

Making an Impact in Eight: Building Shared Leadership

The following eight ideas provide opportunities for further reflection and action. We provide five reflections on what great leaders do and avoid doing to gain focus, as well as three considerations for how to make an impact in eight minutes, eight weeks, and eight months to guide your leadership planning and practice.

Great Leaders Do . . .	Great Leaders Avoid . . .
1. Form a guiding coalition and provide opportunities for this team to both lead and learn, building common understanding of the work of continuous school improvement	Creating a guiding coalition, or doing it on paper only to meet state and district requirements for school-improvement planning (They might have a group of people, but they are not truly leading.)
Current reality and next steps:	
2. Hold high expectations for the work of the guiding coalition; ensure all guiding coalition members are clear on the expectations regarding their role as a part of the guiding coalition and hold them accountable for these expectations; expect artifacts and work products that indicate they are effectively leading their teams; provide ongoing support and guidance	Allowing members of the guiding coalition to slide on expectations, which communicates an unspoken norm that it is OK to not adhere to the defined expectations, and providing limited support and guidance
Current reality and next steps:	
3. Ensure that team leaders understand the essential work of collaborative teams and build their capacity to lead the work by providing tools and strategies for them to be effective leaders	Holding team leaders accountable for doing the essential work of collaborative teams effectively without taking the time necessary to build their skills for leading and facilitating
Current reality and next steps:	

<p>4. Use a variety of data points for the guiding coalition to make informed, evidence-based decisions about next steps for the school</p>	<p>Expecting the guiding coalition to make decisions based on their opinions and possibly the opinions of their teammates instead of using data to make important decisions about next steps for the school</p>
<p>Current reality and next steps:</p>	
<p>5. Authentically seek out opportunities to share leadership in the school; invite teachers to lead professional learning opportunities or share teacher-created products others would benefit from using</p>	<p>Trying to lead everything on their own</p>
<p>Current reality and next steps:</p>	
<p>6. What will you do in <i>eight minutes</i> to impact shared leadership?</p>	
<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about and write down the names of individuals currently on your leadership team. Are they the right people? If so, why? If not, how can you support and guide those who are not? Can you get the right people on the team moving forward? If you don't have a leadership team, think about and write down how you can develop one and whom you would include on that team and why. • Think about and write down ways you can authentically share leadership with your staff. • Send an email to the leadership team and staff explaining the why behind any recent decisions. People need to hear the why in many different ways and more often than you think before they truly begin to understand and support an endeavor. 	
<p>My ideas:</p>	

7. What will you do in *eight weeks* to impact shared leadership?

For example:

- Review the why behind an important initiative each week for eight weeks in as many modes of communication as you can. When the staff say, "We know, we get it already," you know you have been successful. It is better to be redundant than unclear. When there is clarity around the why, the leader does not always have to be the one to communicate it. Staff can remind each other about the why when team or individual discussions and actions are not aligned to the school vision and values.
- Turn over staff meetings to your leadership team for eight weeks. Give them a focus aligned with your priorities and let them own it. Reflect on the process throughout and at the end.

My ideas:

8. What will you do in *eight months* to impact shared leadership?

For example:

- Gather information about each staff member. What areas of teaching and learning do they have strong interests in? What is each person really good at? Determine how you can honor their interests and expertise, and share leadership with them.
- Consider how you currently build the capacity of others to lead. Develop a plan to implement over the course of a school year to build the capacity of two or three staff members a month. Come up with specific strategies you will use to make this happen.

My ideas: