office. As the week progressed, I learned the futility of efforts to change building cultures from main offices and auditorium stages. While my opening day agenda was mildly appreciated, I only sensed real changes in the Central High way when administrators and teachers observed what I attended to: teaching, learning, professionalism, performance, and implementation. The weeks I devoted to talking to administrators and teachers in hallways, in classrooms, and in offices provided me with the perfect venues for translating the values of a strong instructional culture into the performance of those values in main offices and in classrooms. For the remaining 100 days I developed the habit of positioning myself in the school organization where I was able to personally redefine the bad habits of the Central High way.

Founding Father

From the looks in hallways and comments from my administrative team, it appeared that directly confronting bad professional and instructional habits got everyone’s attention: “you really shook the faculty up with your feelings about drinking coffee in classrooms.” I learned from my early confrontations with cultural bad habits that authoring a new vision for Central High would be a continual process of identifying bad professional habits, articulating the values of a strong instructional culture, and embedding those beliefs and values into the daily organizational and instructional

routines—connecting the culture dots. Identifying and articulating values are symbolic acts—they get people’s attention. Embedding strong instructional values into daily organizational and instructional routines requires managerial moves that reconfigure the goals and methods of the systems that administrators supervise. The poor performance of the data processing manager offered me the first opportunity to officially embed the goals and values of a strong instructional culture into the organizational routines of Central High.

The proposal for redesigning the data processing system was unanimously approved by the board of education. Although the board was conservative when it came to capital outlays, I was fortunate to write a proposal that resonated with a number of board members: “Dr. Jones, I’m glad that someone in this administration has finally recognized that we have a problem with student scheduling.” I was also fortunate to find a consultant whose theoretical and practical knowledge of student scheduling programs made her just the right person to provide an objective evaluation of our current scheduling program. The consultant spent two weeks studying our school’s program, questioning me on the goals I wanted to achieve with student scheduling, and questioning our data processing manager on the day-to-day operations of the program. The final draft of her report found both the software and hardware of the scheduling program unable to perform the scheduling functions I outlined for her in our first meeting. I asked her for a timeline for installing a new scheduling program for the coming school year.

“Dr. Jones, if your proposal is approved within the next two months, you will have no problem installing a new program for the coming school year. It will be tight, but it is doable. My only concern at this point is how amendable your data processing manager will be to the installation of the new program. From my experience with software conversions, the success or failure of a software conversion is entirely dependent on the cooperation of the data processing director.

“Sarah, he has assured me that he is on board with this change.”

“That is good news.”

The good news was short-lived. Within weeks of the board approving the new scheduling program, the consultant was in and out of my office requesting that I intervene in disputes between her team and Bob over the conversion process.

“Sarah, I need you to be honest with me. What is going on upstairs?”

“Dr. Jones, it is not my role to become involved in personnel matters. As I said to you when this process began, a smooth conversion process requires that all personnel involved in the process be flexible, knowledgeable, and trainable. After two weeks into this project, we have not received the level of cooperation my team requires to implement the scheduling program you purchased from our company.”

I spent the next two days in and out of Bob’s office questioning him about details of the conversion process. I thought that my daily presence in his office would send a strong message that I expected his full cooperation throughout the entire implementation of the new scheduling program. In each of our conversations, it became clear to me that Bob had no intention of cooperating with the consultant nor did he see any value in the new scheduling program. I was unprepared for a situation where an administrator on my team would be opposed to providing students with schedules that were accurate, delivered in a timely manner, and most importantly, could be adjusted on daily basis. After several more days of fruitless negotiations with Bob, I carried my frustration into the superintendent’s office. While acknowledging that Bob was a difficult person to work with, he was reticent in making any personnel changes in the data processing office. I presented him with a series of personnel moves that would remove Bob from his office without adding personnel.

“Al, there are a lot of moving parts to your plan, but I think it could work. Before you go ahead with the plan, would you take a couple of days to think through all your options for implementing the new program. Maybe we could hire an assistant to bring Bob up to speed or we might consider keeping the consultant on until the program is fully operational. It’s your call Al. I’m just cautioning you on the impact Bob’s transfer will have on the faculty. Teachers like Bob. They view him as the founding father of data processing. There is no doubt in my mind that his removal will have some effect on morale. But again, the board likes what you are doing and will support whatever decision you make.”

On my drive home that night, I reconsidered the options for the implementation of the new scheduling program (see Resource 4.1). All of the options for keeping Bob in his current position placed comfortable routines, longevity, and collegiality above performance, professionalism, and execution. Maybe there was some middle ground between these two sets of values. My early morning meeting with Bob the next day would certainly be more comfortable with some compromise strategy for improving the operations of the data processing office. There was no doubt that the superintendent and board would be more comfortable with a plan that maintained Bob in his position as data processing manager. What is the middle ground between comfortable organizational routines and performance; between longevity and

performance; between collegiality and execution? Thinking over my first conversations with students in the guidance office, with Bob in data processing office, and with the consultant in my office, I decided there was no cultural middle ground: I either adapted to the Central High way or faculty and staff adopted a new vision for Central High. Removing Bob from data processing was the first official administrative move to redefine the Central High way.

“Dr. Jones, Bob is Ready to See You”

My experience next to the main office taught me that the best strategy for this dismissal meeting was to deliver, as briefly as possible, the decision that Bob was no longer the data processing manager—which I did. What followed was Bob’s expected rationale for why my decision was wrong: the program he wrote was superior to the “bells and whistles” of the new program; I was too “young and inexperienced” to fully understand the consequences of my decision; the future of the district would be jeopardized by a general disrespect for “long service to the district;” and the Central High way was working, “why fix something that isn’t broken?” I knew better than to try to reason with Bob over his dismissal. I knew it was best to sit quietly, listen, and thank Bob for his long service to the district—which I did.

After the door to my office was slammed shut, I replayed in my mind all the conversations that had transpired in the first weeks at Central High. I kept searching for administrative strategies that would offer a middle ground between the educational ideals expressed in Central High’s mission statement and the bad organizational and instructional habits I was observing in offices and classrooms. My final conversation with Bob symbolized a school culture that had, for too long, become comfortable with a middle ground culture that valued mediocrity, self-interest, and carelessness.

The question still remained: was the emotional and professional turmoil created by Bob’s transfer worth the organizational and instructional goals I was pursuing? The answer to that question arrived at the end of a week of acrimonious conversations with the cafeteria manager over her refusal to change the practice of publicly identifying students with free lunch privileges. After offering several strategies she could use to both maintain the dignity of students and, at the same time, efficiently move cafeteria lines, I asked her to see me the next day with her preferred strategy. Later that day, she approached me on cafeteria duty: “Dr. Jones, I see your point about publicly embarrassing students in lunch lines. Your new way of documenting free lunch service is a good one. We will start tomorrow.”

School cultures become defined by a consistent and coherent pattern of administrative decisions that align with a valued end of schooling. While

Bob took great pride in his programming skills, he saw little value in designing a program that delivered accurate schedules to students on the first day of school. The cafeteria manager took great pride in quickly moving students through lunch lines, but saw little value in hiding the identities of students enrolled in our free and reduced lunch program. One office valued stability over service and the other office valued efficiency over respect. In the middle of the turmoil of attempting to close the values gaps in both offices, Dick, one of my assistants, commented to me: “Al, this whole thing with Bob is getting messy. Why don’t you just leave it alone?” If values are left alone, the culture will not change. The transfer of Bob and the confrontation with the cafeteria manager were difficult personnel encounters. Both actions, however, along with the bad habits I addressed in walks down Central High hallways, were strong signals to the faculty and staff on what values supported a strong instructional culture and what values would no longer be a part of Central High’s offices and classrooms.

Strong Cultures Enact Values

Words alone do not define a school culture. How those words are enacted in main offices, classrooms, and hallways defines the beliefs and values announced from auditorium stages. In the first weeks of school, a new school leader must be present in times and places to articulate and enact the values of a new vision for Central High:

- Opening day agendas redefined the primary functions of Central High—teaching and learning.
- Drinking coffee was redefined as unprofessional.
- Reading newspapers during instruction was redefined as not teaching.
- Intercom announcements were redefined as an inappropriate use of instructional time.
- Supervision of common areas was redefined as optimizing learning.
- Generating accurate student schedules in a timely manner was redefined as an organizational norm.

New school leaders understand that listening tours, walking tours, and opening day talks are largely symbolic responses to the bad habits of an entrenched school culture. The chapters that follow describe a series of organizational and instructional situations that provide a new school leader with the opportunity to translate symbolic responses to bad cultural habits into tangible demonstrations of the beliefs, values, and practices of a strong instructional culture.

Resource

Resource 4.1 *The Faculty Thinks Highly of Bob*

Option 1	Upside	Downside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Bob • Keep old scheduling program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to faculty/staff morale • No board requests for additional monies • No development of new procedures and training regimes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmation of the Central High way • Adjustments to system will continue to deliver schedules that are inaccurate and late • No ability to develop alternative schedules to accommodate innovative approaches to teaching and learning
Option 2	Upside	Downside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Bob • Purchase new scheduling program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to faculty/staff morale • Possible improvements to responsiveness of student scheduling program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmation of the Central High way • Bob degrades the scheduling options of new program • Failure to learn the new program results in unforeseen scheduling glitches • No ability to develop alternative schedules to accommodate innovative approaches to teaching and learning
Option 3	Upside	Downside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep Bob • Hire assistant • Purchase new scheduling program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No change to faculty/staff morale • Possible optimization of all components of the new scheduling program • Bob becomes a passive observer or engaged partner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmation of the Central High way • Bob undermines the efforts of his new assistant • Continual refereeing of disputes over goals, methods, and outcomes of new program • Conflicts in office result in unforeseen scheduling glitches • Conflicts in office offer no time for experimenting with alternative scheduling programs
Option 4	Upside	Downside
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove Bob • Hire new data processing manager • Purchase new scheduling program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New program achieves goals of doing the small things well: student schedules are accurate and delivered in a timely manner • The development of alternative schedules to accommodate innovative approaches to teaching and learning • Development of training regimes that educate staff on the values and procedures embedded in the new scheduling program • Affirmation of a new vision for Central High 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty/staff morale drops; perceived threat to Central High way • Board requests for additional monies for new scheduling program and training

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We Are All Superior Teachers

THE SITUATION:

“We appreciate your interest in our instructional program”

To: All Faculty
From: A. Jones
Subject: Classroom Observations

In the next two weeks, I will visit all classrooms at Central High. I have attached my visitation schedule. Please feel free to drop me a note if the time and date of my visitation will not work for you. Depending on my schedule, I will try to reschedule for another date.

“Jim, before I send this memo out, I want you to read it over and tell me if there are any contractual problems with my visitations.”

“Dr. Jones, let me say that this would be a first for our faculty. Rarely do we see administrators in classrooms this early in the school year. Typically, classroom observations begin in February. Do you intend to document what you observe?”

“No. My only intent is to get a feel for the instructional program. Would you like me to add a sentence about the informal nature of the visitations?”

“No, that will not be necessary. Speaking for the association, we appreciate your interest in our instructional program. I am confident that in the next two weeks you will find that all teachers at Central High are superior.”

Central High Teaching Script

Jim was wrong. Not all teachers at Central High were superior teachers. The Central High teaching script consisted of teachers spending most of their time standing in front of the classroom telling students facts and procedures and students spending most of their time sitting at their desks taking notes or completing worksheets. On Fridays, most of the time was taken up with a test, a game, or watching a video (Figure 5.1). Central High teachers were comfortable with instructional routines that valued conformity over novelty, memorization over conceptual understandings, recitation over critical thinking, and entertainment over academic engagement. Rarely did I observe a classroom lesson that demonstrated a pedagogy designed to develop the types of knowledge and skills listed in Central High’s mission statement: active and creative minds, sophisticated understanding of content and disciplinary skills, the courage to act on beliefs, intellectual independence and risk-taking,

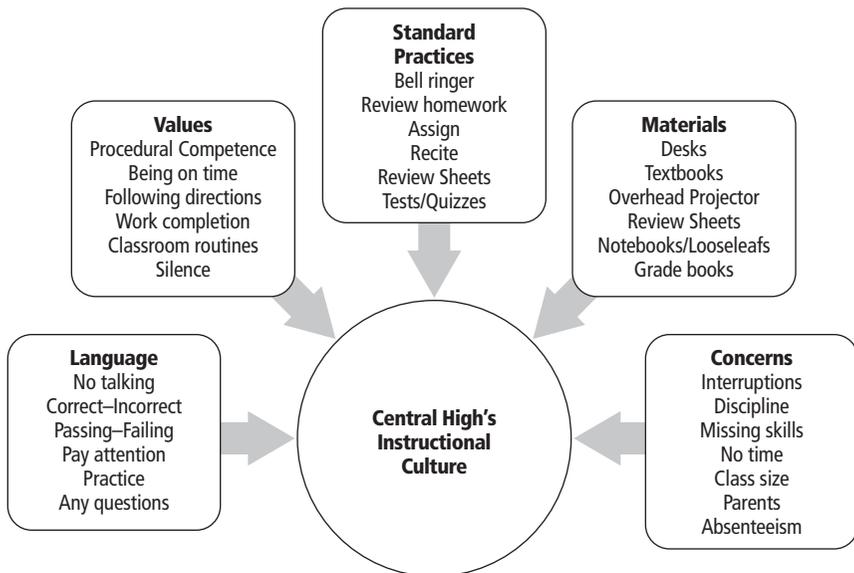


Figure 5.1 Bureaucratic teaching.

and active participation in a democratic society and global community. In the course of discussing the lessons I observed, teachers at Central High, for the most part, were under the impression that their lessons were achieving one or more goals expressed in Central High's mission statement: "Dr. Jones, did you notice the amount of critical thinking that was going on in my lesson?"

While I felt good about the general academic preparation of the Central High's teaching force, the teaching script followed by most faculty was not designed to prompt the high levels of thinking that teachers said were occurring in their classes. I did observe a few teachers who were enacting lessons designed to develop the 21st century thinking skills listed in state and national standards. Sitting in these pockets of excellence, I observed variations on students listening to all sides of well-thought argument over a real world social, economic, or political problem; identifying relevant facts in the discussion; supporting claims with reputable evidence; and willingly discarding a claim that in the words of one student, "just wasn't making much sense." Although the teachers in these pockets of excellence exhibited a wide range of personalities and intellectual styles, they all shared one thing. Each had an instructional worldview that was comfortable with an instructional script that closely aligned with a pedagogy (Figure 5.2) that fostered the level of thinking, discussion, and student work products that administrators talk a lot about at conferences, but are rarely seen in classrooms.

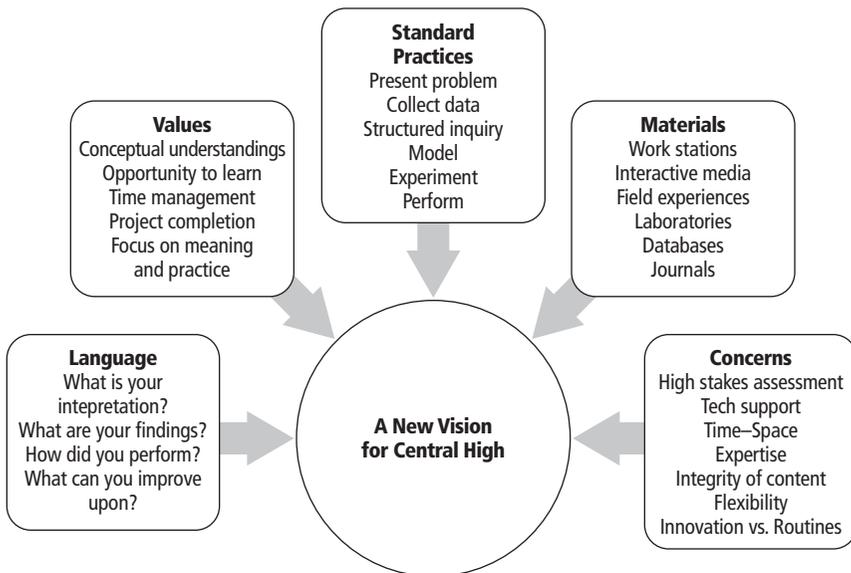


Figure 5.2 Transformative teaching.

Pockets of Incompetence

My thoughts about the expansion of these pockets of excellence throughout the building were crowded out by the other reality I observed in my classroom visits: pockets of incompetence. Before beginning my 2-week visitation schedule, I developed a rudimentary catalog of teaching behaviors that represented different levels of classroom performance. I based this catalog on the assumption that mastering the highly refined talent of transformative teaching depends on the ability to perform certain routine teaching tasks of bureaucratic teaching. At the end of 2 weeks of observations, I tabulated the number of teachers at each performance level (see Resource 5.1). Given the methodological shortcomings of the catalog, I felt I had a rough approximation of the effectiveness of Central High's teaching force. Most of the teachers at Central High were able to demonstrate satisfactory performance of the fundamentals of bureaucratic teaching. Although the lessons in these classes were uninspiring, the knowledge transmitted was accurate, the knowledge was logically organized, the activities aligned with the lesson objective, and the classroom climate evidenced a general respect for the teacher and fellow students. There were ten teachers who were unable to perform one or more of these basic teaching functions. From the brief conversations I had with some of these weak teachers, it appeared that they were unaware that their classes were poorly informed, poorly organized, and poorly managed. These teachers responded immediately to the slight mention of a problem in the class with a commentary on the decline in educational standards or the challenges of educating diverse student populations. The laments were quickly dismissed with a comment about how proud they were to be a part of such a high quality faculty.

When I completed my 2-week visitation schedule, I reviewed the performance evaluations of each weak teacher I observed. Four of the teachers were last evaluated five years ago. Six of the teachers were evaluated in the last 2 years. Each teacher evaluated in the last evaluation cycle received excellent or superior rating. Listed below are some representative comments written by the supervisors conducting the evaluations:

- "Super-teaching."
- "We are fortunate to have a teacher of your quality on our staff."
- "Hope you consider entering our mentoring program."
- "Loved the energy in your room."
- "As always, it is a joy to visit your classroom."
- "Would you consider leading an in-service workshop next year?"
- "A magical lesson."

The form that supervisors used at Central High (see Resource 5.2) was not designed for evaluating the performance of effective teaching behaviors. Setting aside the criteria that have nothing to do with effective teaching (4, 11, 13, 20, 22, 23, and 25), the list of remaining indicators provided supervisors with no vocabulary or teaching criteria that would connect the research on effective teaching with what supervisors were observing in classrooms. Central High's teacher evaluation form was designed for the efficient implementation of observation procedures written into the teacher's contract. Checking off 25 easily observable teaching behaviors provided Central High administrators with the ability to complete 40 or more evaluations within a contractually prescribed time period. The efficiency of the process was speeded up further with no requirement for a written analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson or questioning the disconnect between the educational goals expressed in Central High's mission statement and what teachers were enacting in their classrooms.

The instructional culture I inherited was not new to me. Central High classrooms represented a familiar set of instructional beliefs, values, and practices that support the goals, beliefs, and practices of bureaucratic schooling (see Figure 5.1). School administrators like this orientation because it is easy to manage. Teachers like this orientation because it upholds a set of comfortable teaching routines. Students like the orientation because it allows them "to do" the routines of schooling without reaching for the goals of schooling. Transformative teaching (see Figure 5.2), on other hand, orchestrates a pattern of teaching methods and activities that create classrooms designed to achieve the educational goals written into the Central High mission statement: critical thinking, creativity, conceptual understandings, collaboration, productive citizenship, and effective communication. School administrators dislike this orientation because it requires nuanced understandings of curriculum and instruction. Teachers dislike this orientation because it pushes them beyond comfortable teaching routines. Students dislike this orientation because learning becomes their responsibility.

While the pedagogical differences between bureaucratic teaching and transformative teaching are significant, the language, values, and concerns that characterize the talk, the behavior, and attention of two contrasting instructional regimes are more important from a cultural standpoint. The pedagogy of bureaucratic schooling fosters a vocabulary of compliance, adherence to procedures, and concerns over discipline. The pedagogy of transformative teaching fosters a vocabulary of empowerment, adherence to principles, and concerns over expertise. Each instructional regime

Interpretive Process	Learning Process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disrupting normative understandings of an instructional problem; • Introducing new vocabularies, theories, and practices governing an instructional problem; • Explaining and modeling new vocabularies, theories, and practices in teacher workspaces; • Becoming a participant in instructional conversations around problems evolving out of the implementation of a new pedagogy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing time, expertise, and materials to experiment, interpret, and practice a new pedagogy; • Providing safe spaces for teachers to fail with a new pedagogy; • Providing venues where teachers clarify and challenge habits of teaching; • Making available the technical and logistical support for teachers struggling with a new pedagogy.

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makes very different demands on how teachers and students are expected to perform, both in and out of the classroom.

Changing Central High's bureaucratic teaching script into the type of transformative teaching I observed in Central High's pockets of excellence would entail two processes. An interpretative process that redefined the beliefs, values, and concerns that now supported the Central High teaching script and, at the same time, a learning process that provided teachers with the time, space, materials, and expertise to intelligently experiment with ambitious instructional strategies. At this point in the school year, I lacked the managerial tools and organizational configurations to join with faculty in making collective sense out of transformative approaches to teaching and learning (Table 5.1). What I did accomplish with my brief journey into Central High's instructional culture was gaining the recognition by the faculty that I was serious about a core value I expressed on the opening day of school: teaching matters most. In the next weeks and months of school, I would look for opportunities to translate the generalities of what matters most at Central High into a tangible representation of that value in action. I did not have to look far. All the opportunities for changing Central High's instructional culture lay in a box underneath my desk.

Strong Cultures Define What Matters Most

In the first weeks of school, new school leaders are busy dealing with the contents of inboxes on top of their desk. There is little or no time to deal with the contents of a cardboard box they keep kicking underneath their desk.

Inboxes on main office desks contain materials for managing a school. Boxes underneath main office desks contain materials for purposing a school (Table 5.2). Administrators working from inboxes on top of their desk look for documentation of institutional goals (attendance), surface representations of the reform initiative of the day (completing curriculum alignment form), and efficient management of classroom materials (textbook inventories). Administrators working from boxes underneath main office desks look for documentation of educational goals (curriculum proposals), accurate representations of ambitious teaching (teacher evaluations), and full enactment of instructional systems (staff development, curriculum development, employment, mentoring, and teacher evaluation).

Early on in the school year, new school leaders need to focus their attention on values that will define why we teach and how we behave. In the case of Central High, a new school leader concentrated on establishing the definitions of professional behavior and performance: doing the inbox functions well. At some point in establishing standards of performance and professionalism, new school leaders turn their attention to the box underneath their desks. What our new school leader discovers in the cardboard box underneath his desk are two folders that documented the status of Central High's instructional program: one folder contained Central High's teacher evaluation plan, the other contained unread teacher evaluations.

TABLE 5.2 From What Box Are You Working?

Inbox	Box Underneath the Desk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase orders • Budget allocations for coming school year • Grant proposal • Agenda for meeting with United Way representatives • Bids for locker replacements • Agenda for athletic conference meeting • Time sheets • Agenda for Strategic Planning Session • Protocol for state testing program • Agenda for district cabinet meeting • Agenda for Booster Club meeting (swim team) • Fire drill memo • Employee Assistance Program memo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher evaluation plan • Curriculum proposal for bilingual program • Last year's subscription to <i>American Research Journal</i> (unread) • Last year's teacher evaluations (unread) • Last year's grade distributions by teacher (data processing) • Last year's media use by teacher (media center) • Last year's discipline referrals by teacher • Last year's special education staffing report • Teacher evaluation schedule • Five-year curriculum review cycle memo • One book from Central Office: <i>Good to Great</i> by Jim Collins (unread) • One DVD from Central Office: <i>Take Ten: 10 Minute Leadership Lessons for Teams</i> (still in original packing)

The teacher evaluation plan consisted of a one-page list of teaching behaviors that an administrator could check off after a brief classroom visit. There were no requirements for pre-conferences or post-conferences, no requirements to analyze the lesson, and no requirements to recommend substantive changes to a teacher's instructional repertoire. What recommendations were added to the one-page document were gratuitous comments that fostered the belief that all teachers at Central High were superior. Central High's teacher evaluation system represented the unspoken bargain between administrators and teachers: "You don't bother me, and I won't bother you."

The documents piled high in the box underneath the desk represented the beliefs, habits, and practices of an instructional culture that paid little attention to an outdated and uninspiring teaching regime. A new school leader's early entry into classrooms signaled to faculty the new reality of Central High's teaching culture: the managerial bargain between teachers and administrators was over. No longer would the documents placed into main office inboxes dictate the purpose of Central High. The essential activity of Central High would now be located in the documents lying underneath main office desks.

The first weeks of school provide little opportunity for new school leaders to develop the political or professional authority to unilaterally challenge and redefine the beliefs, values, and practices of an entrenched school culture. The instructional leadership options new school leaders are left with are symbolic instructional moves and managerial adjustments to weakly performing instructional systems: the dismissal of the "founding father" of Central High. The few administrative tools available to a new school leader in those first months of school, however, can dramatically widen when an unexpected event blindsides a main office.

Resources

Resource 5.1 *Departmental Performance Levels*

Department	Teachers	Transformative Teaching	Bureaucratic Teaching	Incompetence
Foreign Language	6	3	3	
Music	3	2	1	
Business	5	5		
Special Education	4	4		
Bilingual Education	4	3	1	
Mathematics	14	8	4	2
English	16	9	7	
Social Science	16	5	8	3
Science	12	4	6	2
Counseling	10	3	6	1
Physical Education, Health, Drivers' Education	16	6	10	
Drafting	2	2		
Shops	3		3	
Home Economics	3		2	1
Art	2		1	1

Resource 5.2 *Central High School Observation Report*

Indicators of Effective Teaching 1 = Satisfactory, 2 = Unsatisfactory, 3 = Not Observed	1	2	3
(1) Demonstrates knowledge of subject matter			
(2) Demonstrates enthusiasm for subject matter			
(3) Uses district curriculum materials			
(4) Follows district lesson plan format			
(5) Motivates students			
(6) Uses technology			
(7) Achieves a high level of student engagement			
(8) Applies discipline fairly and equitably			
(9) Connects with students			
(10) Redirects off-task behavior			
(11) Reflects learning theme of the month on bulletin boards			
(12) Instruction is "bell-to-bell"			
(13) Posts state standard for the day in classroom			
(14) Creates a respectful classroom environment			
(15) Begins class with a "bell-ringer"			
(16) Ends class with "closure" activity			
(17) Assigns grades fairly and impartially			
(18) Uses positive reinforcement			
(19) Remains poised			
(20) Displays six pillars of character counts in class			
(21) Prepares students to be life-long learners			
(22) Reflects values in district mission statement			
(23) Follows district attendance and tardy policies			
(24) Is a team player			
(25) Attends extracurricular activities			

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6

“Blindsided”

THE SITUATION:

“Al, the state decided to get serious about teacher accountability.”

Al, would you take a look at these materials from the state board? It appears the state decided to get serious about teacher accountability. We are mandated to come up with a teacher evaluation plan by the beginning of the next school year. This should be a district project. However, considering your background in teacher evaluation, I would like you to head up the project. I know you have a lot on your plate right now, so there is no rush to get this done. We have until the end of the school year to submit a plan to the state.”

“See Me”

The call slip lying on my desk from the superintendent was brief: “SEE ME.” A call slip without a stated topic typically involved one of three Central Office concerns: (a) a managerial system in the building was malfunctioning,

(b) the district or school was not dealing well with a crisis of the day, or (c) the district was blindsided by some unexpected event at the local or state level. In confirming the meeting time, the superintendent informed me of his concern with a newly passed state mandate requiring all districts to develop a teacher evaluation plan before the beginning of the next school year. School administrators spend most of the summer improving managerial routines that are designed to make the coming school year uneventful. Within months of every new school year, an administrator somewhere in a district will pick up the phone, open up a mailing, or listen to a comment that presents an issue that has the potential to disrupt the best-laid plans for the coming school year. In this case, it was a newly mandated teacher evaluation plan. When administrators are blindsided by an unexpected event, they piece together bits and pieces of tried and true managerial scripts, which they believe will quickly restore order to disrupted organizational or instructional routines. The goal of these tried and true managerial scripts is to restore order without disturbing the goals and practices of the Central High way. The principal message of the “see me” note from Central Office was a clear one: comply, but don’t disrupt. The managerial tool that new school leaders are expected to employ is long on process and short on substance: meetings scheduled during the summer, participation of loyal faculty members, participation of a loyal consultant, and minor revisions to the language of Central High’s teacher evaluation plan.

While these scripts effectively restore order to the school, they miss the opportunity to leverage an administrative blindside into a fundamental shift in the beliefs, values, and practices embedded in organizational and instructional routines. The new state accountability mandate offered me the opportunity to leverage a state blindside into a redefinition of Central High’s teaching script.

Two Cultural Frameworks

The packet of materials the superintendent handed to me contained state mandated policies and procedures that our district was expected to adopt. What I found in the packet were two frameworks for implementing the new state accountability mandate. The first framework could view the new mandate through an organizational lens: insert goal and performance language and assign the school board attorney the task of developing a teacher dismissal policy. The revised plan would leave untouched the substance of the Central High teaching script. The organizational framework was the one favored by Central Office.

The second framework in the packet could view the new mandate through an instructional lens: add professional performance goals, add researched-based effective teaching behaviors, add procedures for reflection on practice, and add forms for documenting the accomplishment of professional performance goals. Implementing the second framework, however, would fundamentally change the Central High teaching script. Using this framework would clearly violate the intent of the superintendent's "see me" message. Navigating a course between the district office goal of minimizing disruptive practices and my goal of redefining Central High's teaching script would involve the coordination of three managerial strategies for transforming a bothersome governmental mandate into a powerful managerial and cultural tool. What follows is a description of the enactment of each strategy.

Framing

I was fortunate to work with a new state mandate that was thick on holding weak teachers accountable and thin on developing a strong instructional culture. Reframing the state's narrow focus on teacher incompetence into a process for professional development consisted of two administrative moves. First, committee members would be asked to reconsider the following components of the Central High's teacher evaluation plan: the goals of teacher evaluation, the criteria for effective teaching, and the procedures for eliminating the arbitrariness of drive-by evaluations (see Table 6.1). Second, I authored an instructional narrative that would be approved by all of Central High's teachers (see Resource 6.1). The first half of the narrative identified the shortcomings of the new state mandate and Central High's plan. The new state plan was too narrowly focused on weeding out incompetence and not on professional growth; Central High's plan was designed for efficiency and finding fault instead of improving instruction. The second half of the narrative reframed a top-down mandate into bottom-up opportunity for administrators and teachers to participate in developing a plan that moved performance evaluation from telling and inspecting to educating and coaching. I ended my talk with a specific plan for the design and implementation of a new teacher evaluation instrument for Central High. A faculty meeting that could have turned sour on the announcement of just one more top-down reform became a process for realizing the goals and practices of a strong instructional culture.

TABLE 6.1 Framing a State Mandate		
State Mandate	Requirements	Redefining Central High's Teaching Script
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine levels of performance • Process for dismissal for incompetence 	Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Assist teachers with professional growth</i> • <i>Develop relationships of trust and rapport with teachers</i> • <i>Develop in teachers the following dispositions: (1) Flexibility, (2) Efficacy, (3) Professionalism</i> • Determine levels of performance • Process for dismissal for incompetence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Shall contain researched-based criteria for effective teaching" 	Effective Teaching Behaviors (See Resource 6.3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of Subject Matter • Provision of Instruction • Classroom Management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for dismissal of incompetent teachers: remediation plan, consulting teaching, quarterly evaluations, dismissal notice 	Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Primary–secondary evaluators</i> • <i>Pre-conference</i> • <i>2–3 observations—55 minutes</i> • <i>Observation report</i> • <i>Post-conference</i> • <i>Summative evaluation conference</i> • Process for dismissal of incompetent teachers: remediation plan, consulting teaching, quarterly evaluations, dismissal notice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remediation Plan: goal, standard of performance, recommendations, meet expectations/ does not meet expectations 	Instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Observation Report</i> • <i>Professional development plan</i> • Remediation Plan: goal; standard of performance; recommendations; meet expectations/does not meet expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent • Satisfactory • Unsatisfactory 	Rating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent • Satisfactory • Unsatisfactory

Educating

The uneasiness associated with all school reforms comes from the fear of any process that could potentially disrupt familiar organizational and instructional routines. To restore certainty to what was perceived as a vague mandate to hold teachers accountable for classroom practice would entail an educational process that equipped administrators and teachers with the pertinent research and conceptual frameworks for redefining the Central High teaching script. The process I put forth continually adhered to the two values of intelligent participation: (a) faculty and administrators were expected to come to meetings knowing the current research and practices

on teacher evaluation (see Resource 6.2), and (b) faculty and administrators were expected to listen respectfully and respond thoughtfully to all contributions.

To avoid becoming bogged down in the particulars of writing a new plan, I authored a set of frameworks and evaluation forms for each section of the teacher evaluation plan:

- Domains of Effective Teaching (see Resource 6.3)
- Observation Report (see Resource 6.4)
- Summative Evaluation Report (see Resource 6.5)
- Professional Development Plan (see Resource 6.6)

Each meeting focused on the task of critiquing and editing a framework or form that would be written into the final plan. Teacher critiques focused on clarifying vocabulary, simplifying procedures, modifying performance standards, translating theory into practice, and allowing teachers more autonomy in determining professional growth. The final plan presented at the board meeting in December was a compilation of the agreed-upon critiques of the frameworks and forms presented at each meeting.

Implementing

While everyone on the committee felt good about the process, a lingering concern of all committee members was how the plan would look in classrooms and main offices. The doubt in the minds of committee members was concentrated on the problems associated with applying theory-based performance models to messy classroom worlds:

- How would administrators interpret the enactment of the domains of transformative teaching? (see Figure 5.2, Resource 6.3)
- How would administrators arrive at a rating of teacher performance?
- How would administrators and teachers participate in evaluation conferences using new pedagogical vocabularies and practices?
- How would teachers respond to critiques and ratings that were not superior?

Along with these unanswered implementation questions, teachers complained about “gotcha” supervisory practices that turned teacher evaluations into a game of teachers and administrators trying to outsmart each other

instead of a process designed to educate each other. Listed below are the most troubling “gotcha” practices named by teachers in committee meetings:

1. Scheduling an observation before or after a school holiday
2. Scheduling an observation on an irregular school day (e.g., pep assembly, homecoming)
3. Entering an observation after the class began or leaving an observation before class ended
4. Unannounced observations
5. 5–10 minute walkthroughs

The unease of teachers on the committee was a legitimate response to a process that was asking teachers to experiment with new pedagogies and to trust that new observation procedures would remove the “gotcha” supervisory mentality. The resolution to the legitimate concerns of teachers on the committee grew out of a number “what if” ideas discussed throughout the design process. The first idea was implementing the formalities of the plan without teachers experiencing the mandated consequences of the plan. I formalized this idea into a pilot program that offered teachers the option of removing all documentation of the new evaluation process from their personnel files. Included in the pilot program (see Resource 6.7) was a schedule for training administrative staff in the latest supervisory practices for evaluating teacher performance. The goal of the training sessions was assuring teachers that administrators would no longer engage in “gotcha” supervision.

Even with these program modifications, teachers were still uneasy with how administrators would interpret the procedures and teaching criteria written into the new plan. Listening to their critiques of the plan, the central issue appeared to be one of trust: Would administrators implement the plan in a professional manner? The lack of trust in the evaluation process was due to a pattern of supervisory behaviors that teachers felt were unprofessional and disrespectful. I was not present in the main office long enough to debate these feelings. What I did offer the committee was a memo of understanding that listed the procedures that administrators would be expected to follow when observing teacher performance (see Resource 6.8). The memo, titled “Visitation Etiquette,” changed the entire mood of the teachers seated across from me. The looks on their faces sent the silent message that “finally someone around here gets it.” I discovered in the coming years that trusting relationships were a key value in developing a strong instructional culture. I also learned that trust was a tenuous value that continually had to be reaffirmed with every introduction of a new organizational or instructional arrangement. Changing a school culture will always depend on all parties believing that someone around here gets it. “Getting it,” is the understanding

on the part of administrators that the practice of unlearning comfortable teaching routines and relearning uncertain teaching routines is a leap into the unknown. If teachers decide to take the leap, they want to be assured that wherever they land on the learning curve, it will be a soft landing.

Strong Cultures Leverage What Matters Most

The assignment to develop a new teacher evaluation plan for Central High provided a new school leader with the institutional authority for redefining Central High’s teaching script. The leadership problem new leaders confront is resolving the dilemma between calming the natural insecurities associated with giving up familiar instructional routines and, at the same time, fueling those same insecurities with the continual push for adoption of unfamiliar instructional routines. It was clear on what side of the dilemma Central Offices favor: they look to a managerial script that complies with the new mandate while minimizing disruptions to the district’s teacher evaluation process. A new school leader decides to stand on the other side of the dilemma: he viewed his assignment as a unique opportunity to leverage the state accountability mandate into the institutional authority for redesigning the Central High teaching script.

Before leveraging an opportunity to change a school culture, school leaders must determine the practicality of a reform they are proposing. Table 6.2 summarizes the practicalities of a school reform initiative that increase the likelihood that unfamiliar theories, ideas, and practices will be welcomed into a foreign school culture. Each practicality of school reform is designed to develop understandable relationships between instructional theory and classroom practice. Instructional initiatives that fall too far out of a teacher’s zone

TABLE 6.2 The Zone of Practicality	
Is the Reform . . . ?	The Practicalities of School Reform
Important	Pursues a valued end of schooling that teachers believe is vital for student success
Concrete	Composed of theories and practices that employ familiar concepts, vocabulary, and practices
Coherent	Aligns with the instructional world view of the district and with other instructional initiatives in the building
Teachable	Faculty possesses the prior background knowledge to learn a new pedagogy
Feasible	District possesses the organizational resources—time, materials, space, and expertise—to train teachers and accommodate diverse instructional design features

of practicality will be ignored, opposed, or modified to accommodate the individual understandings or misunderstandings of classroom practitioners.

Staying within the teacher's zone of practicality entails paying close attention to the gap between the practices of a new pedagogy and the practices in the classrooms they intend to change. In each teacher evaluation meeting, a new school leader must continually ask the following questions:

1. Are the goals of the new plan in agreement with what teachers would value from the evaluation of their performance?
2. Are the concepts, vocabulary, and practices written into the plan familiar to Central High's faculty?
3. Do Central High's teachers possess the academic and pedagogical knowledge to implement the criteria for transformative teaching? (see Figure 5.2)
4. Do the criteria for transformative teaching address the current imbalance between rote memorization and conceptual understandings of subject matter?
5. Will the pedagogy represented in the plan work with the student populations we serve?
6. Is the school district capable of providing teachers and administrators with the space, time, materials, personnel, and expertise to support the learning and implementation of the goals and methods of the new teacher evaluation plan?

