# Effective Traits of Successful Principals

The Principal is the boss, problem solver, vision-keeper, and the campus person to turn to in a crisis. The job requires the principal to guide curriculum, monitor instruction, build budgets, develop schedules, run meetings, maintain safety, enforce regulations, and negotiate the relationship between the school, the community, the district, and the state government. The job description, itself, disallows the time for deliberation and planning essential for the level of performance required of a school leader.  The School Improvement Resource Center (SIRC) believes that to build capacity in the principal is to build capacity in the school. This selection of Effective Traits of Successful Principals is a compilation of characteristics common to several studies of effective schools and effective school leadership.

Peter Drucker, author of *The Practice of Management* and *The Effective Executive*, says that where organizations fall down is where the people have to guess about what the leader wants.  The principal's vision and sense of purpose guide the school and everything in it.  When vision and mission are not clearly and frequently communicated in words and actions, failure is a certainty.  Articulation of a real vision and a clear sense of purpose validated by the principal's choices and decisions stimulate the school toward its goals.

Jack Welch said, "Being a leader changes everything. Before you are a leader, success is all about you.  It's about your performance, your contributions.  It's about getting called upon and having the right answers.  When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.  Your success as a leader comes not from what you do but from the reflected glory of the people you lead".

## The Effective Traits

- Knows curriculum systems and framework
- Establishes and communicates a clear vision
- Manages time and is organized
- Develops an effective professional development plan
- Knows quality/effective instruction
- Monitors and evaluates systems
- Collects and assesses data to drive interventions

- Fosters collaboration
- Practices effective communication skills
- Establishes high performing learning culture and climate
- Identifies effective resources and staff
- Creates a community of leaders
- Enhances community and parental involvement
- Understands accountability requirements
- Develops an effective school-wide plan

**Information on the Effective Traits of Successful Prinicipals was compiled from:**

Marzano, R.J. (2003).  What Works in Schools.  Alexandria, VA:  Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

McEwan, E.K. (2003).  10 traits of highly effective principals:  From Good to Great Performance.  Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press

Developing Leadership Capacity through Leadership Behaviors, Principal Planning Guide, SIRC

# Effective Trait:
# Curriculum Systems

**Rationale:**   Curriculum is the "what" must be taught, and instruction is the "how". As the true instructional leader, the principal must move comfortably in each academic discipline to activate and maintain higher learning expectations, and identify the non-negotiables of what must be taught.  A series of processes can make this possible within the conflicting demands of the principal's responsibilities.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Acknowledge and develop the mind-set that enabling effective instruction is the primary responsibility.
- Use "experts" to guide and review the work of teachers in defining the "what".
- Locate and use a high performing district's curriculum.
- Delegate other responsibilities to free time to treat curriculum as the priority.
- Initiate a working relationship with district curriculum personnel that underscores measurable student learning as the practical curriculum focus.
- Work with district or regional service center to reach a comfort level in discussing disaggregated data with departments, teachers and parents.
- Use test scores and teacher surveys to determine teacher leaders for academic and/or grade level management roles.  Trusting their knowledge and commitment to student learning trumps loyalty.
- Meet with teacher leaders to create a list of job responsibilities.  Foremost on this list will be a deep knowledge of curriculum, TEKS, how tested, TAKS, and a broad range of instructional resources.
- Use teacher leaders to establish teams to match curriculum and instructional timelines to correspond with TEKS and TAKS and guarantee horizontal alignment by having teachers develop skill and concept checks to use as frequent benchmarks.  Principal meets with each academic or grade level team at least twice monthly to listen and learn the classroom applications and to affirm the school goals.
- Schedule meeting to review vertical alignment and prioritize TEKS objectives to check depth and complexity by grade level.
- Use teacher teams from elementary through high school to work in the summer to tighten vertical alignment and design lessons and tutorials for TEKS objectives. Extension and review should be integrated.
- Work with mentor to develop a curriculum calendar and monitoring steps and timeline.

**Research/ Resources:**
- *A Simple Curriculum Alignment Activity*  [www.principalspartnership.com/curricalignment.html](http://www.principalspartnership.com/curricalignment.html).
- *The Curriculum Alignment Kit* for Busy Principals
  [http://www.corwinpress.com/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book9700&](http://www.corwinpress.com/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book9700&)
- *Leadership and Curriculum Development: The Contrast between Japanese and American Public Schools*  [http://www.academicresearchpapers.com/abstracts/9000/09850.html](http://www.academicresearchpapers.com/abstracts/9000/09850.html)

**Notes:**
- Plan a preliminary schedule with a sequence of steps and a timeline that will optimize deliberate change.

<p style="text-align:center">**Effective Trait:**</p>
<p style="text-align:center">**Creating a Shared Vision**</p>

**Rationale:** Commitment to a shared vision provides collaborative support to interventions that support the shared vision. Instead of having to get teachers to buy in to an individual administrator's purpose, developing a shared vision will allow educators to share their hopes for the school. The process should energize participants and unify them in their focus.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Developing the vision
  - Include all members of school community in creating a school vision
  - Discuss and examine values, assumptions and beliefs
  - focus on continuous school improvement
- Communicating the vision
  - Implement a system to communicate the vision
  - Encourage commitment to the shared vision
- Implementing the vision
  - Refer to the vision in faculty discussion
  - Encourage commitment to the shared vision
  - Build leadership capacity to implement the vision
- Monitoring and evaluating the vision
  - Periodically revisit vision to tweak or adjust to meet changing face of campus
- Focus on improved student learning and success

**Research/ Resources:**
- Hessel, K. & Holloway, J. (2003). *Case studies in school leadership: keys to a successful principalship.* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Lambert, L. (2003). *Leadership Capacity for Lasting School Improvement.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Marzano, R. (2003). *What works in schools: translating research into action.* Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Michael Fullan  www.michaelfullan.ca/  Books including: *Change Force* and *Leading in a Culture of Change*
- Peter Senge  www.fieldbook.com *The Fifth Discipline*

**Notes:**
- Determine your vision for your campus and ensure all working towards the same goal.
- Survey your staff to see if they know what your vision is for the school, the faculty, the students, yourself.
- Determine the best way to initiate an honest discussion to focus on a shared vision.
- Ensure that the vision is a part of all decisions made on your campus

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# Effective Trait:
# Time Management and Organization

**Rationale:**   Because a principal's responsibilities and tasks overwhelm the mental and emotional energies and outnumber the hours in a day, management can revert to being re-active rather than proactive. Student learning is the priority that should dictate the use of a principal's time, and holding and communicating that priority requires diligent effort—and strategy.

**Ideas for implementation:**
- Define your vision for the school for yourself, and then articulate it clearly to all staff. The vision directs the use of time.
- Identify two factors that cause the school to fail to meet its objectives and focus efforts toward changing them.  Trying to do many things at once dissipates the impact and diminishes improvement in any area.
- Identify two strengths, break down their components, and use your staff to find ways the strengths can be transferred to other disciplines or areas and, thus, maximized.  Use data to identify.
- Schedule EVERYTHING.  Schedule every five-minute appearance, every meeting, every walkthrough, and every duty.  If it is not scheduled, it probably won't happen.
- Before school starts, have everything scheduled on a school calendar. Publish this so everyone can plan ahead.
- Prioritize meetings and how long they should take.  Set and safeguard a 15-minute time limit.
- Re-think open door policies.  Consider requiring all meetings to be scheduled and creating opportunities for availability.
- Inform staff about small bits of time when you are available to discuss a concern, such as five minutes in the hallway, five minutes before or after school in front of the building, or five minutes during lunch duty. Ask for a reminder note if follow-up is required.
- Learn the strengths of assistants, teacher leaders and other staff, and delegate to these strengths.
  Collaborative administrators get more done and manage more tasks.
- Learn how and when to delegate. Understand that the principal's philosophy can be safely delegated to the degree that it has been clearly communicated and demonstrated.
- Meet weekly with assistant principals to discuss the week's schedule, and model making and valuing a professional schedule.
- Develop processes and forms to guide collaborative efforts; include definitive job descriptions, and
  talk through these when you walk through the faculty handbook at the beginning of the year so responsibilities are clear. Require that all procedures be followed.
- Meet with leadership teams/ department chairs/ grade level leaders to inform, listen, and share responsibility.
- Find or develop monitoring systems that are time efficient. Monitoring is essential, and feedback is the way staff knows it is a priority.

## Research/ Resources:
- Resources on time management   www.franklincovey.com
- *The 15 Minute Organizer*,   Emily Barnes
- *The One Minute Manager***,** Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson

- *Leadership and the One Minute Manager:  Increasing Effectiveness Through Situational Leadership,*  Ken Blanchard and Patricia Zigarmi
- *If You Haven't Got the Time to Do It Right, When Will You Find the Time to Do It Over,*  Jeffrey J. Mayer

**Notes:**

- Begin analyzing your campus major weaknesses, strengths and needs.
- In your own words compose your vision for your school.
- List your major objectives for this year.
- List the priorities for the coming year.
- List the five ways you waste the most time.
- List your strengths and weaknesses.
- Think of the personnel on your campus to which you could delegate tasks.
- Think of the team you will assemble to help you develop forms and procedures.

# Effective Trait:
# Professional Development Planning:
## Matching Trainings to Teacher and Student Learning Needs

**Rationale:**  The reality and the belief that improved student learning is the objective of professional development produces an appreciation of the need to plan.  Professional development powerful enough to significantly restructure established procedures and instruction requires careful selection and a comprehensive plan. The principal models the attitude that learning is ongoing in the effort to better. There is always something more to learn.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Communicate that a learning environment where professional growth is expected leads to continuous student, teacher, and school improvement is the norm.
- Build a collaborative learning community for teachers, administrators and other professional staff.
- Analyze needs as the major tool for planning professional development initiatives.  Use disaggregated data to determine student needs and teachers' strengths and weaknesses.
- Provide varied and flexible options to meet staff needs.
  - Action Research
  - Teacher mentoring
  - Modeling and coaching from district or ESC master teachers
  - Planning sessions modeling the use of disaggregated data to develop lessons
  - Observing skilled teachers within the school or the district
  - Book studies
- Work with district personnel to learn policy guidelines, budget options, and to find an advocate for accrediting these flexible options to teachers as required staff development hours.
- Commit to seek the necessary funding, resources, district waivers and assistance to make professional development a real and practical tool for teachers to use to help students learn.
- Encourage professional staff to use student data to determine their own need to grow and improve, and to seek training that addresses that need.
- Ensure quality in any professional development session. Use the following questions to decide if it is appropriate:
  - Does school data indicate that this provides something we need to know?
  - Does my staff see the need for this training? Are they ready and willing to learn?
  - Is the presenter an acknowledged expert?
  - Do we have a plan for using this training that includes time and planning to implement, monitoring and evaluating?
  - Does the plan allow time for re-teaching or follow-up training if necessary?
- Match school wide staff development to meet challenges or solve problems determined by significant staff input.
- Use benchmark test scores to add or adjust professional development trainings.
- Schedule time to monitor the impact of professional development on teacher effectiveness.
- In January, plan the professional development calendar for the next school year and post it for the teachers.
- Strive to embed individual staff development within campus, district, state, and federal training requirements.

**Research/ Resources:**

- *Toolkit for Planning Professional Development,* North Central Regional Educational Laboratory
  http://www.ncrel.org/pd/toolkit.htm
- *Data Driven Professional Development*, A Guide to Action Research, Education Reform Network
  http://prodev.edreform.net/portal/prodev/data
- *A National Plan for Improving Professional Development,* National Staff Development Council
  http://www.nsdc.org/library/authors/NSDCPlan.cfm

**Notes:**

- List the tasks involved in managing professional development planning on your campus.
- Consider the staff personnel who could best study and introduce Action Research on your campus.
- Begin a timeline for a plan for the coming school year.

# Effective Trait:
# Effective Instruction

**Rationale:** Since NCLB, a school is measured and earns its reputation by student performance. Research reveals the causes of student achievement as self-discipline, effective teachers, high expectations, engagement, rigorous standards, interest, and perceived relevance. Effective instruction is the bedrock of student learning. The effective principal acknowledges the role of provider and guardian of instruction as the fundamental responsibility of each day.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Learn how to select and hire excellent teachers; get district policy guidance and find time to document to de-select inadequate teachers.
- Use experts to examine school data with you to ensure that you are learning everything possible about teacher and student strengths and weaknesses.
- Use your mentor to develop a true comfort level in talking about data to your staff.
- Determine short term and long-term goals from the data.
- Discuss data findings with teachers, parents, and students. Ask for ideas to refine the goals and for strategies to help reach them.
- By departments/grade level/subjects, develop an instructional timeline. Develop a campus calendar that covers all TAKS objectives/targets based on the needs of students/student groups and the weight of the objective. This focuses instruction.
- Have teachers take a released TAKS test.
- Use professional development to reaffirm alignment between the curriculum and the teaching of TEKS at TAKS rigor.
- Provide and attend training for teachers to understand and implement deep alignment between what is taught, written and tested.
- Have experts in Bloom's and Ericsson attend department or grade level meeting to work with teachers on including depth and complexity in the lessons they are planning to teach.
- Allow time for teachers to plan instruction for the entire grading period, including homework and assessments. It is important for teachers who plan together to attend professional development together.
- Train teachers to write TAKS formatted questions and use them as skill checks for shaping interventions by identifying mastery and non-mastery students.
- Schedule tutoring sessions by TEKS objectives so teachers can become specialists in a few.
- Use common planning time to develop enrichment activities for mastery students.
- Lesson planning should schedule reteaching and reinforcement of skills or concepts at weekly and monthly intervals to ensure retention of learning.
- Monitor to see that there is no waste of time at the beginning or end of a class period.
- Design a walk-through form to find teacher strengths such as pacing, varying activities, questioning, sequencing, differentiating instruction, or discipline management. Allow teachers who need help in these areas to observe in these classrooms and report new insights.
- Monitor and ask teachers when you visit classrooms about the percentage of students who are focused and engaged.
- Co-teaching as an inclusion model for special education students has the potential to increase mastery in subject areas, offer differentiated instruction for all students, and expose all students to higher learning expectations.

**Research/Resources:**

- *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement,* Robert J. Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jane Pollack
- *A Handbook for Classroom Instruction That Works***,** Robert. Marzano, Jennifer Norford, Diane Paynter, Debra  Pickering, and Barbara Gaddy
- *Step By Step Series* for Inclusion, research based effective practices  http://stetsonassociates.com**/**

**Notes:**

- Begin tracking time for a day, then for a week to see what steals time from the focus on instruction. Decide where and how to recover this time.
- Sit in on planning meetings with teachers.
- Pick a researcher to locate high performing schools to which you could send teachers.
- Organize a book study of *Classroom Instruction That Works* as a professional development option and arrange to get district credit for your teachers.

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**Effective Trait:**
# Systems for Monitoring and Evaluation

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**Rationale:** Effective operation of all school functions is the core responsibility of the principal, but it often gets lost in the mass of daily commitments and obligations. Attention to design and procedures of systems can eliminate problems before they happen and ensure that the major duty of the school is fulfilled. Institution, periodic monitoring of systems, and end-of the-year evaluation of systems are causal factors in reaching goals for school improvement.

## Ideas for Implementation:

- Clarify your understanding of "system". The dictionary offers several definitions:
  1. "A group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole.
  2. A functionally related group of elements, especially:
     a. An organism as a whole, especially with regard to its vital processes or functions.
     b. A network of structures and channels, as for communication, or distribution.
  3. An organized set of interrelated ideas or principles.
  4. A social, economic, or political organizational form.
  5. A condition of harmonious, orderly interaction.
  6. An organized and coordinated method: "a procedure."
- Begin considering, defining and classifying the systems in place on your campus:
  - Administrative-the network of structures and channels (hiring and monitoring personnel, for example)
  - Managerial-the measures that provide for orderly interaction (setting and overseeing discipline policy, for example)
  - Curricular-the organized and coordinated procedure of determining the knowledge to be delivered (horizontal and vertical alignment, for example)
  - Instructional-interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements that deliver knowledge and skills (setting expectations for types, styles, and rigor of teaching)
  - Decide what indicators will verify proficiently functioning systems in each of these categories.
  - Use the leadership team to list observable behaviors and/or data capable of accurately measuring performance of the system rather than depending on perceptions or impressions.
  - List features of the system that cannot be changed; then list factors that can be changed. Work on those factors that can be changed, and try to minimize the impact of those that cannot.
  - Decide which systems are working and which need immediate change.
  - Use the idea of 'creative abandonment' to eliminate non-productive practices or policies.
  - Carefully oversee the implementation stage of any system, with clear communication with all staff.
  - Design monitoring checklists and a schedule.
  - Delegate monitoring responsibilities among staff, and work together to design forms to report to you.
  - Involve faculty and parents in the evaluation process for each system, and invite solutions to improve.
  - Base modifications, adaptations, or elimination on the goal of increasing precision in focusing on high learning expectations in an academic environment.

**Research/ Resources:**

- ERIC Research Report: *How Well Are We Doing?*
  http://www.mcrel.org/PDF/AssessmentAccountabilityDataUse/5993TG_EvaluatingforSuccess.pdf
- Education Research Report: *Meeting Goal 3: How Well Are We Doing?*
  http://www.ed.gov/pubs/OR/ResearchRpts/goal3.html
- *Case Study: A District-driven Principal Preparation Program Design*
  http://www.sreb.org/programs/hstw/publications/case_studies/Providence.asp

**Notes:**

- List the current systems on your campus.
- Evaluate the time you spend on each.
- Identify areas where importance to the school's purpose does not match the expenditure of time.  Think of people to use as advisers or helpers in your efforts to improve systems within the school.

# Effective Trait:
## Data-Driven Interventions

**Rationale:** Closing learning gaps is the hallmark of NCLB. Identifying the gaps is the first order of business for an instructional leader. Selecting and implementing strategies capable of closing the gaps by improving learning for the low-performing student or student groups promises greater probability of improving learning for all students. The TEKS objectives that reveal lack of mastery must be identified, as should the students with the greatest needs.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Use ESC experts or the campus mentor to learn to interpret all data.
- Begin listing steps for two separate plans to address the needs-one, a short term plan, will emphasize immediate student interventions, the second, a long term plan will emphasize instructional strategies that will reduce learning gaps.
- Teach your teachers to understand and use student data.
- Use data to identify teacher strengths and weaknesses. Match teaching assignments to strengths.
- Focus instruction on weak areas that are most heavily weighted on TAKS. Use interdisciplinary teaching and projects to give double time to these objectives.
- Use teacher teams, ESC specialists and district curriculum personnel to review the district curriculum to confirm that it is strongly aligned to TEKS at TAKS standards as revealed in data.
- After charting data on student needs, implement a Plan, Do, Check, Act cycle of intervention
  - **Plan:**
    - Identify weak and strong objectives and form flexible groups and times for tutorials on specific TEKS objectives.
    - Assign teacher specific TEKS objectives so they can master a variety of strategies and resources for a few rather than all.
  - **Do:**
    - Provide teacher planning time to develop mini-benchmarks and skill checks to track student mastery. (See SIRC Principal Planning Guide-Mathematics p.6)
    - Schedule tutorials by TEKS objective before school for math, and after school for English, for example. Non-mastery of objectives determines tutorial time/s.
  - **Check:**
  - Assess and chart mastery of objectives by student.
  - **Act:**
    - Re-teach if necessary, using different methods and materials.
    - Maintain learning by periodic reinforcement and review
    - Principal monitors via walk-throughs and reviewing charts of student mastery on mini-benchmark tests.
- Vertical alignment of curriculum and teaching to TAKS standards must be put into practice as part of an effective long-term plan.

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**Research/ Resources:**

- Research-based workbooks and practice tests, 100% aligned with the TAKS Objectives and the TEKS Student Expectations. Includes pre-tests and post-tests.
  http://www.buckledown.com/Products/TX/index.php
- Analysis of the number of test items measuring each objective on the TAKS test
  http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/taks/blueprints/index.html
- Information about the TAKS test, released TAKS and SDAA tests, TAKS Information Booklets and Study Guides  http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/

**Notes:**

- Begin to list changes in staff assignments, people to use as resources, adaptations to the daily schedule, and members of an intervention team to immediately address this challenge.

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**Effective Trait:**
# Fostering Collaboration

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**Rationale:** Collaboration means "to work jointly with others or together especially in an intellectual endeavor". Collaboration is a much discussed, little used stratagem in education. Interpreted by definition as working together to achieve a goal, collaboration can expedite improvement in student performance. Real collaboration requires common goals, a sequenced process, clearly defined roles, shared responsibility, and a timeline with clear targets toward the goals. De facto collaboration brings combined strengths and efforts to the solution of school problems.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Create a climate of trust by open communication and acceptance of new ideas for improvement of student achievement.
- Discuss student data as a mean of unifying faculty and staff toward a common sense of urgency.
- Back up policies and processes that strengthen an environment for collaboration, including talking through the staff and student hand books, and monitoring to guarantee consistent enforcement of rules.
- Seek out and eliminate common educational practices that mire new efforts at collaborative work.
- Encourage people to think and to share solutions by providing time to learn and brainstorm.
- Visit high performing schools where collaboration is effective.
- Provide professional development about what collaboration is and is not.
- Build consensus groups by using surveys to find strengths and common interests. Keep groups adaptable until everyone has found his/her niche.
- Design a blueprint to guide team functioning that includes:
  - definition of goal/s,
  - data that prescribes the goal/s,
  - strategies sequenced toward meeting the goal/s,
  - implementation of steps,
  - measurement of progress,
  - and evaluation.
- Schedule regular meetings for discussion, and provide time for feedback loops from stakeholders such as parents or other academic disciplines/grade levels.
- Let the purpose direct the type of team. Academic or management expertise, time availability, vertical as well as horizontal alignment, and personality should be considered in forming collaborative teams.
- Ask Education Service Centers or district personnel to coach and guide collaborative teams as a form of professional development.

**Research/ Resources:**
- *Working Together in Schools : A Guide for Educators,* Gordon A. Donaldson and David R. Sanderson
- *A Rubric for Measuring Collaboration* http://edweb.sdsu.edu/triton/tidepoolunit/Rubrics/collrubric.html
- *Process for Developing Learning Communities* http://www.sedl.org/pubs/change34/6.html

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**Notes:**

- Designate a researcher to summarize information on collaboration.
- Assess your leadership style to determine your comfort level with collaboration.
- Begin thinking of teams that might work effectively to meet needs on your campus.
- List organizational structures in your school that are not working effectively.

# Effective Trait:
# Effective Communication

**Rationale:** Information, messages, and attitudes are constantly being communicated within a school setting. The campus administrator has the power to create communication, and communication channels that foster a climate of learning and promote student achievement. Effective communication is purposeful and mindful of the common objective. Successful organizations focus on developing and keeping active, strong, ongoing communication systems.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Acquire and embrace a mindset that information should be shared with as many people as possible, as quickly as possible, as often as possible without creating levels of hierarchy.
- Consider the audience (teachers, parents, students, community, school and office leadership teams, paraprofessionals, and/or non-teaching professionals).
- Tell people "Why" at every opportunity.
- Use the calendar to communicate information.
- Develop a common vocabulary with all staff, use a staff meeting to write school specific definitions, and use the terminology repeatedly in as many situations as possible.
    - Vision-The manner in which one sees or conceives of something…in this case, your school and/or your graduate.
    - Mission-The business with which a body of persons is charged.
    - Objective-Something worked toward or striven for; a goal.
    - Communication-The exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, as by speech, signals, writing, or behavior, and interpersonal rapport.
- Use the services of public relations experts from outside the field of education to train staff to:
    - Talk about the school's mission and its commitment --- in all conversations.
    - Conduct parent and student conferences.
    - View issues from the student and/or parent perspective.
    - Emphasize that informal as well as formal interactions communicate school values.
    - Be consistent, fair, and purpose-driven in actions as well as in words.
- Set aside time and select staff members to help to specify times, timelines, methods and venues for effective communication.
- Design communication systems that facilitate the strong, ongoing, timely flow of information.
- Create opportunities for parents, staff and students to offer suggestions and share information.
- Listen.
- Make it a practice to give regular feedback. Find or develop forms to make this quick and easy.

**Research/ Resources:**
- *Communication Is Paramount,* The Emerging Leader.com
  http://www.emergingleader.com/article2.shtml
- *Mistakes Educational Leaders Make*, Clete Bulach, Winston Pickett, and Diane Boothe
  http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_pric/is_199806/ai_524978456
- *Communication Skills*, Karen Irmsher
  https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/dspace/bitstream/1794/3324/1/digest102.pdf

**Notes:**

- Begin analyzing current communication by examining the philosophy behind current practice, the effectiveness of current policy and practices, strengths and weaknesses, where strengths can be used to fix weaknesses,  who the design team will be, the who and how of getting input, a forum for presenting new policy, and which district personnel to enlist.
- Design forms and a calendar to serve as guidelines as you implement and monitor.
- Invite staff input into the end of year evaluation so effective modifications can be made.

# Effective Trait:
# Establishing a High Performing Learning Culture and Climate

**Rationale:**  A school clearly focused on learning and academic achievement generates energy that propels students, faculty and staff into a cycle of ever-higher performance.  Higher performance is its own reward and urges greater attention to learning and achievement.  The school principal stands at the center of this wheel. The instructional leader who holds the focus on learning is the bedrock for a climate of high expectations that brings success within the reach of all stakeholders.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Realize that every campus has a mood or atmosphere, and determine to make yours positive with:
    - An open and inviting entrance,
    - Clean and safe hallways and bathrooms,
    - Evidence of school pride,
    - Adults engaging with each other and with students in positive ways,
    - An air and tone of scholarship and purposeful activity,
    - Indications of college preparation as the expectation for all students.
- Train office staff to greet each visitor in a friendly and informative way.
- Model and require courtesy from all staff.
- Teach students personal responsibility and politeness.
- Direct discipline management toward the value of learning and student opportunities afforded by education. Value class/instruction time.
- Believe in "No Excuses" for student failure to learn. Accept no excuse from staff, parents or students. Establish this as the school philosophy.
- Equip teachers to incorporate higher-level thinking and activities into lessons by having professional development in the form of departmental or grade level work with them as they plan.
- Use periodic vertical instructional as well as curricular meetings to guarantee that teachers know the rigor expected of their students.
- Train all teachers to write TAKS questions.
- Identify academically gifted minority students and groom them to be role models by giving them every cultural and academic support.
- Send **all** teachers to Advanced Placement training.
- Continually add to the Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and AVID course offerings.

**Research/Resources:**
- *Critical Issues in Leadership*  http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/le0cont.htm
- *The Advanced Placement Program* http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/ap/about.html
- *Professional Learning Communities at Work***,** Richard Dufour and Robert Eaker

**Notes:**
- Describe the first impression your school gives.
- List steps you can take to improve it.
- List the people who can help make the atmosphere one of learning and academics.
- List individuals who can help find the professional development to train teachers to master and teach the rigorous subject matter required.

# Effective Trait:
# Effective Resources and Staff

**Rationale:** An effective leader gauges potential for successful performance by frank assessment of the Five-T's within reach to accomplish his/her charge. A principal must make deliberate use of Talent, Teamwork, Tools, Transparency, and Tradesman-ship to hasten and extend student achievement.

**Ideas for Implementations:**

- Effective use of Talent involves:
  - Charting areas in which each teacher is highly qualified.
  - Using student data to re-assess teacher strengths and weaknesses for teaching assignments and/or mentoring.
  - Learning special skills or abilities of faculty and staff and matching these to school needs.
  - Delegating to strength s in assistants, staff, teachers, and parents.
  - Documenting system for removing teachers or staff hazardous to achievement.

- Effective Teamwork involves:
  - Exploring types of collaboration--teacher team, professional learning communities, action research teams for academics, "buddy" mentoring systems, parent-teacher teams.
  - Developing scheduled meetings, job descriptions, shared responsibility, and monitoring methods with assistants.
  - Implementing activities to involve parents and community members.
  - Professional training in consensus building and conflict resolution.

- Effective knowledge of Tools means:
  - Using the budget to prioritize academic performance and opportunities for student achievement.
  - Safeguarding time for quality instruction.
  - Locating and accessing quality, practical professional development indicated by data, and bringing it to your campus in practice.
  - Singling-out reliable district and ESC people who can aid your efforts.
  - Forming a burn-out prevention plan for teachers, staff, and yourself.

- The exercise of Transparency requires:
  - Frequent, methodical, open communication about vision, goals, progress, data, underperformance, activities, events, and successes.

- Tradesman-ship involves the craft or skill level employed in exercising the talent, teamwork, tools, and transparency to achieve performance standards for the campus.
  - Evaluate and have others assess your strengths and weaknesses.
  - Match strengths to the campus needs.
  - Have a plan to empower staff in your areas of weakness.

**Research/ Resources:**

- *Principal Development: Leading with Strengths*
  http://www.gallup.com/consulting/education/22114/Principal-Leadership-Development.aspx
- *Balanced Leader Profile* and other resources for principals, Mid –Continent Research for Education and Learning  http://www.mcrel.org/
- An e-bay style marketplace where smart educators can buy and sell original lessons and course materials  http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/

**Notes:**

- Begin assessing your management style and the constancy of your focus on performance objectives.
- Consider strengths and where to apply them.
- List weaknesses.
- Identify staff whose strengths can come along side to support in these areas.
- List ideas for enlisting these staff members in your efforts.

# Effective Trait:
# Creating a Community of Leaders

**Rationale:** The administrator's job is to assign, manage, and hold accountable as the school executes its purpose--student learning.  A distributive leader empowers others to make decisions by building co-responsibility and co-accountability for the process and outcomes. Distributive leaders do more than delegate; they provide the resources, supports, and conditions necessary for informed decision-making, implementation, and monitoring of results.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Know your purpose and remind yourself and staff often in writing and in words.
- Learn what "quality" looks like. Visit high performing schools to analyze their environment, student/teacher attitudes and interactions, behavior management, expectations of students, instructional standards, teaching practice, and monitoring systems.
- Make clear your vision, and convince the staff that it is real by your words and actions.
- Use your purpose and vision to help you anticipate needs, and begin to groom the person who can accomplish that function.
- Always be looking for ways to improve, and create an environment in which staff ideas are encouraged and responsibility is distributed.
- Provide time and a place for sharing what is working, what is not, what might be a better solution, and what people are learning. Use your readers and researchers to circulate information to keep all staff current on rules and successful practices.
- Watch for strengths, talents, and tendencies in faculty and staff that might be exploited to better serve the school purpose.
- Find leaders who inspire and energize others to stretch to bigger goals.  Controlling personalities do not make good leaders.
- Use your leaders to help you attack the problem of Creative Abandonment, defining what practices and policies can be abandoned to hasten your efforts to improve student achievement.
- Empower leadership wherever you find it.  Don't allow the organization or system limit the number of leaders on campus. Look for leadership in administrative staff, support staff, faculty, parents, students, and in the community.  Keep a notebook with you for reminders of capacity.
- Support well-chosen risk-taking. Failure is a natural part of stretching toward success, and the person who fails in a considered, researched effort should be protected and encouraged.
- Assign responsibility and trust the person responsible.  Resist micro managing.
- At least every two months review data and processes to see if you really are performing like you think/hope you are.
- Designate each leader as a mentor to a person who has leadership potential, so leadership capacity is continually being expanded on the campus.
- Monitoring is essential to delegating. Schedule monitoring progress reporting meetings, and use timelines to assist you in monitoring work being completed by your assistants and faculty.
- Organize a monitoring notebook or other system for tracing the progress of delegated work.

