

The Leadership for Learning  
Curriculum for School Leaders  
Developed by  
The American Association of School Administrators

in collaboration with

Laureate Education  
Prominent Researchers  
Distinguished Educational Leaders

# Essential Characteristics of the LFL Curriculum

- Mapped on the ISLLC Standards
- Research-based Content
- Intensive Applied Learning Activities
- On-line or Web Enhanced
- Credit and Degrees Awarded by Universities
- Focused on Authentic Problem Solving
- Grounded on How People Learn (National Research Council)

# Uses of the LFL Curriculum

10 courses, 30 modules, 10 integrative applications, 50 intern activities

Universities may offer:

- the entire curriculum
- one or more courses
- one or more modules
- modules and/or intern activities

School districts, in collaboration or on their own, may use parts of the curriculum for leadership development

# The LFL Pedagogy

- Students engage in authentic problem-solving tasks called challenges (e.g., develop a strategy for collecting and analyzing data on student performance).
- Challenges involve learning specific content and related leadership skills (e.g., explain to parents why learner-centered teaching is effective for all students).
- Students work through a set of “learning cycles” using multiple learning resources and interacting with other students and the instructor as they respond to the challenges posed.



Challenge Learning Cycles: An Instantiation of learner-centered design

# The Challenge

A challenge is a task that a principal would need to successfully undertake in order to foster high achievement among all students. Challenges are contextualized by an “anchor case” requiring complex problem solving

*Related research: case-based reasoning (Schank), situated cognition (Brown, et al., Dewey); transfer to realistic world context (CTGV)*

# Share Initial Thoughts

Students post and discuss their initial thoughts about the challenge. This serves to 1) surface students' predispositions, 2) alert others to the different ways one might understand and address the problems involved, 3) helps the instructor to identify teaching opportunities and challenges.

*Related research: generative learning (Wittrock), eliciting prior knowledge (Gagné), avoiding inert knowledge (Whitehead); social constructivism (Cole, Resnick); advanced organizers (Ausubel); setting personal goals for understanding (Alexander).*

# Examine Varied Perspectives and Resources

Students examine and compare a range of perspectives and learning resources related to the problems to be solved.

*Related research: multiple representations-cognitive flexibility (Spiro); constructivism (Bruner); contrasting cases (Bransford & Schwartz); expertise, knowledge in depth (Alexander)*

# Types of Learning Resources

- Discussion of research by leading scholars (on DVD)
- Commentary on effective practice by distinguished educators (QuickTime on DVD)
- Texts, reports and articles (print and on-line)
- Examples of effective practice (web and DVD)
- Selected web sites
- Structured opportunities to interact with other students and the instructor on-line

# Some of the Expert Educators Involved in the LFL Program

- Nicky Ramos-Beban, Los Angeles
- Robert Mason, Nashville
- Karen Miles, ERS
- Rosa Molina, San Jose
- Thomas Payzant, Boston
- Mary Russo, Boston
- Jerry Weast, Montgomery Co.
- William Schmoker,
- Steve Leonard,
- Robert Smith, Arlington Co., VA

# Test Your Understanding

Students take a brief examination on the content of the learning resources they were provided in order to hold them accountable and to increase the chance that student discussions to follow are informed. The instructor evaluates and provides rubrics that allow students to self-evaluate.

*Related research: Embedded assessment (Wiggins); scaffolding (Vygotsky);*

# Response to the Challenge: Discussion and Posting of Later Thoughts

The response to the challenge involves two steps, both of which include interaction among students and between students and the instructor:

1. An open-ended discussion of a critical issue related to the challenge.
2. A draft and, following discussion, a redraft of the "final" response to the challenge.

*Related Research: authentic audiences and emerging understandings, (Vygotsky, Lave); social constructivism (Brown)*

# Integrative Application

Each course requires students to use what they have learned from the course modules to solve an authentic problem in a school setting. For example, students must assess the adequacy of services being provided to English Language Learners and students with disabilities and recommend strategies for improvement based on research and noting the potential barriers to implementation.

# Reflection

To wrap up each course, students are asked to reflect, in writing, on what and how they have learned focusing on the differences between their initial thoughts (which they have posted) and their later responses to the challenges.

*Related Research: reflective practice (Schön);  
the development of metacognitive skills  
(Bransford, et al.)*

# Some of the Researchers Involved in the LFL Program

- Patricia Alexander
  - Kenji Hakuta
- David Berliner
  - Ann Lieberman
- Douglas Fuchs
  - Joseph Murphy
- Linda Darling-Hammond
  - Sam Stringfield
- Joyce Epstein
  - Michael Fullan
- Eugene Garcia