In the case of the teacher accountability mandate, the answer to each question was a qualified "yes." The new plan pursued a valued goal of the Central High teaching staff (professional development). It established teaching criteria that were not widely practiced, but were well within the academic and pedagogical understandings of faculty. The new plan described a pedagogy that would achieve the educational goals written into Central High's mission statement—conceptual understandings. Lastly, the new plan was a priority for the superintendent, who promised the time, materials, and expertise that would be needed to fully enact the state's mandate.

Central High's new teacher evaluation plan provided the cultural lever a new school leader was looking for to redefine Central High's teaching script. The "qualified" use of this cultural lever was solely dependent on the will and the know-how of administrative team members to fully enact the answers to the practicalities of school reform. In the early months of the school year, school leaders will remain somewhat uncertain about the capabilities of his administrative team. Until new school leaders are certain they have the right people in the main office, the cultural levers an administrative team will be asked to push will seize up.

Resources

Resource 6.1 *A Narrative for Mandating Excellence*

<p>Valued End of Schooling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching matters most • To recognize and support quality teaching
<p>Current Situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central High’s teacher evaluation program meets very few of the guidelines listed in the mandate. • Based on comments made to me when I visited your classrooms, you would agree with the state that Central High’s teacher evaluation plan does not define quality teaching, does not evaluate quality teaching, and does not provide a process for teachers to improve their craft. • Central High possesses teachers who demonstrate, on a daily basis, what the research says is effective teaching, and who are willing to continually improve those teaching behaviors. • While the state mandate offers general guidelines for the submission of an acceptable plan, they leave the specifics of the plan to school districts. We have a real-time opportunity to author a teacher evaluation plan that shines a light on the quality teaching going on in this building and provides multiple pathways for the personal development of quality teaching behaviors. • The timelines established by the state permit us to wait until the summer to write a plan. We would then implement the plan next fall. In discussions with the association and my administrative team, there was general agreement that we need a period of time to pilot the new plan before progressing to full implementation.
<p>What the Research Says</p>	<p>The research on teacher evaluation plans identifies six characteristics that continually improve teaching performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed-upon criteria for effective teaching • Different expectations, time lines, procedures for teachers with varying levels of experience • Multiple sources of information determine levels of teaching performance • Sensitivity to the social context of the classroom • A process that focuses on coaching rather than telling • Knowledgeable and trained supervisors conduct the observations
<p>Action</p>	<p>The superintendent agreed to the following process for developing Central High’s Teacher Evaluation Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board will provide the time, materials, and expertise to write a plan. • We will complete the plan by January 1. • We will replace the normal Central High evaluation cycle that begins in February and ends in March with the newly designed teacher evaluation plan. • Based on feedback during the pilot period, an evaluation committee will revise the plan over the summer. • No documents from the pilot program will be placed in teacher personnel files. In effect, the board and association have agreed to suspend the upcoming evaluation cycle. • The faculty will vote on the final version of plan in the fall and will fully implement it in the next year’s evaluation cycle.

Resource 6.2 *District 93: Teacher Evaluation Committee Calendar*

Timeline	Activities	Outcomes
Session #1 October 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review project timeline • Review state guidelines • Discussion: Goals of teacher evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft: District 93 Goals of teacher evaluation
Session #2 October 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and edit goals • Discussion: What is quality teaching? What are criteria of effective teaching? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated: District 93 Goals of teacher evaluation • Draft: District 93 Criteria of effective teaching
Session #3 November 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and edit criteria of effective teaching • Discussion: How do you evaluate quality teaching? • Discussion: Differentiated performance evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated: District 93 Criteria of effective teaching • Draft: District 93 Teacher evaluation procedures
Session #4 November 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and edit teacher evaluation procedures • Discussion: Models of Supervision • Discussion: Coaching for Improved Performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated: District 93 Teacher evaluation procedures • Draft: District 93: Teacher evaluation forms
Session #5 December 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and edit final draft of District 93 Teacher Evaluation Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated: District 93 Teacher evaluation forms • Final Draft: District 93 Teacher Evaluation Plan
Session #6 January 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and edit final draft of District 93 Teacher Evaluation Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Copy: District 93 Teacher Evaluation Plan • Submission to Board of Education

Resource 6.3 *District 93: Domains of Effective Teaching*

Domain of Teaching	Criteria for Effective Teaching
Knowledge of Subject Matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representation of Subject Matter: Lessons represent content, methods, and the disciplinary thinking put forth by state standards and disciplinary experts. • Organization of Subject Matter: Subject matter is arranged into distinct elements: facts, skills, concepts, exemplars, themes, big picture/big questions.
Provision of Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose: Teacher explicitly identifies the relationship between student outcomes (work products) and activity structures. • Continuity: Lesson evidences a clear relationship between previous learning activities and projected learning experiences. • Coherence: Lessons establish connections among purposes, subject matter, activities, and student outcomes. • Discourse Patterns: Activity structures generate discourse patterns that go beyond teacher talk. Learners engage each other in purposeful conversations that support inquiry and involve them in methods of thinking that transfer to problem solving and real-world performances. • Activity Structures: Teacher has constructed learning activities that align with the stated purposes of instruction and that have intellectual integrity. • Attention to Student Thinking: Students thinking processes are respected and are considered a source for alternative explanations of subject matter content and methods. • Questioning: Evidence a balance between convergent and divergent questions. • Assessment: Teacher employs multiple assessment techniques to evaluate student performance. • Feedback: Teacher continually adjusts the lesson design based on assessed student understanding.
Classroom Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal Relationships: Classroom relationships are courteous and respectful. • Time: Students spend the majority of classroom time engaged in appropriate learning activities. • Transitions: Shifts in classroom activity structures and subject matter content are smooth and coherent. • Routine Procedures: Classroom administrative procedures (e.g., taking attendance, distribution of materials) are handled efficiently.

Resource 6.4 *District 93: Observation Report*

School District 93: Observation Report	
Teacher	
Supervisor	
Dates of Observation	
Minutes of Observation	
Description of Lesson	
Strengths of Lesson	
Areas of Growth	
Teacher signature	
Supervisor signature	
Date of Post-Conference	

Resource 6.5 *District 93: Summative Evaluation Report*

Central High Summative Evaluation Report	
Teacher	
Supervisor	
Dates of Observation	
Dates of Conferences	
Teaching Strengths	
Areas of Growth	
Excellent	The teacher has demonstrated mastery of all the domains of effective teaching and in certain domain areas has demonstrated novel strategies for teaching and learning.
Satisfactory	The teacher has demonstrated mastery of the fundamental domains of effective teaching and has shown improvement in identified areas of growth.
Unsatisfactory	The teacher has not mastered one or more of the fundamentals of effective teaching (knowledge of subject matter, clarity of instruction, and class management) and has not demonstrated growth in one or more of the fundamental domains of effective teaching.
Teacher signature	
Supervisor signature	
Date of Summative Conference	

Resource 6.6 *District 93: Professional Development Plan*

School District 93: Professional Development Plan	
Teacher	
Supervisor	
Dates of Planning Conference	
Areas of Growth (Domains of Teaching)	
Instructional Methods/Techniques/Strategies	
Plan of Action	
Assessment of Areas of Growth	
Teacher signature	
Supervisor signature	
Date	

Resource 6.7 *Pilot Study*

Timeline	Task(s)	Activities
December	Distribution of District 93’s new Teacher Evaluation Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print plan • Present plan (Principal) • Present pilot program (Principal)
January–February	Administrative training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three half-day sessions (Saturdays) • Domains of effective teaching (in action) • Observe effective teaching • Document effective teaching • Rate effective teaching • Conference
February	Notification of involvement in pilot program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters to teachers identified for pilot study • Orientation to plan (in-service day)
February–April	Conduct two evaluation cycles	<p>Evaluation Cycle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 pre-conference • 2–3 observations (same lesson on consecutive days) • 1 mini post-conference • 1 post-conference • 1 observation report (see Resource 6.4)
April–May	Summative Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 summative conference • 1 summative report (see Resource 6.5) • 1 professional development plan (see Resource 6.6)
May–June	Revision of District 93 Plan and option to remove documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconvene teacher evaluation committee • Analyze teacher evaluation survey of teachers involved in pilot • Edit District 93 Teacher Evaluation Plan
June	Board Approval of Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee presents plan to board • Board approval
July–August	Administrative Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe effective teaching • Document effective teaching • Rate effective teaching • Conference: direct, informational, cognitive coaching

Resource 6.8 *Visitation Etiquette*

Visitation Etiquette	
<i>Always remember that you are a guest in a teacher's room.</i>	
1)	Always announce your visit by sending a note to the teacher informing them of the time and date of visitation. The note might also include information that you would like the teacher to provide about the lesson.
<i>Avoid unannounced visitations</i>	
2)	Always arrive early to the classroom for the scheduled visitation. When you arrive at the room for the visitation, ask the teacher for permission to enter the room. If you arrive just as the lesson is beginning, quietly slip into a seat at the back of the room. If for some reason the teacher requests that you not enter his or her classroom for the scheduled visitation, respect that wish.
3)	Always remain in the classroom for a full lesson (however that is defined in the class you are observing) or as long as the teacher has requested for a particular lesson segment.
4)	Never interrupt a class while it is in session with a question to the teacher or a question to students in the room. Try to avoid facial expressions or body language that would indicate your feelings about the lesson (whether positive or negative). Never get up from your seat while the lesson is in session and walk around the room (unless the teacher has placed students in a lab or group situation—then it is permissible to walk around the room and observe what students are doing at a lab table or in their group sessions).
5)	Always respect the wishes of the teacher on the date and time of observation.
6)	Never schedule a visitation before or after holidays, days on which schedules have been changed, days on which students are involved in school wide activities (e.g., pep assemblies), or on days in which the normal running of the school will be disrupted in some way.
7)	Multiple visits (6–10) are the only means for gaining an understanding of a teacher's pattern of instruction. Teachers should be viewed in multiple settings. Avoid visiting the same class period or same subject.
8)	No visitation should occur without a PRE-CONFERENCE and a POST-CONFERENCE. Hold conferences in the teacher's classroom or an area that is not considered an administrative office/area. Always schedule conferences in a private area that is quiet and where no interruptions will occur. While the conference is in session, do not answer a phone or permit clerical staff to interrupt the conference.
9)	The preferred sequence of a teacher observation is: pre-conference, multiple classroom observations (2–5), mini-post-conference, delivery of formal observation report to teacher (prior to post-conference), post-conference, and lastly, signing of evaluation report. <i>At the final post-conference, the teacher, in consultation with the supervisor, may revise the observation report. Teachers always have the right of rebuttal to the contents of an observation report.</i>

7

The “I” in Team

THE SITUATION:

“I placed the agendas for last year’s faculty meetings on your desk.”

Dr. Jones, at Central High, there is no “I” in team.

COMMENT MADE TO ME AT THE END OF MY INTERVIEW
FOR PRINCIPAL OF CENTRAL HIGH

Dr. Jones, I placed the agendas from last year’s faculty and cabinet meetings in your inbox. Dr. Meyer usually sent them out a week before each meeting.

COMMENT MADE TO ME BY MY NEW SECRETARY

To: All Faculty
 From: A. Jones
 Subject: Faculty Meetings

Based on my experience with two months of faculty meetings, I believe the time allocated for these meetings would be put to better use working on instructional-related activities. For the remainder of the school year, I will communicate the information normally presented at these meetings via email. If a situation arises that requires a general face-to-face meeting with the faculty, I will schedule a faculty meeting at the regularly scheduled meeting time.

The “I” in Team Matters

Strong instructional school cultures mature in buildings where all administrators are reading from the same cultural page. Weak school cultures exist in buildings where administrators are reading from cultural pages that are missing, are unintelligible, or are in the wrong book. While the personalities and work habits of administrators in strong instructional cultures are diverse, what they value in education, how they talk about those values, and how they implement those values represent a common set of beliefs and practices. After several months of working closely with my administrative team, I knew I was fortunate to inherit a group of individuals who possessed a common set of occupational beliefs and behaviors that would advance the goals and values of a strong instructional culture (see Table 7.1). I clearly had the right people in the main office.

Although my administrative team shared a common set of beliefs and values, the ability to fully enact those values and beliefs at Central High was compromised by a mismatch between the managerial skill sets they possessed and the jobs they were asked to perform. Each team member should

TABLE 7.1 The Right People in the Main Office	
Beliefs and Dispositions	Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child-centered/advocate • Teaching matters most • Fair-minded • Open-minded • Reflective • Collegial • Caring • Enthusiastic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong work ethic • Punctual • Articulate • Literate • Organized • Well-prepared • Knowledgeable in chosen field • Good judgment

TABLE 7.2 Managerial Proficiencies

Type	Proficiency
Academic	Ability to apply theories, philosophies, concepts, and methods in subject matter domains to real-world classroom instructional problems.
Analyzer	Ability to apply theories, ideas, concepts, and multiple data sources to organizational and instructional problems.
Auditor	Ability to develop budgets and maintain an accurate record of budgetary expenditures.
Counselor	Ability to resolve conflicts between individual social, emotional, and intellectual behaviors and institutional goals, procedures, and outcomes.
Implementer	Ability to efficiently and accurately allocate personnel, materials, space, time, and expertise.
Technocrat	Ability to resolve systems problems.

have been supervising organizational areas that aligned their individual managerial proficiency with the goals and functions of their administrative assignments (see Table 7.2). Mike, for example, was a superb counselor and child advocate. When Mike chaired a particularly acrimonious special education staffing, I was certain that parents, teachers, and support staff would leave the meeting believing that the best interests of the student had been served. Mike's attention to detail, however, was problematic. The staffing requests he submitted to me were often inaccurate and late. Jill, on the other hand, was a superior technocrat and implementer and I could be certain about her accuracy and timely submission of staffing reports, budgets, and schedules. The cost to the organization for misplaced administrators was low-performing systems.

In operational terms, some systems in the building were delivering services that were far from being professional, responsive, competent, and efficient.

Although the managerial mismatches I encountered did not halt any school services, our main office team was sending the damaging cultural message that delivering subpar services was the best the organization could do. Without a reorganization of main office job responsibilities, coping with supervisory missteps would continually marginalize the goals, values, and practices of a strong instructional culture. At this point in the school year, I knew the personalities and managerial skills of my administrative team well enough to make the necessary managerial reassignments (see Resource 7.1). The reorganization process was more difficult because of the feeling on the part of my administrative team that the new job assignments were an indication of poor performance. The response of each team member to his or her new duties was a request for more time to improve

their performance. In some cases, I was able to modify a job responsibility to match a managerial proficiency. In most cases, however, the skill set of the team member was too far removed from the functions of the system they were supervising.

The decision to remain firm on the job reassignments proved to be a sound one. In the weeks following the administrative reorganization, there was a discernible change in the quality of services delivered to teachers, parents, and students. The most dramatic changes occurred in data processing, general administration, and supervision: grade reports went out on time, bell schedules were rung on the right days, substitute teachers were in the right rooms, lunchrooms were orderly, and clerical services were performed in a timely manner. Not only was there a tangible change in the delivery of certain services in the building, but more importantly, the main office reassignments signaled to the school community that whatever jobs faculty or staff performed, those jobs would be performed competently.

At the time, I did not notice the effect that redefined performance standards was having on the Central High way. The continued press for doing things well was gradually eroding Central High's hometown feel. The relaxed and friendly tone of the building was disrupted and ultimately transformed by a very different set of values, beliefs, and practices. In place of a compliance vocabulary and "just good enough" behavior, was a vocabulary of performance and accountability. The early decisions to fundamentally alter accepted organizational arrangements would establish a pattern of managerial decision-making that placed the value of quality performance above the Central High value of "just good enough" services and "just good enough" instruction.

In the following years, I struggled with the distinction between being a leader and being a manager. One set of skills established and enforced performance standards. The other set of skills assessed and granted exceptions to established performance standards. Each organizational and instructional situation I confronted in the first 100 days asked me to reconcile the gaps between what the organization ought to be doing and what the organization was comfortable with doing. The Central High way valued and practiced the belief that there was no *I* in team. If your title was an administrator, then you were capable of managing any organizational function and leading any team. A new vision for Central High valued job performance over team affiliation. Enacting this value meant that administrators would manage organizational functions and lead teams that matched their individual managerial skill sets. The reorganization of Central High's main office was a clear one—the *I* in team mattered.

The “I” in Meetings Matters

At this point in the school year, faculty, staff, and my administrative team were exposed to patterns of talk and decisions from the main office that symbolized the values of a strong instructional culture: teaching matters, learning matters, performance matters, competence matters, and implementation matters. Missing from these main-office pronouncements and managerial decisions was an organizational structure that would embed the values of a strong instructional culture into Central High’s daily organizational and instructional thinking and conversations. Moving my vision for Central High out of the main office into the vocabularies and behaviors of the school community would entail an established process that joined organizational and instructional values with organizational and instructional practices. The accepted managerial structure for linking the ends and means of an organizational vision is some type of cooperative forum for discussing the what’s, why’s, and how’s of a new reform initiative.

Although most of my administrative colleagues would give nodding agreement with the concept of collaboration, in practice, they were more comfortable with managerial scripts that tell rather than listen, allocate rather than explain, and inspect rather than purpose. The justification for top-down managerial scripts were bad experiences with faculty, team, and program meetings that always seemed to turn collaboration into a confused mix of anecdotes, claims, counter-claims, recriminations, and unworkable solutions. The early faculty gatherings I participated in at Central High followed the meeting scripts most feared by my colleagues. Each meeting began with the goal of openly discussing a school-wide problem or initiative, but was quickly hijacked by an outspoken faculty member attempting to catch an administrator in contradictory policy pronouncements. Even smaller department meetings were overshadowed by discourse patterns that reduced purposeful approaches to problem solving to monologues or accusatory debates. Administrators countered these failed attempts at collaboration, with meeting agendas whose only evidence of a deliberative process was the perfunctory “any questions” comment tossed out as administrators were leaving the meeting.

While I understood the hesitancy on the part of my colleagues to embrace any form of collaboration, I also understood that collaboration in general, and meetings in particular, were the chief managerial tool for connecting theories and ideas with particular school or classroom circumstances. A misunderstanding of the definition of collaboration and confusion over the goals, functions, and context of scheduled meetings prevented collaboration in meetings at Central High. Most of Central High’s meetings were designed to announce and explain policies and procedures. The role of the

administrator in *informational* meetings is to present. The role of the participant is to listen, ask for clarification, and implement. *Instrumental* meetings, on the other hand, are designed to engage participants in a deliberative problem-solving process. The goals and functions of instrumental meetings are to educate, to interpret, and to coach. The role of the administrator in instrumental meetings is to facilitate. The role of the participants is to discuss, deliberate, and author new strategies. Instrumental meetings achieve their goals when administrators carve out safe spaces for colleagues to question, examine, and interpret new instructional or organizational routines. The meetings I attended at Central High consisted of a confused mix of telling, allocating, inspecting, educating, interpreting, and coaching (see Figure 7.1).