**Research/ Resources:**
- Jack Welch's Steps to Building a Winning Organization
  http://www.1000ventures.com/business_guide/mgmt_new-model_25lessons-welch.html#LMML
- Jack Welch on How to Harness Your People for Competitive Advantage
  http://www.1000ventures.com/business_guide/mgmt_new-model_25lessons-welch.html#HYP
- *Peter Drucker on Leadership*
  http://www.forbes.com/management/2004/11/19/cz_rk_1119drucker.html

**Notes:**
- Make a list of things to be done if your school is to fulfill its purpose.
- List ways and places you can communicate your vision for the school.
- Think of a friend, businessman, or professor who can be a sounding board and adviser for you as you try new leadership strategies. How will you approach him/her with your request?
- Begin a list of staff/ faculty who might have untapped leadership abilities.

# Effective Trait:
# Parental Involvement

**Rationale:**  The No Child Left Behind Act calls for strengthening the bond between parents and school. By law, parents must be involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of the campus improvement plan for schools in improvement.  This calls for fundamental changes in the mindset of principals.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Inform your faculty of the Title I requirements regarding parental involvement.
  - Discuss the difference between "involvement" and "support".
  - Examine the current parental involvement policy and practice and measure its effectiveness.
  - Build a practical definition of "Parental Involvement" for your campus by listing programs and activities that would increase student achievement and accelerate learning.
  - Develop the school's definition and three goals for the current school year.
  - Decide how to measure it.
  - Decide what programs could be abandoned for lack of effectiveness, or which could be foundations for new approaches.
  - Have faculty and staff volunteer for an activity or task for which they have a talent or inclination.
- Design a survey for parents, teachers, and students with questions that reveal the perceived obstacles to parental involvement.
- Engage parents in the development of a parental involvement plan that outlines the strategic steps tied to a timeline, and a method to monitor effectiveness at intervals.
- Develop and publish a calendar of meetings and events to help parents schedule their attendance.
- Extend the boundaries of the school by holding tutorial sessions or meetings in community centers, churches, or apartment complexes at times of the day convenient to parents.
- Enlist parents willing to be responsible for announcing information about school events, opportunities for involvement, and school successes, at churches and community meetings.
- Train teachers and parents who will lead parental involvement efforts to work collaboratively to maintain the focus of all activities on improving student performance.


**Research/ Resources:**
- *Principal's Planning Guide: Parental Involvement*  [www.esc13.net/statewide/sirc/resources.html](www.esc13.net/statewide/sirc/resources.html)
- *ESC XVI's Title I Statewide Initiative: Parental Involvement Resources,* NCLB parental involvement strategies with resources for research
  [http://www.esc16.net/dept/isserv/title1swi/parental/resources.html](http://www.esc16.net/dept/isserv/title1swi/parental/resources.html)
- *Parental Involvement Requirements for NCLB Programs*
  [http://www.esc16.net/dept/isserv/title1swi/materials.html](http://www.esc16.net/dept/isserv/title1swi/materials.html)
- *Communities in School,* Ideas for mentoring and engaging parents as partners [www.cisnet.org](www.cisnet.org)
- Federal publications for parents and the school/community partnership
  [http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/partnership.html](http://www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/partnership.html)

**Notes:**
- Begin assessing the impact current practice have had on student performance.
- Write some questions for the survey.
- Make a list of teachers and parents who might be trained to be leaders in the parent involvement effort.
- List community and church groups with which to make connections.

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# Effective Trait:
# Understands Accountability Requirements

**Rationale:** Using accountability data is essential to generate the increases in student achievement required by NCLB. The leadership role of the principal requires an understanding of accountability requirements as a basis for decisions about curriculum, staffing, course sequencing, and goal setting. The principal is the person who maintains the momentum toward meeting accountability standards.