Added to the poor alignment of the goals, functions, and outcomes of meetings was confusion over the definition of collaboration. Democratic forms of participation are not open mike forums where all members, all knowledge, all ideas, and all proposals are treated equally. True collaboration is a marketplace of ideas where thoughtful practitioners engage in a deliberative process that, if skillfully carried out, is able to distinguish between weak and strong thinking, weak and strong ideas, and weak and strong strategies. A marketplace of ideas functions poorly in environments where all meeting participants are equal. A true marketplace of ideas requires structures where the right knowledge and the right participants are brought together to address the right problem or develop the right strategy.

After a few months of “gotcha” faculty meetings and several bogged down problem-solving meetings, I felt it was time to redefine Central High’s

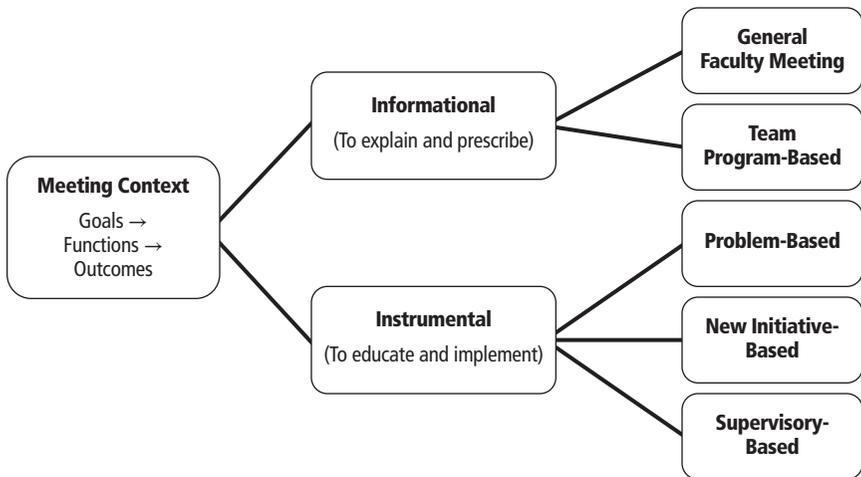


Figure 7.1 The context of a meeting.

model of collaboration. At the beginning of the second month of school, I sent out a memo indicating that faculty meetings would be scheduled on a need-to-know basis for the remainder of the school year. The messages I was conveying in the memo were: (a) teacher time was sacrosanct, and (b) accomplishing the goals and functions of *informational* meetings did not require formal meeting structures. I followed this memo with several administrative meetings in which we developed a classification of meeting types that clearly delineated the goals, functions, and outcomes of the meetings that members of my administrative team would find themselves leading (see Resource 7.2). In the coming months, we devoted considerable time in our team meetings to reviewing meeting logs (see Resource 7.3) to determine if meeting structures remained true to the goals, functions, and outcomes of a school-wide problem or strategy. Included in this review would be a frank discussion of the social, emotional, and intellectual dynamics of the meeting.

The most consequential cultural shift in Central High's meeting script was a meeting format that evolved out of my experience with the development of District 93's teacher evaluation plan. The state mandated timelines and redefinitions of performance required a level of thoughtfulness and meeting decorum that had been absent in Central High's meetings. The redefinition of collaboration at Central High began with a clear definition of participation and a clear definition of deliberation. Faculty members that were invited to participate entered the conference room with a particular experience and disposition to thoughtfully examine the contributions of other participants in the conference room (see Figure 7.2; Resource 7.5). I entered the conference room with the goal of creating a safe space to openly examine ideas and proposals of all the participants seated around the table. As these meetings proceeded, I found that the best strategy for the critical examination of ideas was holding participants accountable for contributions that did not wander

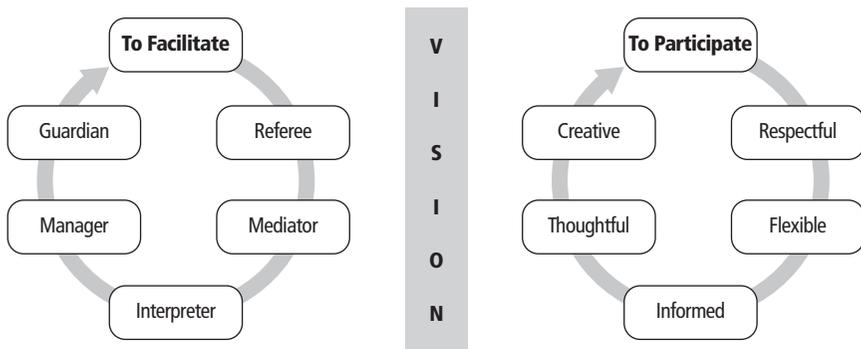


Figure 7.2 Collaboration redefined.

far from a thoughtful conversation (see Figure 7.2; Resource 7.4). In those early months of instrumental meetings, participants struggled most with listening and determining relevant facts. I struggled most with articulating the connections between vision statements, strategies, and plans of action.

The struggle with connecting ideal ends with instrumental means was largely due to having vocabularies, strategies, and plans of action designed to tell, allocate, and inspect. In my facilitator toolbox, I did not yet have a conversational framework that would articulate the relationships between ideal ends of schooling and practical means of achieving those ideal ends. The missing conversational framework gradually evolved out of what administrative team members called “office door meetings.” I ended each school day with impromptu visits to administrative offices to check on the progress of the projects that my team members were supervising. The visits began with the typical “checklist” discourse: topics discussed, viewpoints aired, recommendations made, actions taken, adjustments made, and future directions. In the course of these question and answer sessions, opportunities arose to formulate a story line that connected the goals, functions, and outcomes of the projects under discussion. Within months of the beginning of the school year, all members of the administrative team were participating in a conversational framework that connected the implementation dots (Figure 7.3). Although these early instructional narratives often

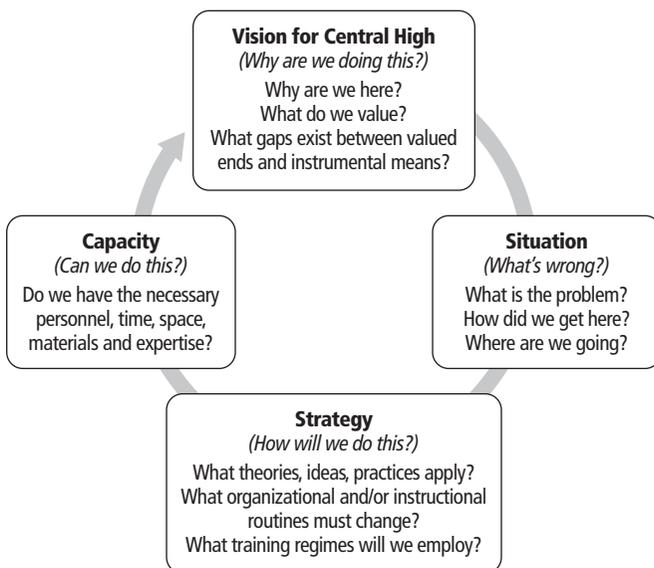


Figure 7.3 Connecting the implementation dots.

remained focused on the how’s of implementation, no meeting ended without some mention of the why’s of implementation. With every mention of why, the conversations moved towards solutions that were larger than any one person’s point of view.

While each organizational and office door meeting reflected a different social, emotional, and intellectual dynamic, every Central High meeting now had in common the redefinition of performance and professionalism: the *I*’s participating in meetings were accountable for knowing what they were talking about; the *I*’s leading the meetings were accountable for producing an actionable outcome.

Strong Cultures Restore the “I” in Team

In the first few months of a school year, new school leaders will find a number of opportunities to articulate their visions of quality schooling. While statements from auditorium stages and singular administrative decisions symbolize changes to the beliefs, values, and practices of a school culture, the full enactment of a new set of cultural norms requires a stable organizational platform to tie together words on stages with deeds in classrooms. In most schools, various meetings are scheduled to facilitate personal understandings of an agreed-upon vision of schooling. In most schools, however, the collaborative process often amounts to little more than “telling” managerial agendas or “gotcha” faculty meetings. The failure of this chief managerial tool to establish links between educational values and particular school and classroom circumstances originates in school structures and practices that are more comfortable with managerial scripts that tell rather than listen, allocate rather than explain, and inspect rather than purpose. Without an organizational platform for connecting the cultural dots—values, beliefs, and practices—schools remain susceptible to short-term and self-serving formulations of ways to make it through the school day.

In the first 100 days of a school year, a priority for new school leaders is the development of forums designed to educate, deliberate, and coach. Deliberative forums are guided by two principles: (a) the *I* in team matters, and (b) the *I* in meetings matters. The first principle requires that school leaders align the goals, functions, and outcomes of the meetings they schedule with the managerial proficiencies of the administrators leading the meeting. The second principle requires that all participants in a meeting possess the content knowledge and interpersonal skills to fully engage in a deliberative process. When both principles become embedded

in organizational routines, collaboration becomes the principal organizational arrangement for connecting the cultural dots.

While the enactment of meeting structures that replace accusatory debates with deliberative forums would appear to be a bottom-up initiative, in operation, establishing purposeful structures for collective sensemaking is a top-down affair. New school leaders place the *I* back into team when they assume responsibility and control over the goals, functions, and outcomes of the meetings they chair and those chaired by members of their team. Every problem, initiative, and concern should be prioritized and guided by an *I* in the main office. The *I*s in the main office should be held accountable for possessing the knowledge and skills to fulfill the goals, functions, and outcomes of scheduled meetings. From the standpoint of organizational strategy, placing the *I* back into team reclaims the managerial ability to focus school resources on problems, initiatives, and concerns that are worth pursuing. From the standpoint of changing a school culture, placing the *I* back into team reclaims the leadership responsibility for connecting the valued ends of schooling with daily organizational and instructional routines. From the standpoint of teaming and collaboration, placing the *I* back into team requires that all professional *I*s in the room assume personal responsibility for considering problems and initiatives in a thoughtful and disciplined manner. From the standpoint of working within the constraints of institutional schooling, placing the *I* back into team provides new school leaders with the freedom and authority to think outside the box.

Resources

Resource 7.1 *Realignment of Management Proficiencies and Job Responsibilities*

Team Member	Proficiencies	Original Responsibilities	Revised Responsibilities
Mark	Counselor Implementer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline • Police Liaison Officer • Supervision Schedule 	Add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation
Mike	Counselor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Activities • Special Education • Facilities and Grounds • Master Schedule • Registration • Transportation • Activity Fund 	Remove: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities and Grounds • Master Schedule • Registration • Transportation • Activity Fund
Jill	Analyzer Counselor Implementer Technocrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupil Personnel Services 	Add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration • Master Schedule • Standardized Testing
Sarah	Analyzer Implementer Technocrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Processing 	Add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Schedule • Grade Reports
Tom	Analyzer Implementer Technocrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Athletics (materials, scheduling) • Chair of Athletic Council (Enforcement of Athletic Code) • Employment and Supervision of Coaches 	Add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Athletic Eligibility
Sam	Analyzer Auditor Implementer Technocrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget 	Add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity Fund • Facilities and Grounds
Department Chairpersons	Academic Analyzer Implementer Technocrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget • Staffing • Curriculum Development 	Add: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Evaluation • Staff Development

Resource 7.2 *Meeting Types*

Meeting Type	Goals	Functions	Outcomes
Systems-Based (1–2 participants) Weekly/As needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor performance • Maximize performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questioning • Describing • Explaining • Proposing • Implementing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of resources • Purchase of technology • Modification of processes • Training regime
Team Program-Based (2–15 participants) Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calendar reminders • Present policies, procedures • Team reports • Instructional problems and concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting • Questioning • Proposing • Implementing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of problem areas • Establishment of study group
Problem-Based (2–6 participants) Daily/Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolve school-wide problem • Resolve program-based problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting • Describing • Explaining • Proposing • Implementing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of resources • System redesign • Training regime
New Initiative-Based (Targeted groups) Weekly/As needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale for new initiative: situation–strategy–capacity • Alignment with school instructional worldview • Implementation strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting • Describing • Explaining • Proposing • Responding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocation of resources • System redesign • Organizational redesign • Adoption of new materials • Employment of consultants • Changed supervisory stance • Training regime
Supervisory-Based (1–1 participants) Daily/Weekly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional feedback • Continuous professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describing • Explaining • Paraphrasing • Proposing • Implementing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused observations • Coaching • Professional Development Plan • Training regime
General Faculty Meeting (Entire faculty) Quarterly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize excellence • Inform • Present policies, procedures, mandates • Calendar reminders • Progress reports from problem-based teams • Frame/introduce new programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting • Describing • Explaining • Responding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informed faculty • Understanding • Organization • Implementation

Resource 7.3 Meeting Log

Meeting <i>(Attach Agenda)</i>	Date:
Meeting Type:	
Participants:	
Problem or Initiative:	
Outcomes of Meeting	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descriptions • Explanations • Theories, Ideas, Practices • Strategies • Plans of Action 	
Obstacles to Achieving Goals	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 50%;">• Clarity of Goals <li style="width: 50%;">• Lack of Data/Research <li style="width: 50%;">• Administrative Commitment <li style="width: 50%;">• Lack of Expertise <li style="width: 50%;">• Local Commitment <li style="width: 50%;">• Time <li style="width: 50%;">• Amount of Time and Effort for Implementation <li style="width: 50%;">• Required Resources <li style="width: 50%;">• Number/Composition of Participants <li style="width: 50%;">• Oppositional Belief Systems <li style="width: 50%;">• Contractual Constraints 	
Problem/Strategy Worth Pursuing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important • Concrete • Coherent • Teachable • Feasible 	
Problem/Strategy <i>Not</i> Worth Pursuing (<i>Rationale</i>)	

Resource 7.4 *Role of Facilitator*

Role	Function
Referee	Create safe space for a knowledgeable and disciplined exchange of ideas
Mediator	Reconcile different theoretical and practical perspectives
Interpreter	Translate generalized knowledge into situational contexts
Manager	Implement agreed upon strategies
Guardian	Maintain a focus on valued ends of schooling

Resource 7.5 *Role of Participant*

Required Disposition	Function
Respectful	Willingness to listen non-judgmentally to the ideas of others
Flexible	Willingness to understand other theories, ideas, beliefs, and practices
Informed	Willingness to do the required “homework” to know and understand the issues and research governing a new initiative or problem
Thoughtful	Willingness to engage in disciplined methods of inquiry
Creative	Willingness to offer new theories, ideas, strategies, and practices

Thinking Outside the Box

THE SITUATION:

“I know how to get these kids back to school, but you won’t do it.”

In early November, I picked up our monthly attendance report from data processing. As I looked over the figures, Sarah, the data manager, shared the following observation with me:

“Dr. Jones, our monthly attendance numbers are really being impacted by thirty-two freshman students who have over 30 days of non-attendance.”

“Are they excused or unexcused absences?”

“They are little of both.”

I walked back to my office and called our truant officer to discuss our thirty-two missing freshman students.

“Sandy, are you aware of a group of freshman students who are not attending school on a regular basis?”

“Yes, I am.”

“What are you doing about it?”

“I have followed the standard procedures of notifying and counseling truants.”

“It appears from the reports on my desk that these standard procedures are not working.”

“Dr. Jones, I can speak from experience that none of these measures will work.”

“Well, Sandy, what works then?”

“Dr. Jones, I know how to get these students back to school, but you won’t do it.”

“What won’t I do Sandy?”

“Dr. Jones, with all due respect, I know you care about these kids, but past administrators were unwilling to make the necessary changes to the school organization that would accommodate the needs of these students.”

“Sandy, what changes to this school would bring these students back?”

“First, these students do not do mornings.”

“Sandy, come on, what do you mean they don’t do mornings?”

“They don’t do mornings. Getting on a bus at 6:30 and sitting in a cafeteria until 8:00 just won’t cut it with these students. They would be willing to come to school at 10:00, but not 8:00.”

“What else?”

“They don’t do gym.”

“That’s a state mandate.”

“I told you they you wouldn’t be able to accommodate these students.”

“What else?”

“They want to study subjects they are interested in, not the required courses.”

“Sandy, some of these required courses are state mandated. Go on.”

“They do not navigate the seven period school schedule very well. Ideally, they would be much more comfortable in some form of self-contained classroom with one or two teachers they get to know well.”

“Anything else?”

“Dr. Jones, if you are really serious about this problem, I would be willing to come on board as a resource teacher for this program. Give me a classroom in the building annex. I will take responsibility for creating a curriculum and schedule that will accommodate the individual needs of these students.”

“What about the gym and require courses mandate?”

“Dr. Jones, again with all due respect, that is your problem. I am just telling you what we need to do administratively and instructionally to bring these kids back to school.”

STARS

The discovery that there were thirty-two freshman students who had all but given up on schooling in early November presented me with a problem that few schools, few programs, and few policies have resolved. In fact, the institutional policies designed to prevent truancy not only failed to bring truant students back to school, but also pushed these students farther away from the classes they should be attending. It is at this point in the problem-solving process that administrators are given a real opportunity to change the beliefs, ideas, and practices of a school culture. I could leave the Central High way untouched by merely adjusting one or more of the prevailing institutional strategies already in place (Table 8.1). The least disruptive, and most ineffective, option was to allow the Central High way to take its course (Option #1). The counselors and deans would make the appropriate

TABLE 8.1 Truancy Options

Option	Activities
1 Follow Central High's Attendance Policies and Procedures	Enforce current policies and procedures regarding excused and unexcused absences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 absences → Parent letter - 5 absences → Parent conference - 10 absences → Drop from class with failing grade
2 Implement Truancy Interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home visitations • Counseling • Adjust academic program • Closely monitor attendance
3 Adopt a Truancy Prevention Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase data tracking attendance module • Purchase curriculum materials: “Differentiated Learning” • Design in-service program: “Differentiated Learning” • Employ consultant: “Differentiated Learning” • Employ teachers' aide(s)
4 Design Alternative Instructional Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure the school schedule (10:00-4:00) • Restructure course requirements: alternative P.E. program and student choice of courses • Adopt Individualized instructional program • Self-contained classroom • One resource teacher • Contract: Program expectations for students and parents

contacts and fill out the appropriate forms. The outcome of following the current attendance procedures would be the realization on the part of my stay-at-home freshman that no matter how hard they tried, they were already mathematically unable to pass any of their classes. Adopting various components of truancy prevention programs would offer program options that appeared to be innovative, and at the same, employed familiar managerial moves to implement (Options #2 & #3). In reality, however, each truancy prevention strategy would merely reduce a complex motivational problem to simplified familiar institutional goals and methods: the documentation of the number and type of interventions and justification for the purchase of new program materials and technologies. The outcome of this innovative sleight of hand would involve no changes to the organizational and instructional routines that were keeping a group of freshman students seated in their bedrooms instead of classrooms. The only option that held out the possibility of returning a group of alienated freshman students back to Central High classrooms was to develop a personalized learning environment that respected and optimized their diverse talents, abilities, and interests (Option #4): thinking outside the institutional box.

The proposal I sent to Central Office offered a plausible response to each reason Central Office would offer for voting down the program: no theory, no money, no personnel, and no room (see Resource 8.1).

- The curriculum content, instructional strategies, and behavioral expectations for Central High's new alternative educational program closely matched the research findings on the characteristics of successful truancy programs (theory).
- The county was offering monies for schools willing to experiment with new strategies to reduce truancy (money).
- Sandy was a teacher who possessed that rare mix of empathy and toughness that appealed to a group of students who were looking for someone at Central High to appreciate who they were personally and what they could achieve academically (personnel).
- The recent purchase of a vacated elementary school next to Central High provided the seclusion Sandy would need to repair the broken emotions and intellects of our stay-at-home freshman students (room).

Although the goals, the pedagogy, the curriculum, and behavioral expectations of the alternative truancy proposal were substantive departures from the Central High way, the organizational and instructional routines of the program appeared to mirror the schooling going on in the main building. Most importantly, the implementation of Central High's

outside-the-box truancy program was a concrete representation of Central High's mission to offer educational experiences that were tailored to the diverse talents, abilities, and interests of the school community we served.

Even with all these agreed-upon conditions in place, the weeks before the board vote on the truancy proposal involved extensive negotiations with board members and teachers to calm their fears that this experimental truancy prevention program would disrupt the organizational and instructional routines of Central High. Table 8.2 summarizes the agreements that were reached with central office and the teachers' association to guarantee that Central High's outside-the-box truancy program would not disrupt Central High's inside-the-box program. At the January board meeting, the STARS (Students Through Accepting Responsibility) program was officially born. The first cohort of 18 students entered the program in January. My initial visits to the program confirmed for me that institutional strategies for controlling truancy would not work with a group of students who were deeply

Type of Obstacle	Functions	Preventing Disruptive Practices
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation/Mandates • District/School Policies • Credentialing • Accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed: Mandated subjects completed to receive diploma • Agreed: Disciplinary rules and enforcement assigned to self-contained teacher • Adapted: Summer STARS physical education • Agreed: Parents sign contracts outlining program design and requirements for remaining in the program
Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual Agreements • Certification • Learning Standards • Knowledge Organization (subjects) • Curriculum Materials (e.g., textbooks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapted: Student choice of subjects • Adapted: Individualized instructional programs • Agreed: Passing grade in course determined by passing departmental final exams or agreed-upon alternative • Agreed: Departmental monitoring of course materials and student performance criteria • Agreed: Self-contained teacher not part of bargaining unit
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Schedule • Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapted: STARS school day = 10:00–4:00 • Agreed: Allocation of self-contained classroom • Agreed: District supervision of grants associated with STARS program

alienated from the goals and methods of traditional schooling. Because the program involved a small number of students located in a remote part of the building, our team had the flexibility and capacity to make the necessary adjustments to resolve the normal discrepancies that arose between the machinery of school administration and a classroom designed around the idiosyncrasies of the students seated in front of Sandy.

During the following weeks and months, it became clear how critical it was that we had thoroughly interrogated the theories, practices, and feasibility of the program *before* implementation. For every problem that emerged from uncertain theories and practices, our team had an effective response that was able to bridge the theory–practice divide (see Resource 8.2). In the progress report I was required to deliver at the March board meeting, I reported that all students enrolled in STARS were attending school on a regular basis and passing all of the classes that they had selected to study. Over the next seventeen years, I would hand seven hundred and seven diplomas to students who, without the STARS program, would have become a number on a dropout report. In that same period of time, Central High’s average graduation rate increased by 9.62%.

The outcomes of the program were gratifying for all those involved. In the words of my superintendent: “Al, this was a slam dunk.” But STARS was not a slam-dunk. The organizational, professional, institutional, and community hoops that Sandy and I were asked to jump through almost benched the entire program. Our persistence and a set of favorable circumstances allowed us to get on the court and eventually do a slam-dunk. What troubled me the most about the STARS proposal, and continued to trouble me throughout my career in the main office, was the school community’s routine opposition to any idea or proposal that offered novel approaches to teaching and learning. What is it about innovation that so bothers teachers, parents, and my colleagues in the main office?

Asking the Wrong Question

The daily struggle I underwent to make substantive changes to organizational and instructional routines at Central High was a product of a set of organizational realities that aggressively resisted any change initiatives that would have threatened the Central High way. Generally, the school community I served was content with the organizational and instructional routines of institutional schooling: seven period days, fifty-five minute periods, five subjects, tests on Fridays, and homecoming. Any discontent that appeared in my office was related to superficial concerns about the implementation of the manifestations of institutional schooling: grades, credits, diplomas,

and placement in high-status programs. The process for resolving these concerns had always been reduced to the same three questions: What went wrong? Who is at fault? How do we fix it? After identifying the crisis of the day and establishing blame, the managerial fix was always the same: add or subtract a resource, change personnel, modify a schedule, or amend a rule.

I discovered early on in the development of the STARS program that we were asking all the wrong questions in the main office. When we sat down at conference tables, we assumed that the source of the oppositional behaviors of the students we served were products of poor parenting, poor communities, or poorly developed personality traits. At no time in these main office conversations did we blame the organizational and instructional routines of Central High for the learning and behavioral problems that we spent our day attempting to manage away. In the case of the STARS program, Sandy was asking a very different question in the main office. She began with the assumption that the source of the oppositional behaviors we were dealing with was not outside of school or inside of the student. She looked instead to a model of schooling that failed to respect the individual abilities, talents, goals and satisfactions of the students we served. In schools, thinking outside the box begins with the realization that the only question we should be asking in main offices is the one Sandy continually asked her students in the STARS program: “What can I do to make you successful in this class?”

Strong Cultures Find the Right Balance Between Leading and Managing

The *managerial* culture that grows out of the daily administration of the goals and methods of institutional schooling serves as a strong firewall against the beliefs, values and practices of a strong *instructional* culture. This managerial firewall provides administrators, teachers, parents, and students with organizational and instructional routines that allow each member of the school community to play a predictable institutional role: legislators mandate; administrators comply; teachers transmit; students listen; and parents support. The organizational cost of this firewall was the abandonment of habits of thought and action that serve as drivers of outside-the-box thinking: the readiness to disrupt institutional schooling, the openness to new models of schooling, the fortitude to experiment with novel instructional platforms, and the know-how to implement the managerial details of outside-the-box programs.

None of these drivers of outside-the-box thinking will materialize without the disposition to redefine the values, attitudes, and practices of inside-the-box schooling. Even with the disposition to experiment with novel ideas and practices, the institutional beliefs, goals, and practices of institutional

schooling will present formidable barriers to outside-the-box thinking. No matter how thoughtful or effective a school reform initiative might be, teachers, parents, and students will man the school reform barriers when they believe that a new strategy for teaching and learning would significantly disrupt how they teach, how they learn, and how they experience school.

The STARS program represented a pocket of innovation that closed the gap between the educational ideals expressed in most district mission statements and the organizational and instructional routines of institutional schooling. When new school leaders make the decision to innovate, they will struggle with new habits of thinking and action that are far removed from the managerial thinking they brought into main offices. School administrators advance up the bureaucratic school ladder based on their ability to efficiently tell, allocate, and inspect. The development and implementation of truly innovative programs require an entirely different set of knowledge and skills. School leaders need the ability to draw connections between valued ends of schooling and the goals, beliefs, and practices of new models of schooling. They need the ability to explain the theories and practices that guide the program and the ability to orchestrate the numerous adjustments to a program with no precedents to draw upon. When new school leaders work on some facet of novel instructional programs, they need both their managerial and leadership skills to make the program work. One set of skills allows leaders to do the right things well and the other set of skills allows them to do the right things. New school leaders must keep in mind the consequences of favoring one set of skills over the other: management without leadership is a strategy for stagnation; innovation without management is a strategy for confusion. If new school leaders are persistent in experimenting with outside-the-box thinking, they will become adept and finding the right balance between leading and managing (see Figure 8.1).

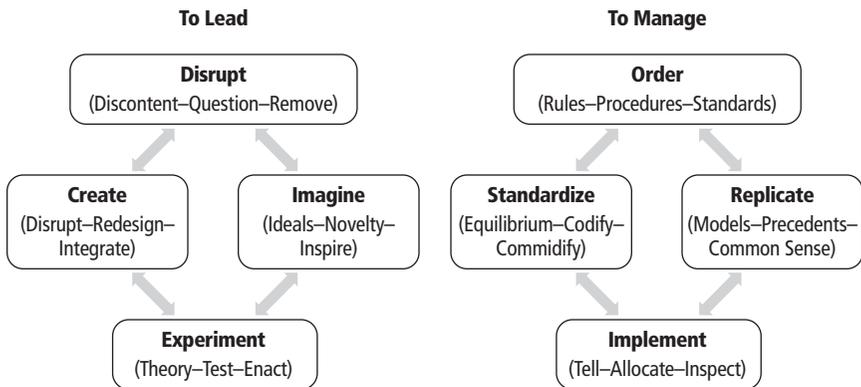


Figure 8.1 Finding the right balance.

Resources

Resource 8.1 *STARS Proposal (Part I)*

Valued End of Schooling
To value the diverse talents, abilities, and interests of students.
Current Situation
<p><i>Thirty-two freshman students have been absent from school in excess of 30 days</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These students are currently failing all courses. • The amount of work missed will result in failing grades for the semester. • Central High procedures for excused/unexcused absences have been followed. • Truancy officer has completed all required visitations and interventions. • All freshman truant students have the academic ability to pass their courses • All parents of truant students have expressed a willingness to cooperate with all school efforts to return their son or daughter to school. • The ages of these freshman students prohibit them from dropping out of school or being dropped by Central High.
What the Research Says
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truancy is an early warning sign of a student headed for potential delinquent activity, social isolation, or educational failure via suspension, expulsion, or dropping out. • Several studies have established that a lack of commitment to school is a risk factor for substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, and school drop out. • The following school factors contribute to truancy: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Push-out policies: suspension or automatic F for students with poor attendance 2. Teacher characteristics, such as lack of respect for students and neglect of diverse student needs • The following personal factors contribute to truancy: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor academic performance resulting in lack of self-esteem 2. Alcohol and drug use and abuse 3. Lack of vision of education as a means to achieve goals • Components of Effective Truancy Reduction Programs: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parent involvement 2. A continuum of support 3. Concrete and measurable goals for program performance and student performance 4. Interventions for chronic truants tailored to the individual students 5. Fairly and immediately applied sanctions that are clearly tied to the truant behavior 6. An emotionally and physically safe school setting so that students are not afraid to attend 7. Fostering positive relationships between teachers and students and among students

Resource 8.1 STARS Proposal (Part II)

Program Components	Resource	Amount	Source
Personnel	1 Resource Teacher: Mrs. S. Kantor	\$45,000	Board: \$22,500 Grant: \$22,500
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Nebraska Correspondence Courses • Distance Learning Courses: University of Illinois 	\$3,000	Board: \$1,500 Grant: \$1,500
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Computer Stations 	\$1,500	Board: \$750 Grant: \$750
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Materials 	\$500	Board: \$500
Space	Lincoln Elementary School	\$0	
Total Cost to Board			\$25,250
Program Schedule	10:00–4:00		
Program Requirements	Contract (<i>signed by parent/student</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Excused Absences = Dropped • 2 Tardies = Dropped • 1 Subject Failure = Dropped • 1 Dean’s Referral = Dropped 		
Academic Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum Course Load = 3 Courses • Minimum Core Courses = 2 Courses • Physical Education = Summer Program • Credit will be awarded for vocational/job placements 		

Resource 8.2 *The Problem of Innovation*

Barriers to Innovation	Bridges to Innovation
<p>Do we understand the problem?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The data on the problem is reliable. • The data reflects an essential disruption to a valued end of schooling. • The data provides insights into the causes of the problem. • The data provides insights into possible solutions to the problem. • The solutions to the problem appear to be achievable within the school context.
<p>Are we able to bridge the theory–practice divide?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are abundant studies of the problem. • Studies of the problem arrive at a consensus on the causes and possible solutions to the problem. • The theories that govern the problem are translatable into the daily organizational and instructional routines of schooling.
<p>Is the strategy feasible?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solutions to the problem will not substantively challenge or disrupt organizational and instructional routines. • The organization (school) possesses the appropriate personnel, time, space, materials, expertise, and leadership to implement a solution to the problem. • Criteria for success are achievable.
<p>Is there room for experimentation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timelines for completing project include room for adjustments. • The organization (school) possesses the appropriate resources to adjust personnel, time, space, materials, expertise, and leadership. • Administration understands the risks involved with the agreed upon strategy. • Administration is willing to make real-time adjustments to the program. • Administration is committed to a long-term solution to the problem.

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Valued Ends of Schooling

Why Are We Here?

Each chapter in this book presented a series of managerial situations that frequently arise in the first 100 days of a school year. The problematic situations offered a new school leader the opportunity to connect the dots of a strong instructional cultural: why we are here → what we believe → what we value → how we enact our goals and values. The managerial strategies employed by the new school leader described the particulars of enacting policies, procedures, and practices that offer the potential for changing a school culture. Throughout this book I have purposefully left unanswered the first question of a strong instructional culture: Why are we here? The debate over what the valued ends of schooling are—why we are here—is a century-old argument between five educational philosophies:

- The *civic school* believes that children should be prepared to assume their roles as active citizens in democracy.
- The *vocational school* believes that children should be trained to assume their roles in a free-market economy.

- The *humanistic school* believes that children should be educated to become human beings capable of love and imagination.
- The *human development school* believes that children should be free to author their own personal identities.
- The *institutional school* believes that children should be credentialed for completing mandates course sequences.

Underlying these five philosophies of schooling are two views of knowledge that define how their valued ends are represented in schools:

- The *civic, vocational, and institutional schools* view knowledge as a source of power to control the environment, society, and one's self.
- The *humanistic and human development schools* view knowledge as interpretation that equips young people with the academic tools to develop a better understanding of the self and the historical struggles over identity, politics, and power.

School mission statements are packed with goals articulating one or more of these philosophies of education. Mission statements serve the important purpose of answering the first question of schooling: What do we want our students to become? Do parents send their sons and daughters to school to become active citizens, productive workers, or good people, or to earn a credential, or some combination of these goals? Most school leaders are too busy managing the crisis of the day or implementing this year's new strategic plan to allocate time to making collective sense out of vague expressions of educational values and goals listed on the cover of district public relations folders. The disregard of philosophical goals creates a confused culture where the valued ends of schooling often fail to agree with the institutional means of schooling. The ends-means confusion appears each day in "child-centered" schools that have eliminated recess; in "critical-thinking" classrooms dominated by teacher talk and worksheets; and in "world-class" labs housing outdated and unrepaired computers. The source of weak school cultures is the daily disconnect between what school communities say they value and what those same communities really do in main offices and classrooms.

New school leaders intent on authoring a strong instructional culture place the why back into the how of schooling. They understand from the first day in the main office, the numerous organizational and instructional decisions they will be asked to make will be grounded in a collective understanding of the educational values written into school mission statements. Developing and enacting a collective understanding of the why of

schooling does not mean there is a single why or a single what or a single how. The common denominator of strong instructional cultures is a process for making collective sense out of the diverse why's, what's, and how's that enter the school doors each year. No matter what instructional worldview new school leaders may favor, they possess the academic background and managerial expertise to determine if the goals, methods, and practices of a new instructional initiative make collective sense. The process of collective sensemaking interrogates the why, what, and how of every goal, every theory, every pedagogy, and every organizational design that appears at the schoolhouse door. If goals agree with methods, then the process of implementation begins. If goals and methods do not make collective sense, the schoolhouse door closes on the new reform of the day. No policy, program, theory, pedagogy, or organizational arrangement will enter the collective sensemaking arena until the school community satisfactorily answers the essential question asked by strong instructional cultures: Is this goal worth pursuing?

Strong Cultures Do the Right Things

Once a school community makes collective sense out of the why, what, and how of a new instructional initiative, strong instructional leaders call upon their managerial skills to implement the particular what's and how's of the program. The why of the new initiative never changes in the implementation process. Strong instructional cultures grow stronger when they remain faithful to an agreed-upon why of schooling (see Table 9.1). School cultures become weak when the why of a new instructional initiative is disconnected from the values and the practices defined by an agreed-upon educational goal: that is, the elimination of recess in child-centered schools. Without a constancy of purpose, new school leaders lose the ability to make choices among the annual array of theories, ideas, policies, and practices vying for

TABLE 9.1 Constancy of Purpose

Qualities	Policies, Programs, Systems, and Practices
Congruent	<i>All</i> policies, programs, systems, and practices conform to a school's agreed-upon response to the question: "Why are we here?"
Continuous	<i>All</i> policies, programs, systems, and practices advance the goals, methods, and practices of the school's agreed-upon response to the question: "Why are we here?"
Coherent	<i>All</i> policies, programs, systems, and practices work together to further the goals, methods, and practices to the school's agreed-upon response to the question: "Why are we here?"

recognition in main offices and classrooms. The cost of poorly defined or poorly pursued purposes is starving good programs, resourcing mediocre programs, or ignoring promising programs. Each lost opportunity eventually erodes the desire on the part of teachers to venture much beyond their instructional comfort zone.

Each administrative situation presented in this book offered a new school leader the opportunity to redefine the why, what, and how of schooling. The theme of the first 100 days is a description of a way of thinking and acting that at all times is committed to connecting the valued ends of schooling to the particulars of organizational and classroom practices (see Figure 9.1). Resource 9.1 provides a template for answering the essential question of a strong instructional culture: Why are we here? Until school leaders author their personal instructional worldviews, the schools they lead will succumb to the day-to-day talk and organizational routines of the Central High way.

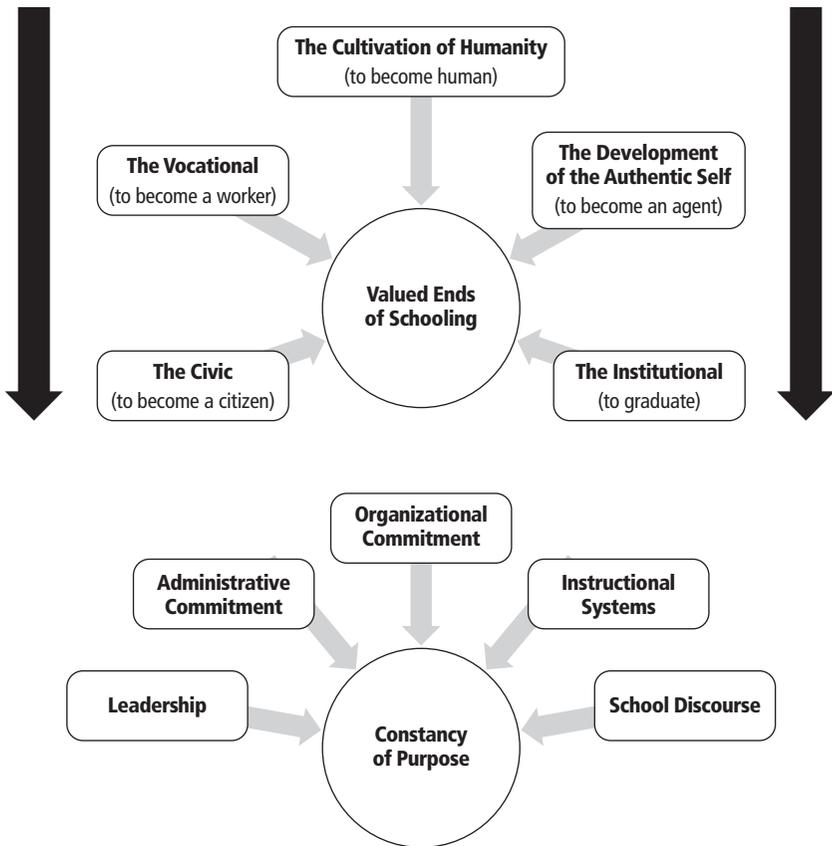


Figure 9.1 Connecting the cultural dots.