**Ideas for Implementation:**

- Have a clear understanding of data used to determine AYP status by differentiating between indicators, components, measures, and standards
  - Indicators- One of 3 areas on which a district/campus is evaluated for AYP. Missing AYP *on the same indicator* two years in a row triggers Title I School Improvement Requirements. These areas are:
    - Reading/English Language Arts,
    - Mathematics, and
    - One Other Indicator (either Graduation Rate or Attendance Rate)
  - Components- Subsidiary parts of the Reading /ELA and Mathematics indicators. A campus must meet AYP *on both components* of an indicator to meet AYP on the indicator:
    - Performance
    - Participation
  - Measures- Data corresponding to a student group by indicator (and by component, for Reading/ELA and Mathematics.) A district /campus must meet the standard on every measure within a component to met AYP for the component.
- Ensure that faculty has a clear understanding of what the minimum number of all students and each student group tested in grades 3-8 and 10 is for participation and performance.
- Keep faculty and staff informed about changing policy and guidance.
- Train all staff members to become "experts" in data.
- Use ESC, district, or other experts to learn to interpret all data.
- Review campus benchmarking systems to guarantee that they test what is taught, that they are aligned to the TEKS, in TAKS format, and reflect the TAKS rigor. Also, ensure that the assessments guide instruction and evaluate the effectiveness of the programs.
- Subscribe to TEA's Accountability and Student Assessment Listserv to keep abreast of current information.
- Understand the ramifications when a student is tested on more than one component.
- Examine the three year trends in the performance/participation of all demographics.
- Study data to determine gains being made, areas to target.
- Determine current whether current rate of gains will enable the campus to meet AYP by the target date.
- Ensure that the campus know who is in the LEP count for AYP and how Special Education students' assessment results are included in the AYP indicator system.
- Know students new to campus minus students enrolling after PEIMS snapshot date from another district. Review students' last year TAKS.
- Provide professional development to train teachers to use data to determine instruction and interventions. Use a data analysis tool for data driven decisions.

**Research/ Resources:**

- *2006 Adequate Yearly Progress Manual-*
  http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2006/manual/index.html
- US Department of Education Website
  http://www.ed.gov/nclb/accountability/index.html?src=ov
- *Comprehensive Accountability Systems: A Framework for Evaluation*
  http://www.mcrel.org/PDF/AssessmentAccountabilityDataUse/5021IR_ComprehensiveAccountabilitySystems.pdf
- Website to subscribe to TEA's NCLB listserv- http://www.tea.state.tx.us/nclb/list.html
- Website to subscribe to TEA's Student Assessment listserv-
  http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/

**Notes:**

- Honestly assess your current knowledge of state and federal accountability standards.
- List steps necessary to gain the level of competence and understanding you desire.
- Determine who you will designate as experts.
- Make a plan that will allow you to stay current and communicate with your faculty.

# Effective Trait:
# Developing a School-wide Plan

**Rationale:**   A principal often steps onto a campus and lets it run on the tracks of familiar policy and traditional practices until campus performance reports require a change.  An effective leader envisions the goal, considers possible routes, maps the best course toward the destination, gathers resources, decides what must be left behind, and sets a timeline for milestones that mark progress toward the goal. The plan precedes the trip. Knowing the exact destination leaves no doubt about whether you have arrived. Just driving, even making good time, will get you somewhere. Effective school-wide planning charts a map to the exact destination--increased student learning reflected in improved campus scores.

**Ideas for Implementation:**
- Study the campus data, previous needs assessments and the Campus Improvement Plan to clarify the current vision, mission, culture, and goals as a basis for setting new targets for campus efforts.
- *Study the accountability and district requirements to chart the difference between current student performance and required student performance to know how much improvement is needed and which student populations need urgent interventions.*
- *Have all staff take a released TAKS test, so all parties recognize the standard.*
- Find and position a loyal campus leadership team. Survey and observe to know their strengths and possible areas of responsibility.  Review and rewrite job descriptions to align with current campus objectives and communicate performance expectations.
- Establish fairness and consistency as the standard, and enlist leadership team as models.
- Use mentor to find or develop effective monitoring systems for routine management tasks and instructional staff performance.
- Share data with all staff, so everyone recognizes the urgency, need for improvement and common goals. Have them offer edits/updates to the staff handbook.
- Determine which practices or personnel are obstacles in reaching campus goals.
- Survey teachers to see which systems are effective and which are not.
- Review the discipline management plan to ensure that it safeguards instruction, and is uniformly and consistently enforced.  Visit high performing schools to learn alternatives to accepted practice.
- Design a form for monitoring the uniformity and consistency of enforcement.
- Schedule professional development to meet needs revealed by data.  This might be school-wide, by departments/academic disciplines/grade levels, or in the form of individual coaching/mentoring.
- Set realistic performance goals by departments or grade levels, and have each group list practical strategies to reach those standards. Include roles parents could play or functions parents could perform.
- Survey parents to learn strengths and possible contributions in time, energy, or support efforts they might offer in the challenge of increasing student achievement.
- Invite parents and teachers to a meeting focused on redesigning the campus improvement plan to meet the current challenges of the school.
- Decide which practices can be abandoned to make time for the new priorities.
- Revise the Campus Improvement Plan to make the needed improvement a reachable goal.
- Schedule benchmarks and review of the plan's potential. Adapt or abandon non-productive parts.
- Solicit district support.
- Find a trusted adviser to use as a sounding board.

**Research/ Resources:**

- *Strategic Framework---The Foundation of an Effective Planning Process,* Sue King
  http://www.infomanagementcenter.com/enewsletter/200411/third.htm

- *The Principal's Leadership Counts!: Launch a Baldrige-Based Quality School,*
  Margaret A. Byrnes with Jeanne C. Baxter

- *What Every Principal Should Know About Strategic Leadership,* Jeffrey Glanz

**Notes:**

- Begin a list of what you know about your campus.

- List things you need to know, with blanks beside each item for **who** can provide the answer or **where** you can find it or **how** you can learn it.

  - Who will you enlist to examine school data with you to pinpoint immediate needs?

  - What needs to be done immediately?

  - Who will help?

  - Who can be empowered to help?

  - What needs to be included in a long-range plan that cannot have your full attention this year?