Resource

Resource 9.1 *Authoring a Personal Instructional Worldview*

Educational Beliefs	Questions–Concepts	What I Believe
What are the goals of schooling?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an ultimate goal or multiple goals? • What goals (vocational, civic, self-development, humanistic, institutional) should our school pursue? 	
How do children learn?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitation • Association • Application • Interpretation 	
What do all children need to know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great books • Basic skills • Disciplinary concepts • Contemporary problems 	
How should we organize subject matter?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A textbook • Disciplinary representations • Test preparation manuals • Themes • Problems • Concepts • Big ideas • What draws a student to a subject 	
How should we assess understanding of subject matter?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A test • Grades • School projects • Performances • Authentic products 	
How should we teach?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture • Model • Direct instruction • Socratic questioning • Facilitate/coach 	
How should we work with children?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believe routines and rules are important for real-world success. • Honor individual differences/talents/interests • Believe moral training is critical • Believe rebellion is normal/abnormal • Believe behavior is a matter of rewards/punishments • Believe behavior is a matter of cognitive understanding 	

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10

Cultural Levers

Doing the Right Things

The first day as a new school leader is a humbling experience. Your new desk is covered with call slips, your inbox is spilling over, all the lights on your phones are blinking, and your secretary is patiently waiting outside your office door. The covered desk, the overflowing inbox, the phones, and your secretary are calling for a decision now. The reason you are standing in the office is a résumé and interview process that convinced your new bosses that you knew what decision to make now. Sitting down in your new office chair, there are two paths for administering a school: you can manage the school or you can lead the school. The fundamental difference between managing a school and leading a school is the distinction Bennis (1985) makes between administrators who do things right and administrators who do the right things (see Table 10.1).

The standard response to this situation is to follow the familiar managerial script of telling, allocating, and inspecting. The managerial script responds efficiently to call slips, inboxes, phones, and waiting secretaries.

TABLE 10.1 Managing vs. Leading	
Doing Things Right	Doing the Right Things
Emphasis on participation	Emphasis on performance
Handles situations	Provides symbols and enhances meaning
Emphasis on planning	Emphasis on purposing
Gives directions	Builds capacity
Builds monitoring systems	Builds accountability systems
Extrinsic motivation (Rewards and Punishments)	Intrinsic motivation (Meaning, Trust, Commitment, Identity, Efficacy)
Congeniality	Collegiality
Calculated or rational	Creates cognitive dissonance

Telling, allocating, and inspecting are designed for checking off tasks. They are not designed to fundamentally change the educational experiences of children and adolescents seated in classrooms surrounding the main office. The alternative administrative script that a new school leader could adopt is one that purposes, educates, and coaches. Following this leadership script, the call slips on your desk, the documents in your inbox, the voicemails on your phones, and your secretary’s “to do” lists offer numerous opportunities to fundamentally change the goals, beliefs, values, and practices of your school’s instructional culture. What problems and concerns a new school leader chooses to attend to, how that new school leader talks about and resolves problems and concerns, what performance expectations the new school leader establishes, and what educational goals the new school leader pursues are cultural levers that a school leader can pull.

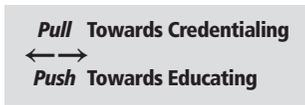
A new school leader has an opportunity to pull a cultural lever in the direction that reinforces a culture of control or to push a lever in the direction of a culture of inquiry and experimentation. This chapter summarizes the goals of each cultural lever that resides in main offices (see Table 10.2). Before school leaders decide which direction they will pull or push a cultural lever, they should honestly assess whether they are professionally and emotionally ready to confront the formidable institutional obstacles that have historically seized up one or more of these cultural levers. Being professionally ready means having the ability to know which lever to move, in which direction to move it, and how far to move it. In educational terms, the school leader must possess a well-formulated response to the essential question of a strong instructional culture: Why are we here? Emotional readiness means having the disposition to respond patiently and calmly to what a school community might perceive as a wrong pull or push of a cultural

TABLE 10.2 Cultural Levers

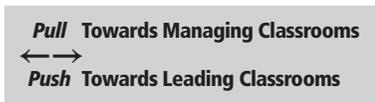
		Push vs. Pull (Levers)			
Why, What, and How					
Purposes	Credentialed vs. Educate	Managing Classrooms vs. Leading Classrooms	Instructional Management vs. Instructional Leadership	Mandates' Instructional Agenda vs. Your Instructional Agenda	Thinking Small vs. Thinking Big
Values	Teacher Empowerment vs. Teacher Professionalism	Directing vs. Deliberating	Wrong People on the Bus vs. Right People on the Bus	Being Told vs. Being Involved	Being <i>in</i> Authority vs. Being <i>an</i> Authority
Processes	Top-Down vs. Bottom-Up Thinking	Reacting to the Crisis of the Day vs. Solving the Crisis of the Day	Simple Systems vs. Complex Systems		

lever. In educational terms, the school leaders convince their school communities that they possess the right combination of pedagogical knowledge and managerial skills to author a new instructional reality.

Cultural Lever #1: Purposes



School organizations are designed to efficiently implement the purpose of institutional schooling: to credential. A school culture focused on the credentialing function will pay particular attention to placement, grading, and documentation. School organizations focused on the educational function of schooling will pay particular attention to the five fundamental questions of schooling: How do children learn? What knowledge is of most worth? How should knowledge be organized? How should we assess student understanding? *How should we teach?* School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture redefine their administrative role from one of managing the documentation of student progress to one of leading the enactment of the knowledge and skills to achieve the goals written into school mission statements.



Developing a strong teaching culture is central to developing a strong instructional culture. Standing in the way of strong teaching cultures is the strong belief on the part of teachers that the classrooms are their private domains. School administrators affirm this belief with the lament that trespassing on private classrooms takes too much time away from their managerial obligations. One cultural value says, “Don’t enter my classroom” and the other cultural value says, “I do not belong in the classroom.” Except for perfunctory drive-by teacher observations that produce “you don’t bother me and I won’t bother you” performance reviews, the chief vehicle for instructional change—the classroom—remains unsupervised and unchanged. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture redefine the boundaries of main offices to include the inner workings of private classrooms.

***Pull* Towards Instructional Management**
 ← →
***Push* Towards Instructional Leadership**

Most school administrators would admit to a wide gap between the goals of their job—instructional leadership—and the functions of their job—instructional management. School administrators attribute this gap to time-consuming managerial functions that keep the building running well, but leave little time for reviewing curriculum, observing classes, coaching teachers, and reading the research. While there is some truth in the busyness of getting through a school day, the whole truth would acknowledge that the academic and experiential background of school administrators is managerially thick and instructionally thin. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture must redefine their role from instructional manager to instructional leader. The personal and professional process for developing the knowledge and skills to lead instruction would, at a minimum, require a coherent response to the fundamental questions of schooling (see Resource 10.1) and the authoring of a teaching model that represents the goals and practices of a personalized instructional worldview (see Resource 10.2).

***Pull* Towards Mandated Instructional Agendas**
 ← →
***Push* Towards Your Instructional Agenda**

New school leaders will enter main offices that are already occupied by defined instructional agendas. Stacked on main office bookshelves are district curriculum guides, teacher evaluation plans, technology plans, strategic plans, discipline plans, state codes, and district policy manuals that represent governmental and district interpretations of best practices in curriculum, instruction, and school administration. Central offices define the role of instructional leadership as the efficient implementation of handed-down instructional agendas—the contents of the documents stacked on main office bookshelves. What new school leaders often find on these stacked bookshelves is an incoherent mix of organizational and instructional theories, ideas, and practices that responded to a local or national crisis of the day or the educational fad of the day. Without a well-articulated instructional worldview, there is no standard for judging the value of a new instructional initiative or a process for making collective sense out of the jumble of theories, techniques, and programs that travel in and out of school buildings each year.

New school leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture must enter main offices with a well-defined instructional worldview that

connects the social, emotional, and intellectual values expressed in school mission statements: “Our mission is to respect and enhance the diverse abilities, talents, and interests of students we serve.” School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture redefine the role of instructional leadership from the implementation of handed-down instructional agendas to the development of organizational and instructional activity structures that transform the educational ideals expressed in district mission statements into the realities of daily classroom practice (see Resource 10.3).

***Pull* Towards Thinking Small**
 ←→
***Push* Towards Thinking Big**

Most of the call slips and unanswered phone calls that await a new school leader on their first day in the main office are requesting a response to poor delivery of services: buses arrived late, students have wrong schedules, the school lunches are inedible, and a school locker is continually jammed. While doing the small things well will divert time and energy away from the role of instructional leadership, effectively addressing these gaps in service is fundamental to developing a strong instructional culture. Parents and board members know little about curriculum and instruction; they know a lot about the delivery of school services. From a parent perspective, if school staff is unable to deliver basic services well, then the delivery of the complex service of teaching immediately becomes suspect. This logic extends to pursuing ambitious instructional strategies: why trust a new strategy for teaching reading, when your son or daughter was assigned to the wrong English course. Convincing school communities to think big about teaching and learning, begins with the expert delivery of small services. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture should be certain that the managerial functions of their job are performed professionally, competently, responsively, and efficiently (see Resource 10.4).

Cultural Lever #2: People

***Pull* Towards Teacher Empowerment**
 ←→
***Push* Towards Teacher Professionalism**

Teachers look upon the introduction of new instructional theories and practices as a violation of the autonomy they require to exercise their professional judgment. There is no question that teachers become more

positive about an instructional initiative when they are granted more freedom to interpret and practice a new pedagogy. What is equally true is the freedom to interpret and practice a new pedagogy is usually reduced to selecting pieces of the instructional model that fit into comfortable teaching routines. Those parts of ambitious teaching that do not fit are discarded or misconstrued. The dilemma for school administrators is finding the right balance between the freedom to interpret a new instructional initiative and the responsibility to fully understand and accurately represent new theories and methods in daily classroom instruction. Most main offices sidestep the empowerment–responsibility dilemma by reducing the implementation of a new instructional initiative to a series of simple checklists of behaviors that can be easily inspected and documented. The instructional outcomes of this managerial avoidance are superficial representations of new approaches to teaching and learning.

Teachers will be more willing to give up their freedom to interpret new theories and practices if two organizational conditions are in place:

1. The school organization has a well-developed strategy for assisting teachers with unlearning comfortable teaching routines and relearning new theory-driven instructional strategies (see Resource 10.5).
2. School administrators have demonstrated over time that they trust teachers to do the right thing.

Trusting school environments show respect for teacher experience, provide the appropriate resources to learn and practice a new pedagogy, and find the right balance between the teaching skills and pedagogical complexity. Both organizational conditions provide teachers with the understanding and trust they require to faithfully execute new instructional theories and practices in their classrooms. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture redefine the relationship between professional judgment and professional responsibility.



School organizations designed to accomplish institutional goals follow meeting agendas that tell participants what to do, when to do it, how to do it, and who will do it. While managerial meeting agendas are workable formats for telling, allocating, and inspecting, they are poor formats for resolving gaps between educational values stated in school mission statements

and organizational and instructional realities. Meetings designed to implement educational values require participants to engage in a process of intelligent deliberation: to be informed, to be respectful, and to assume responsibility for agreed-upon solutions (see Resource 10.6). School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture redefine the goals, functions, and tasks of meetings.

Pull Towards the Wrong People on the School Bus
←→
Push Towards the Right People on the School Bus

No matter how much effort administrators put into implementing a new instructional initiative or designing a well-run system, ultimately the effectiveness of well-run systems and instructional programs will depend upon the quality of the people employed to run the system or teach the class—having the right people on the school bus. Teachers and staff members arrive in schools with widely different intellectual, social, and motivational capabilities. Some will grasp their function quickly, while others will continually ask you what they should do next. Some will adopt a collegial approach to working with fellow staff members, while others will require your constant intervention to squelch a rumor, referee squabbles, or isolate a personality. Some will be self-starters who complete their task efficiently and effectively, while others will continually require prodding to move to the next task or properly complete the task they are working on. Maximizing the performance of the diverse abilities and dispositions of staff and teachers is both a human and a management process. The human process is a highly personal affair involving ongoing conversations over common definitions of job performance. The human process assumes that school leaders have the right people with the right skills and dispositions on the school bus.

Employing the right people on the bus and developing the right skills for the job function is a managerial process that includes fully developed systems for employing, training, and evaluating the performance of school personnel (see Resource 10.7). Even with fully developed employment, training, and performance systems, administrators will confront the human problem of individuals who fall short of a school's performance expectations. When the right knowledge, skills, and dispositions are absent in offices or classrooms, school leaders commit themselves to initiating and following through with the managerial process for removing personnel who are unable to meet the performance expectations for the job they hold. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture pay strict

attention to getting the right people on the bus, placing the right people in the right seat on the bus, and removing the wrong people from the bus.

***Pull* Towards Being Accountable**
 ←→
***Push* Towards Being Responsible**

Of all the managerial concerns encountered in schools, the most frequently stated challenge is the inability to persuade various members of the school community to complete a task or improve their performance. The managerial approach to lackluster performance is the employment of two motivational strategies that are the mainstay of main offices, deans' offices, and classrooms. Strategy A is the "go-to" strategy for almost every situation of noncompliance with school goals. It is a simple strategy to understand and implement: (a) this is the rule, (b) this is what will happen to you if you break the rule. While Strategy A is simple to implement, the outcomes of these carrot-stick strategies are short-lived, produce inferior work products, and give rise to oppositional strategies that ignore, modify, or rebel against the rule.

School administrators turn to Strategy B when the oppositional strategies generated by Strategy A are openly defeating the goals and content of a new rule or instructional initiative. The preferred methods of Strategy B are rule modifications, added resources, or some show of appreciation (e.g., coffee and donuts, thank you notes, clothing apparel with the school logo). The back and forth movement between Strategy A and Strategy B creates a good cop/bad cop school culture. One day teachers are receiving free T-shirts celebrating their excellence and the next day they are seated in a darkened auditorium being publicly berated for low test scores. Not knowing which cop is going to show up at your classroom door shuts down the kind of conversations and deliberations that are necessary for continually improving performance.

A third motivational strategy rarely fits well into schools designed around the desire to categorize, label, and sanction. It originates from the inner desire of students and teachers to work in an environment that provides them with the freedom to decide what gets done, a signal that they are being listened to, and a feeling that they are making a difference in the world. Teachers and students will only make the effort to venture beyond their intellectual comfort zones when respect, trust, and meaning are restored to classrooms. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture commit to a motivational strategy that replaces carrots and sticks with meaning and accomplishment.

Pull Towards Being in Authority
 ← →
Push Towards Bottom-Up Thinking

New entrants to the main office must determine on what basis they will establish their legitimacy in the eyes of the faculty. Will they lead by being *an* authority or will they lead by being *in* authority? Being *in* authority means telling, allocating, and inspecting—all of which are designed to administer techniques, materials, and checklists. Being *an* authority means educating, facilitating, and coaching—all of which are designed to change beliefs and translate theory into practice (see Resource 10.8). School personnel are willing to follow school leaders who possess the knowledge and skills to translate educational visions into classroom realities. School personnel will ignore, modify, or oppose main office directives that tell them what to do, how to do it, and what will happen to them if they do not do it. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture know what they are talking about, model what they are talking about, and participate in what they are talking about.

Cultural Lever #3: Processes

Pull Towards Top-Down
 ← →
Push Towards Bottom-Up Thinking

Schools are bureaucracies. Administrators at the top of the organization are charged with developing visions, programs, and policies. Teachers at the bottom are charged with implementing those visions, programs, and policies. Top-down bureaucracies ignore the learning function of an organization. Without the top, the organization lacks the structure to initiate, guide, and supervise new understandings of teaching and learning. Without the bottom, the organization lacks the venues to generate, practice, and apply new understandings of teaching and learning. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture find the right balance between vision and experience, theory and practice, planning and doing, and routines and experimentation.

Pull Towards Reacting to the Crisis of the Day
 ← →
Push Towards Solving the Crisis of the Day

Every school year brings with it unexpected disruptions to organizational and instructional routines. The accepted managerial script for responding

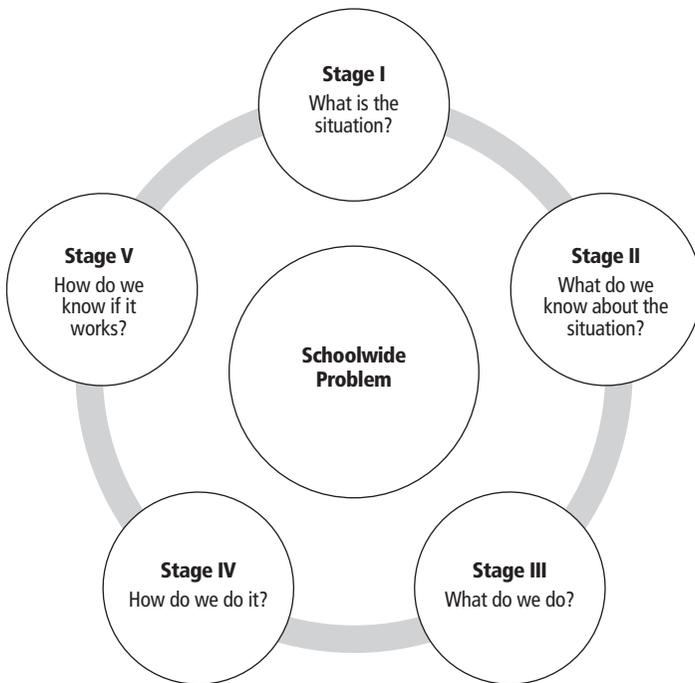


Figure 10.1 A thoughtful approach to problem solving.

to the “crisis of the day” is to implement some modified version of telling, allocating, or inspecting. At best, different modes of telling, allocating, or inspecting will appear to fix the crisis. Rarely, however, do these managerial fixes solve the crisis of the day. Telling, allocating, and inspecting bypass a purposeful approach to truly solving the crisis of the day (see Figure 10.1). Without a thoughtful approach to the what, why, and how of a complex school problem, telling, allocating, and inspecting remain disconnected managerial tools that drift around the building with no agreed-upon method for explaining or resolving the crisis of the day. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture redefine how administrators and teachers think about and resolve the crisis of the day.

Pull Towards Simple Systems



Push Towards Complex Systems

Schools are composed of many systems that organize the delivery of services to parents, teachers, and students. One set of systems is designed to

Aims	Goals	Inputs	Tasks	Sequence	Feedback
<i>What services will make our client feel good about this school?</i>	<i>What standard of performance do our clients expect from the service?</i>	<i>What resources will be required to meet client expectations?</i>	<i>What functions will be required to meet client expectations?</i>	<i>What order of functions will meet performance criteria?</i>	<i>Why is the system meeting/not meeting client expectations?</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Building • Health • Food 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely • Accurate • Appropriate • Complete • Feasible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processes • Tools • Personnel • Materials • Location • Budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures • Routines • Methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stages • Phases • Steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan • Do • Study • Act

Figure 10.2 Looking inside a simple system.

efficiently allocate resources and deliver a service to members of the school community: buses arrive on time, grades are correct, hallways are clean. Simple systems (see Figure 10.2) are designed around feedback cycles that identify gaps between the goals of the system and one or more functions of the system: inputs, tasks, and sequencing. Fixing a problem in a simple system amounts to adjusting missing or poorly designed inputs and tasks. The resource guide at the end of this chapter provides four checklists that guide the process for the design and monitoring of effective simple systems (see Resource 10.9 through 10.12). While simple systems often go unnoticed in main offices, they are noticed in homes of students and teacher work areas. In the minds of parents and teachers, a good school is defined by the daily performance of simple school systems.

The same certainty that comes with managing simple systems vanishes when supervising the school's instructional program. Figure 10.3 identifies a small fraction of the instructional variables that school administrators are asked to supervise. In addition to being overwhelmed by the sheer number of economic, social, political, and pedagogical variables swirling around classrooms, school leaders have no certain theories, frameworks, concepts, or vocabularies to explain how the interactions of these variables influence student learning.

Making collective sense out the complex instructional systems is a deliberate process of identifying instructional variables under the control of main offices, arranging the organization to optimize the implementation of each variable, and developing habits of thought that assess and adjust the interactions of the variables in play. Figure 10.4 offers one example of a conceptual framework for arranging instructional variables that administrators

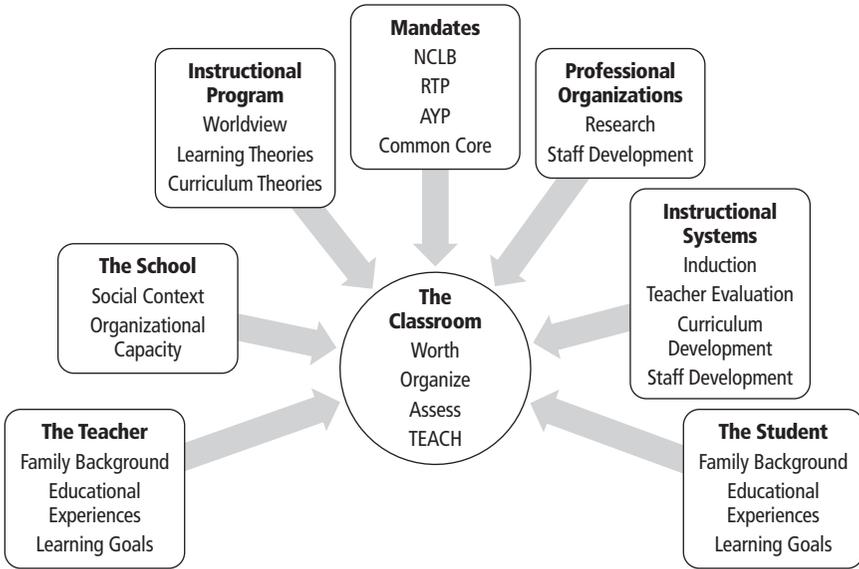


Figure 10.3 Looking inside a complex system.

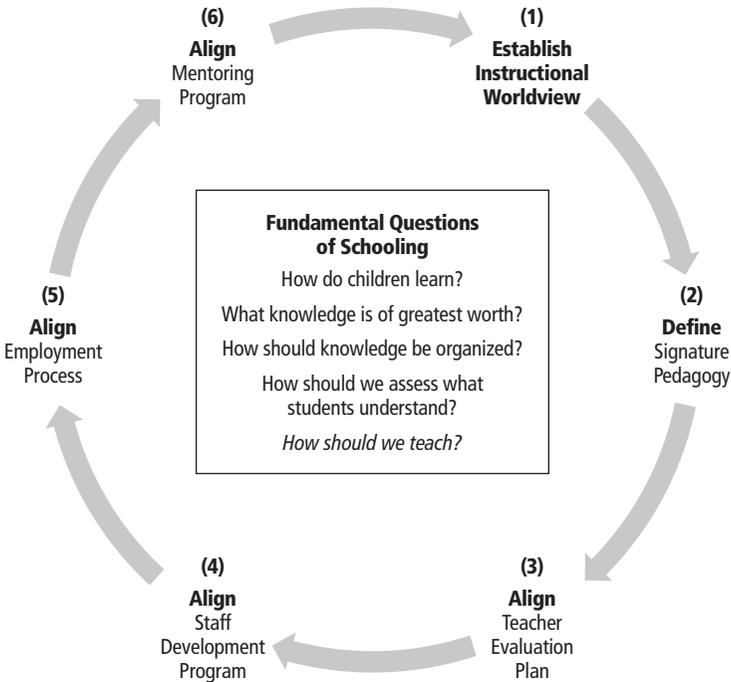


Figure 10.4 Making sense out of complex instructional systems.

and teachers directly control. Each variable in this instructional framework represents the goals and practices of a school's instructional worldview.

A school committed to a constructivist-leaning pedagogy, for example, would develop organizational systems that align with that “signature” pedagogy (see Resource 10.2).

- The school's teacher evaluation plan would focus on teaching behaviors that accurately represent the goals and practices of constructivism.
- The staff development programs would concentrate on developing the knowledge and skills for effectively teaching the goals and practices of constructivism.
- The employment process would select candidates with the educational and experiential backgrounds for effectively teaching the goals and practices of constructivism.
- The school's mentoring programs would initiate new teachers into the theories, vocabularies, and methods, for effectively teaching based on constructivism.

Whatever framework is developed for making collective sense out of the complexities of teaching and learning, every framework will be disrupted by variables that will never be under the complete control of main offices: uncertain inputs (students), uncertain methodologies (what is effective teaching), and uncertain goals of schooling (what does it mean to be educated). Bringing order to disrupted instructional systems entails learning habits of thought that will bring a semblance of order to the accepted uncertainties of teaching and learning. Table 10.3 lists habits of thought that offer a purposeful approach for making collective sense out of a disrupted instructional system. None of these habits of thought, alone or in combination, will permanently solve the disruptions to complex instructional

Refusal	to simplify
Openness	to alternative instructional models
Respect	for expertise
Sensitivity	to classroom situations
Willingness	to experiment
Tolerance	for failure
Patience	with program development
Rejection	of quick fixes

systems. The number of uncontrolled instructional variables in and outside of schools embeds impermanence into all instructional systems. What these habits of thought do provide, however, is a system of thinking that both recognizes the complexities of a disruption and, at the same time, provides a method for evaluating solutions to the crisis of the day. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture model and enact methods of inquiry that make sense out of uncertainties of teaching and learning.

Cultural Orientations

All schools reflect a certain cultural orientation. For the most part, schools in America represent a mix of five institutional orientations: organizational, academic, athletic, vocational, and societal. What emerges out of the mixture of orientations is one dominant orientation that reflects a deeply prized value of a particular school community. Administrators pay special attention to artifacts that represent improvements according to the school's dominant cultural orientation (Table 10.4).

None of these cultural orientations provides the means to systematically teach standardized bodies of knowledge and skills to millions of

Cultural Orientation	Valued Improvements
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zero-based budgeting • Data management systems • TQM • Strategic planning
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added AP courses • Weighted grades • Required core • Reduced electives • Honor roll
Athletic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ coaches first, teachers second • Add levels • Build facilities • Honor victory
Vocational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper placement • Career planning • Occupational clusters • Work programs
Societal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis • Test preparation • Pacing guides • Coverage

young people with individualized ways of understanding the world. Adding an AP course, building a field house, or implementing a new strategic plan changes building structures, course requirements, and organizational goals—it does not change how learning takes place in classrooms. In schools where instruction becomes the cultural orientation, there is a continual search for curriculum designs and instructional methods that translate standard ways of understanding the world into personalized ways of knowing that same world. The answer to creating personalized learning environments falls along a continuum of learning theories and pedagogical practices. Strong instructional cultures devote all of their organizational and instructional activity structures to finding the right mix of theories and practices that appeal to diverse abilities, talents, and interests. School leaders intent on developing a strong instructional culture continually push their school’s orientation towards what matters most: teaching and learning (See Table 10.5).

The cultural levers described in this chapter are specifically designed to shift a school culture from an institutional orientation towards an instructional orientation. A new school leader pushed or pulled one or more of these cultural levers to develop a new vision for Central High. When pushing or pulling a cultural lever, new school leaders should not ignore the institutional orientations of schooling in America. The failure to pay attention to how a school community defines schooling will jam the cultural levers described in this chapter. Parents are much more willing to accept conceptual approaches to teaching mathematics, or thematic approaches to teaching history, or inquiry approaches to teaching English, if the artifacts of institutional schooling are in place, are well-maintained, and are respected. Successfully developing a strong instructional culture requires knowing in which directions to pull or push the right instructional levers and, at the same time, knowing in which directions to pull or push the right managerial levers.

TABLE 10.5 Valued Improvements of an Instructional Orientation

Fundamental Question of Schooling	Valued Improvement
How do children learn?	Mastery → Cognitively Assisted
What knowledge is of greatest worth?	Facts/Procedures → Concepts/Ideas
How should knowledge be organized?	Task Analysis → Problem Based
How should we assess what students understand?	Summative → Formative
How should we teach?	Direct Instruction → Discovery

Resources

Resource 10.1 *Enacting an Instructional Worldview*

Fundamental Questions of Schooling	Classroom Practices
How do children learn?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social interaction • Discovery • Inquiry
What knowledge is of greatest worth?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big ideas • Big questions • Authentic problems/situations • Concepts
How should knowledge be organized?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes • Interdisciplinary Studies • Disciplinary and real-world problems • Understanding vs. Coverage • Concepts
How should we assess student learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project/exhibitions/demonstrations/forums • Rubrics representing standards of performance
How should we treat students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect and honor diverse abilities, talents, and interests • Respect and honor differences: social class, disability, sexual orientation, nationality, race, ethnicity, gender, language, and educational attainment • Explain, not impose, policies and rules • Accommodate/mediate asymmetrical power relationships • Do no harm
How should we TEACH?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus students on a problem or event in their lives • Question student understandings of the problem or event • Provide students with “visualizations” of authentic problems • Design problems/activities that require joint problem solving (collaboration) • Present big ideas, metaphors, analogies, theories, concepts (explanatory frameworks) to resolve “schooled” and “unschooled” understandings of the problem or event • Have students solve problems by applying one or more explanatory frameworks

Resource 10.2 *Signature Pedagogy*

Domain	Description
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The goal of each lesson is the solution to a messy or complex academic or societal problem.
Representation of subject matter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lesson reflects accurate representation of the discipline. Concepts are connected to subject matter facts and procedures.
High cognitive demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memorization of subject matter definitions, facts, procedures will always connect to the academic concept or idea.
Students are responsible for thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design lessons and activities to hold students responsible for resolving academic problems rather than relying on the teacher or textbook. Prompt students to support solutions and claims with accepted authorities in the discipline.
Classroom discourse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discourse advances beyond dominant teacher talk. Students frequently engage each other in purposeful discussions.
Lesson sequence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson sequence is logical and accurately reflects disciplinary thinking.
Activity structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The arrangement of students, allocation of time, type of materials, degree of support, and form of technology reflects the purpose and outcomes of the lesson.
Attention to student thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers pay close attention to what students say and do during a lesson so they can uncover and understand how they are thinking about theories, concepts, and practices in the discipline. Teachers identify particular theories, ideas, and strategies represented in student thinking.
Lesson outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students produce artifacts that reflect real-world applications and deep understandings of disciplinary theories, concepts, and practices.
Lesson coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lesson flow is aligned as such: Purpose → Discipline → Cognitive demand → Classroom discourse → Activity structures → Lesson outcomes.

Resource 10.3 *Daily Realities of a School Culture*

Instructional Worldview		
Learn → Worth → Organize → Assess → Teach		
Signature Pedagogy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose • Representation of Subject Matter • High Cognitive Demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Thinking • Lesson Sequence • Activity Structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson Outcomes • Lesson Coherence • Classroom Discourse
		
Activity Structures	Implementation	
Subject Matter Communities	<i>How we resolve problems</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worldviews • Interpretations • Methods of Inquiry • Predictive Models
Instructional Systems	<i>How we organize the school for learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ • Mentor • Evaluate • Educate
Administrative Commitment	<i>How we supervise student learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Participation • Expertise
School Discourse	<i>How we talk about learning and students</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful • Knowledgeable • Deliberate • Reflective
Organizational Commitment	<i>How we support student learning</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Space • Materials • Expertise • Configuration

Resource 10.4 *Small Things Done Well*

Goal	Essential Components
Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean and organized facility and work areas • Professional dress and conduct • Knowledgeable staff • Short, well-organized, and effective public events • Brief, accurate, and informative communications
Responsive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (phone calls, emails, are returned on same day) • Informed • Delivers appropriate materials • Resolves problems promptly
Competent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegates to appropriate personnel • Demonstrates knowledge of school routines and procedures • Demonstrates knowledge of curriculum and instruction • Reflects understanding of instructional worldview
Efficient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timely • Accurate • Appropriate • Complete

Resource 10.5 *Master Training Regime*

Component	What Teachers Are Asked to Do
Problem	Identify gaps between a valued end of schooling and actual student performance.
Theories and Practices	Identify alternative explanations for the instructional problem.
Model	Observe expert performance of theory-based methods.
Practice	Under the supervision of a mentor/consultant, apply theory-based methods in the classroom.
Coach	Participate in ongoing conversations with a mentor/consultant on gaps between the intentions of theory-based methods and actual implementation of those methods in classrooms.
Practice	Under the supervision of a mentor/consultant, continue to employ feedback from coaching sessions to close gaps between intentions of theory-based method and actual implementation of those methods in classrooms.
Author	Construct pedagogical approaches and a plan of action that agree with a school's instructional worldview, the social context of the school, and pre-existing experiences of teachers.
Standardize	Normalize a set of teaching methods that make sense to teachers, are working for teachers, and accurately reflect the application of a theory-based method of instruction.

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Resource 10.6 *Thoughtful Meetings*

Meeting Expectations	Purpose
Supports a strategy already agreed upon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revises goals of a strategy • Revises enactment of components of strategy • Solves a systems problem • Reassigns responsibilities • Reallocates resources
Attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those directly involved in implementation • Those who have done their homework
Attendees do their homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiar with theories, ideas, and practices associated with organizational or instructional change • Familiar with components of instructional culture that are being enacted • Read all materials (books, research articles, position papers) • Clear about what they will contribute to the meeting (e.g., summary of a report, appropriate options)
Meeting protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings are not informational • Attendees understand that they are not participating in a brainstorming session • Attendees understand they are participating in a dialogue over a school-wide instructional or organizational problem. • Attendees understand the role of respectful listener. • Attendees understand that they will be responsible for enacting meeting outcomes.
Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to enactment of components of instructional culture • Changes to systems involved • Changes responsible personnel • Changes acquisition and allocation of materials, space, time, expertise • Changes criteria for success • Changes timelines • Establishes future meetings dates

Resource 10.7 *Driving the School Bus*

Who Is on the Bus	How You Drive the Bus	
Getting the Right People on the Bus	Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District/school prescribes criteria for selection of candidates. • District/school has a process for screening candidates. • The employment process begins in a timely manner. • District/school uses a team approach to interview candidates. • District/school conducts multiple interviews before final decision. • District/school conducts on-site observations of prospective candidates. • District/school uses scripted questions for interviews.
	Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors are highly accomplished veteran staff members. • Mentors and protégés communicate early and frequently. • Mentors and protégés are appropriately matched. • Mentors and protégés communicate effectively. • District/school provides appropriate training and support. • Mentors and protégés engage in frequent observations and meetings. • Mentoring process is documented and provides purposeful approaches to reflection on practice. • There is a process for ongoing evaluation of mentor performance.
	Staff Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning is active. • Learning is content-based. • Learning respects teacher identities. • Learning is interpretative. • Learning is socially constructed. • There is a purposeful approach to training: unlearning → relearning → interpreting → practice
Getting People in the Right Seats on the Bus	Job Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job responsibilities • Job duties • Job skills and qualifications • Expected levels of performance
	Systems: Tasks and Functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align system functions/tasks and job descriptions. • Align system functions/tasks and employee proficiencies. • Adjust systems to accommodate employee proficiencies and/or training regimes for gaps in performance.
Getting the Wrong People Off the Bus	Teacher/Staff Performance Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide written criteria indicators for effective performance. • Align levels of performance with criteria/indicators. • Educate/train teachers and staff on effective performance of criteria indicators. • Educate/train supervisors on effective performance of criteria indicators. • In the process for evaluating the performance of criteria indicators, include performance observation/documentation, conferencing on performance, and individualized professional development plans. • Provide a process for remediating below-standard performance. • Provide a process for dismissal of low-performing employees.

Resource 10.8 *Being an Authority*

Leadership Tools	Proficiencies
Purpose	Ability to provide a coherent response to the five fundamental questions of schooling: <i>Learn, Worth, Organize, Assess, Teach</i>
Frame	Ability to author a narrative that explains the relationship between an instructional problem, a theory-driven strategy for resolving the problem, and the organizational capacity to implement the strategy
Challenge	Ability to confront strongly held assumptions, beliefs, and practices about teaching and learning
Interpret	Ability to apply theory-driven instructional initiatives to practical realities of the classroom: adopt, adapt, or ignore
Leverage	Ability to enhance prior knowledge and skills
Allocate	Ability to position the appropriate resources (personnel, space, time, materials, expertise) in the right place at the right time
Implement	Ability to link goals (purpose + frame) with objectives (challenge + interpret + leverage + allocate) to achieve desired outcomes
Participate	Ability to work in teacher workspaces/classrooms to adopt theory-driven instructional initiatives

Resource 10.9 *Goals–Diversions–Functions*

System	Goals Services the Client Expects	Diversions Non-Client Services	Functions Services the Client Receives
Student Schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students receive schedules before the start of the school year. Schedules accurately reflect student requests or course changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Payroll schedule delays student schedules. Payroll program overrides current changes to student schedules. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students receive schedules on the first day of school. Schedules do not reflect student requests or changes. Students wait in guidance offices for corrected schedules.
Classroom Cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean white boards Swept/mopped floors Emptied wastepaper baskets Desks free of graffiti 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up football stadium for Friday game Set up auditorium for choral concert All rooms receive same time allocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Components of room are not cleaned or room is missed for cleaning
System in Your School			

Resource 10.10 *System Analysis: Mailing of Grades*

System: Mailing of Grades		
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate • Informative (understandable) • Timely 	
Elements	Components	Functions
Inputs	Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Processing Manager • Registrar • Payroll Manager • Principal • Principal's Secretary
	Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scantron Grading Machine • Data Processing: Mainframe
	Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scantron Grading Forms
	Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Processing Office • Principal's Office
	Processes (other offices impacted)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Principal
	Tools	Online Grading Program
	Tasks	Step 1
Step 2		Establish number of grade reports (for year)
Step 3		Establish following dates: Grades due to data processing → grades sent out to parents
Step 4		Coordinate grading calendar with other data processing programs (payroll)
Step 5		Revise grading calendar based on calendars from other departments
Diversions	Business Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate running of payroll • No modifications to scheduling program
	Teacher punctuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review grade calendar with union representative • Personal contact with late teacher inputs

Resource 10.11 *Systems Calendar Template*

Month	System	Tasks (Due Date)	Personnel	Notes
June	Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish bus routes (5/15/____) Establish stations (4/15/____) Registration forms (6/1/____) Run schedules (8/1/____) Parent letter (6/5/____) Employment: Registration Workers (7/15/____) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistant Principal A.P. Secretary Data Processing Manager Human Resource Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Spanish translation of registration materials Review systems audit Review performance evaluations of registration workers Redesign express registration
July				
August				
September				
October				
November				
December				
January				
February				
March				
April				
May				

Resource 10.12 *Systems Audit*

Tasks	What worked	What did not work	Modification	Personnel responsible	Timeline
Station 1: Immunization Check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New form • Express registration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued long lines (holds up other stations) • Discussions with parents and students who have incomplete forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add two school nurses/nurse aides • Create referral station for immunization assistance • Offer incoming 8th graders immunizations at high school in April–May 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School nurse • Assistant Principal 	September–December <i>Target:</i> December 1

Enacting a Strong Instructional Culture

3,000 Days Later: Lessons Learned

School cultures do not change in 100 days. What new school leaders *can* do in those early months of school is develop patterns of talk and behaviors that, over time, faithfully represent the answer to the fundamental question of schooling: “Why are we here?” Once a new school leader establishes organizational and instructional pathways for the enactment of the valued ends of schooling, the task of cultural change shifts to the messy business of maintaining the integrity of those pathways, which are continually eroded by three cultural truths that rarely receive mention in the literature on school reform.

Cultural Truth #1

The ever-changing circumstances of a school environment will divert attention away from the cultivation of the beliefs, values, and practices of a new cultural vision. A new superintendent, a new mandate, a new board of

education, a referendum failure, or a death in the school community, can quickly negate norms of thinking and practice that took years to establish.

Cultural Truth #2

The unlearning of comfortable beliefs, values, and practices and the relearning of foreign beliefs, values, and practices require enormous amounts of social, emotional, and intellectual energy. Sustaining the level of energy required to implement a new vision of schooling often demands more time, more resources, and more preparation than main offices are capable of providing.

Cultural Truth #3

The articulation and enactment of high expectations for performance will always provoke discord between what the organization standardizes, measures, and evaluates and what members of the organization believe *should be* standardized, measured, and evaluated.

Faced with the uncomfortable truths of cultural change, a new school leader has three choices: to retreat to the main office and manage the school; to adopt programs and manage reforms; or to lead the process of cultural change. The first two choices aim at getting teachers and students through the school day without tampering with established beliefs, values, and practices. The third choice places new school leaders in the messy cultural world of fundamentally redefining established norms of thinking, behaving, and performing.

This book has portrayed the thinking and actions of a new school leader intent on leading the process of cultural change. Each chapter described an organizational strategy employed by a new school leader to redefine the beliefs, values, and practices of an entrenched school culture. Underlying all of these organizational strategies is a set of leadership lessons I learned in my tenure as principal of a high school for seventeen years. What follows are summaries of those twelve lessons that served me well in redefining the beliefs, values, and practices of the Central High that I led.

Lesson #1: Get Fired for Doing Something

During those first 100 days at Central High, I frequently called a mentor of mine to discuss my cultural crisis of the day. At the end of one of these discussions, he offered, what became for me, the first lesson of leadership: “Son, it is better to get fired for doing something than for doing nothing.”

In organizational terms, my mentor was telling me to “stop managing, and start leading.” *Managers* are most comfortable supervising stable processes that require little, if any, adjustments or disruptions: doing nothing. *Leaders* live in the messy world of unstable processes that require continual rearrangement of activities and the periodic creative destruction of processes that appeared to be working: doing something. The goals and processes of institutional schooling are designed for managers. The goals and processes of strong instructional cultures are designed for leaders.

Lesson #2: Start With a Theory

On my first day in the main office, I was handed a number of documents that, in my superintendent’s words, would “familiarize me with the vision, mission, goals, and strategic plans of the district.” While each of these documents consistently used the vocabulary of contemporary school reform—data mining, critical thinking, common core—none of the documents separately, or together, provided me with a coherent response to the five fundamental questions of schooling: (a) How do children learn? (b) What knowledge is of greatest worth? (c) How should knowledge be organized? (d) How should we assess what students understand? (e) How should we TEACH? Whether pursuing incremental improvement or instructional breakthroughs, the particulars of a school situation will require constant adjustments to theories, ideas, programs, and practices. What remains constant in the reform process is a theory of schooling that reorganizes new techniques, ideas, programs, and practices into a coherent and continuous framework for teaching and learning. A theory of instruction provides administrators and faculty with a clear causal relationship between vision, goals, and practices.

Lesson #3: Start With Structure

In my first educational psychology course, my professor ended a lecture on learning theory with the question: “Who invented the high school?” The point of the question was the obvious disconnect between theories on how children learn and the structures of institutional schooling. A short walk through any level of schooling finds students conforming to organizational and instructional routines that pay little attention to a child’s fundamental social, emotional, and intellectual needs to communicate, to construct, to inquire, to move, and to create. All attempts at implementing theory-driven instructional reforms are doomed to fail without a fundamental change to the organizational and instructional arrangements of institutional schooling.

Lesson #4: Be the Smartest Person in the Room

After the Central High Board of Education passed the STARS program, the superintendent whispered to me, “Al, we were lucky on this one.” For the most part, my luck held up under four more superintendents, numerous changes to the board of education, and significant changes to the financial condition of the district. The long streak of passing ambitious instructional initiatives confirmed my belief that luck happens when you are the smartest person in the room. Being smart is not about how intelligent you are; it is all about doing your homework. Smart leaders do not read from scripts, or turn the meeting over to a consultant, or narrate a PowerPoint presentation. School leaders who do their homework enter public forums with well-crafted personalized instructional narratives that demonstrate to the school community their deep commitment to the educational values written into mission statements, a thorough understanding of the pedagogies that will develop those values, and the managerial skills to transform those pedagogies into classroom realities. There are many legitimate reasons for a board of education to reject a reform initiative. One of those reasons should never be the absence of the smartest person in the room.

Lesson #5: Failure Is an Option

All school reform initiatives originate from theories of teaching, learning, and organizational behavior. Theories are generalized predictions of physical or human behavior gathered from laboratory-induced situations that have been stripped of environmental variables that would confuse cause and effect relationships. When a district or school adopts a new learning or organizational theory, those same environmental variables that were stripped in controlled investigations reappear in classroom settings. The ordered relationships that were carefully positioned in the research become disordered in messy classroom situations. Bringing predictability back to disrupted theory-driven instructional initiatives requires some form of experimentation with different combinations of new and existing theories, routines, techniques, and practices. Being comfortable with experimentation means a school leader understands the place of failure in making collective sense out of theory-driven instructional initiatives. Failure is an essential tool for interpreting and eventually institutionalizing instructional practices that work. If no one in a school organization is reporting failure, then you can be assured that no one in the organization is learning or innovating.

Lesson #6: Conflict Is Inevitable

No matter how well-framed or how well-resourced a new school reform initiative may be, teachers look upon new instructional theories and practices as a direct threat to their classroom identity and competence. No reform strategy possesses the ability to overcome the various levels of disagreement that will emerge when disrupting deeply held beliefs about teaching and learning. School leaders owe their school community the intelligent and purposeful enactment of theories and practices that fulfill a worthwhile vision of schooling. If that effort is carried out with integrity and respect, then school leaders have done everything possible to invite teachers to become members of a strong instructional culture. School administrators should never allow their vision of teaching and learning to be compromised by faculty members who, for whatever reason, have decided to place themselves outside the process of continuous professional development.

Lesson #7: Those Closest to the Problem Know Most About the Problem

In an early effort to design a more efficient process for cleaning classrooms, my formula for dividing the number of rooms by the number of custodians left out the all-important variable of the types of classrooms being cleaned. In the words of one of the night custodians: “Dr. Jones, I would appreciate it if my assignment didn’t include any science rooms.” Throughout those first 100 days, problems that I thought were solved in main offices became bigger problems when they were implemented outside my office. Main office meetings bring together supervisors who know the generalities of the processes they supervise: written procedures, number of personnel, job descriptions, location, materials, and cost. Main office designs do not take into account the countless unpredictable variables that staff encounter when implementing a new policy or procedure. Over time, school personnel will fit these unpredictable variables into predictable patterns of performance. When the number or type of unpredictable variables overwhelms a system, the natural inclination of a supervisor is to sit in main offices and write a new rule or procedure, add or subtract personnel, or purchase a new technology—problem solved.

However, new policies, new personnel, and new technologies miss the countless adjustments system operators have already developed to make a building process work. Without an understanding of what particular adjustments system operators have made to the system, main office adjustments to underperforming systems will only burden system operators to make

sense out of another unpredictable variable. Finding the right mix between the practicalities of making a system work and the planned goals of a system can only emerge out of conversations in which operator understandings of a system are listened to, valued, and become part of the solution.

Lesson #8: Instruction Is Everybody's Job

An inconvenient truth of school administration is how fast and how far an administrator rises in a school's hierarchy depends directly on how fast and how far the administrator is able to distance him or herself from the classroom. What is valued in boardrooms and central offices is the ability of school administrators to balance a budget, bring in a building renovation under budget, develop a new funding resource, write a new technology plan, or implement a new security system. The messy world of classroom supervision produces few tangible managerial accomplishments that higher-ups would recognize as reflecting valued administrative goals. The reality of school administration is a career ladder that finds administrators at the top dealing with budgets, boilers, and boosters and administrators at the bottom dealing with curriculum, instruction, and students.

The reversal of institutional career ladders is central to building a strong instructional culture. Developing quality teaching is everybody's job. Budgets, boilers, and boosters are what administrators do before and after school. Making sense out of the messy world of classrooms is what all administrators should do during the school day. A culture evolves from values that are represented in what school leaders read, what they talk about, and where they spend their time. Spending all day writing a newsletter, studying spreadsheets, or attending conferences sends the clear message that teaching matters least in an organization where teaching should matter most.

Lesson #9: Constancy of Purpose

Each day, school administrators must make managerial and supervisory decisions that will influence the goals and methods of a school's instructional program: whom to hire, how to develop teacher expertise, which instructional materials to purchase, how to organize curricula, how to structure courses, and how to assess student progress. A strong instructional culture turns to a well-developed instructional worldview to answer each of these questions. Weak instructional cultures turn to the theory of the day, the program of the day, or the consultant of the day to answer these same instructional questions. The continuous improvement of instructional decision-making assumes that there is a coherent and stable system of theories,

ideas, and practices to reflect upon. Purposeful strategies for improving instructional decision-making are nonexistent in schools where faculties are presented annually with incoherent mixes of philosophies, goals, theories, mandates, techniques, and programs.

Lesson #10: Who Is on the School Bus?

Of all the managerial lessons I learned after 3,000 days in the main office, the one that proved most effective in changing a school culture was reduced to three personnel decisions: whom I hired, whom I dismissed, and whom I transferred. Each decision possessed the power to quickly change how a class is taught, how a system functions, and how a culture behaves. While most administrators would agree with the potency of this managerial principle, they rarely apply the principle in the schools they lead. The reluctance to pay close attention to the personnel function is based on three faulty managerial beliefs. First, it is impossible to dismiss a tenured teacher. Second, the emotional turmoil generated by a termination or transfer is detrimental to faculty morale. Third, missing knowledge, skills, and dispositions can be taught. The first assumption reveals a school administration without fully developed instructional systems: employment, teacher evaluation, and staff development. The second assumption abdicates a primary function of instructional leadership. The third assumption underestimates the complex process of unlearning comfortable teaching routines and relearning the theories, vocabularies, and practices of a new pedagogy. Few administrators would openly admit to these faulty managerial beliefs. Most, however, would also openly admit that their greatest managerial failures could be traced back to their failure to pay attention to who was allowed on the school bus, who was asked to leave the school bus, and who remained in the same seat on the school bus (Collins, 2001, p. 41).

Lesson #11: Start Small

The number and strength of the social, economic, political, and pedagogical variables that school administrators are unable to control make the successful implementation of an ambitious reform initiative highly problematic. Failure to pay attention to this reality of change often results in the annual cycle of reform failure that begins with ambitious goals and programs announced from auditorium stages in August. The cycle ends with a memo in November indicating that the lack of resources or an underperforming system or the crisis of the day has stalled program implementation. Small pilot programs offer school leaders a strategy for breaking out of the

cycle of reform failure. The self-contained design of a pilot program provides administrators with the ability to reduce the number of uncontrolled variables that move in and out of a new program and the freedom to experiment with different combinations of the variables they now have under their control—failure becomes an option. Only when the feedback from these small experiments in teaching and learning indicates a new pedagogy or a new program is achieving the desired outcomes should an administrator enlarge the scope of a new instructional initiative. Even these public pronouncements of successful launches should be phrased in the cautionary language of program possibilities and limitations.

Lesson #12: The Whole Educational Truth

Every school day brought a member of the school community into my office requesting that I provide more of some resource to improve student learning: more time, more space, more personnel, more technology, or more materials. No matter how unrealistic the request, each individual who entered my office was expressing a truth about teaching and learning. Yes, I agree in principle with reducing class sizes. Yes, I agree in principle to the purchase of more computers. Yes, I agree in principle to adopting a new elective program. Yes, I agree in principle to hiring more clerical support. Each truth expressed in my office, however, was always a small part of a larger truth. At the end of each request, I asked the truth teller for the whole truth:

1. How would this request connect to the educational goals of Central High?
2. What parts of the school's signature pedagogy would this request enact?
3. What would change in the teacher's instructional repertoire as a result of this added resource?
4. What would students be doing differently in classrooms as a result of this added resource?

Rarely did my pursuit of the whole truth venture beyond a vague connection between the added resource and an educational goal (e.g., "small class sizes would allow us to do more with critical thinking"). Questions two, three, and four remained unanswered: What specific pedagogical practices and classroom experiences would change as a result of the added resource?

An essential function of instructional leadership is formulating the small truths expressed in main offices, classrooms, and boardrooms into whole educational truths: the answers to questions two, three, and four.

Only when the cultural dots are fully connected should a school leader consider whether the school possesses the organizational and instructional capacity to enact the whole educational truth. The development and enactment of the STARS program (Chapter 8) is one example of a series of small truths—small class size, remote location, individualized learning goals, different school schedule—that were translated into a whole educational truth for 18 truant freshman students.

Developing Strong Instructional Cultures

When school administrators sit together and discuss the challenges of their jobs, the conversation will always turn to the day-to-day resolutions of the large and small conflicts between institutional and human values (see Table 11.1). Whether sitting in the dean’s office, observing a mathematics lesson, or supervising the cafeteria, administrators find themselves judging which value system will prevail in particular school situations.

Three decades of school reform initiatives have faltered over the inability to reconcile the ends and means of institutions with the ends and means of how children learn. No matter how small or large a managerial decision may be, school administrators continually confront the dilemma of institutional demands to credential, grade, and rank, and a child’s and adolescent’s need to be known, to be respected, and to be interested. The first 100 days presents a pattern of decision-making that a school leader

TABLE 11.1 The Dilemma of School Administration

Institutional Values	vs.	Human Values
Preparation		Emancipation
Subjects		Interests
Attention		Engagement
Discipline		Responsibility
Attendance		Presence
Compliance		Assent
Diversity		Inclusivity
Control		Autonomy
Standardization		Uniqueness
Simplicity		Complexity
Conformity		Openness
Coverage		Understanding
Quantity		Quality

enacted to increase personalized learning environments and decrease institutional goals and routines. Each decision reflected the purposes, pedagogies, and organizational structures of a strong instructional culture (see Resource 11.1).

The message of this book is the simple truth that school cultures matter most. No matter how well researched a theory-driven instructional initiative may be, it will falter and ultimately disappear in a weak instructional culture. Although this simple truth is continually referenced in books and journals on school reform, it continues to be ignored by school leaders busily implementing the mandate of the day or consumed with managerial diversions: budgets, boilers, and boosters. The aimless search for the instructional or managerial technique of the day undermines the foundations of a strong instructional culture. The source of strong instructional cultures is a clearly articulated instructional worldview that becomes embedded in daily organizational and instructional routines.

The authoring of educational purposes—instructional worldview—is a highly personal journey involving a disciplined response to three questions: (a) Who am I educationally?; (b) How do I translate abstract theories into understandable school and classroom realities?; and (c) How do I organize a school to support and advance a strong instructional worldview? Although the answers to these questions were not the subject of this book, the lessons presented in this book will lie dormant without a personal commitment to replacing managerial routines of telling, allocating, and inspecting with leadership repertoires that educate, facilitate, and coach. Without embarking on the journey for becoming a strong instructional leader (Jones, 2013), the personalized strengths of children and adolescents in our schools will continue to be constrained in classrooms designed to control, to tell, and to credential.

Resource

Resource 11.1 *Weak vs. Strong Instructional Cultures (Part I)*

Component	Weak Culture	Strong Culture
Instructional Worldview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top-down directives • Incoherent • Aligned with district policies/new programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authored by staff • Coherent • Aligned with new initiatives/systems
Subject Matter Discourse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandates, programs, techniques • Textbooks, curriculum guides • Methods of implementation (tell, allocate, inspect) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional worldview • Interpretative communities • Methods of inquiry (educate, facilitate, coach)
Administrative Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates teachers • Sets up training • Has generic pedagogical knowledge • States district policy/program initiatives • Gives formal presentations • Uses ad hoc solutions to school wide problems • Devotes time to managerial functions • Implements state/district mandates • Ensures that policies, systems, and practices conform to institutional goals: categorize, label, and code. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaches teachers • Participates in training • Has subject matter knowledge • Articulates instructional worldview • Engages in instructional conversations • Uses purposeful approaches to problem solving • Devotes time to instruction • Interprets state/district mandates • Ensures that policies, systems, and practices conform to goals of educational opportunity, equality, and achievement
Organizational Commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative complies with district goals/state mandates • Resources are too little/too late; too much/too soon • Teachers must find the time • Administrators manage instructional initiative • Instructional time is superseded by managerial goals • Theory, technique, or program of the day • New instructional initiatives adopted to organizational routines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiative advances instructional worldview • Resources are appropriate for initiative • Teachers are given time • Administrators supervise instructional initiative • Instructional time is protected • Number and type of reforms are limited and focused • Organizational routines are adopted to new instructional initiative
Instructional Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One or more instructional systems is not in place or dysfunctional • Instructional systems conform to managerial goals • Feedback is designed to inspect managerial goals: telling → allocating → inspecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Five instructional systems are fully enacted: employment, mentoring, teacher evaluation, staff development, and curriculum development • Five instructional systems conform to instructional worldview • Feedback is designed to reinterpret theories, ideas, and practices

Resource 11.1 *Weak vs. Strong Instructional Cultures (Part II)*

Component	Weak Culture	Strong Culture
School Discourse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff focuses on academic and social deficiencies of student population • School staff believes that parents are not providing adequate support of school goals • Curriculum offers narrow pathways for school success • Teacher conversations focus on compliance with district policies/ programs • School staff complains about lack of resources • School meetings are agenda driven and focus on compliance with managerial directives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff honors diverse abilities, talents, and intelligences of student population • School staff believes that all parents are making their best effort to support school goals • Curriculum offers multiple pathways for school success • Teacher conversations reflect deep understandings of pedagogy • School staff discusses how best to allocate resources • School meetings are deliberate and focus on instruction

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Dr. Alan C. Jones is an educational consultant specializing in curriculum, instruction, and instructional leadership. His teaching career includes teaching English at DuSable Upper Grade Center in Chicago, Illinois; social studies at Thornton Township High School in Harvey, Illinois; and educational administration at Saint Xavier University in Chicago, Illinois. He began his administrative career as an activities director at Thornton Township High School and went on to become assistant principal at Bremen Township in Illinois and served as principal of Community High School District 94 in West Chicago, Illinois, for seventeen years. Under his leadership, Community High School was awarded the Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 1993 and was recognized as a 1995 School of Excellence by *HISPANIC* magazine. His publications include articles in educational journals on instructional leadership and school reform, and three books: *Students! Do Not Push Your Teacher Down the Stairs on Friday: A Teacher's Notebook* (Quadrangle Books, 1972), *Becoming a Strong Instructional Leader: Saying No to Business as Usual* (Teachers College Press, 2012), and *Teaching Matters Most: A School Leader's Guide to Improving Classroom Instruction* (Corwin Books, 2012).