Aligning your School Mission

Educator actively shares responsibility for shaping and supporting the mission to support learner success.

Key Method

Educator creates an action plan to include sample mission statements, agendas, interviews and suggested revisions.

Method Components

Advancing Teacher Quality and Student Success

In pursuit of their commitment to advancing teacher quality and student success, educators across the country are raising our voices together for our students, for our schools and for ourselves as educators. Education advocacy and social justice advocacy go hand in hand. T

Educators enter the profession because they love teaching and because they have an unwavering belief in their students. Yet, the sad truth is that many teachers aren't earning enough to make ends meet and finding it harder and harder to support their families. To make matters worse, the pay gap between educators and other professionals is vast and growing, forcing many educators out of the profession and creating a teacher shortage crisis that threatens our students and communities.

Students benefit from educators who know them by name, know their community and have a say in the policies that govern their schools.

The current landscape of education requires that teacher leaders, across a wide spectrum of experience, participate in the changes and transformations that are necessary. Teacher leadership is no longer optional. Just as excellent teachers approach their practice from an array of perspectives and with many talents, teacher leadership requires many individuals' strengths and interests, coming together for the benefit of students and the profession.

InTASC Standard 10: Leadership and Collaboration

The InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards shares that treating teaching as a solo act is counter to what we know about effective teaching today. Just as collaboration among learners improves student learning, we know that collaboration among teachers improves practice. The core teaching standards require teachers to

- Open their practice to observation and feedback (transparency);
- Participate in ongoing, embedded professional learning where teachers engage in collective inquiry to improve practice;
- Participate actively as a team member in decision-making processes that include building a shared vision and supportive culture, identifying common goals, and monitoring progress toward those goals;
- Work with and share responsibility with colleagues, administrators, and school leaders as they work together to improve student learning and teacher working conditions;

- Engage in efforts to build a shared vision and supportive culture within a school or learning environment;
- Establish mutual expectations and ongoing communication with families; and
- Involve the community in meeting common goals (InTASC Model Core Teaching Standards, page 5).

School Mission Statements

A mission statement is a brief and enduring statement of the core values and principles that guide your school or district's goals.

A vision statement is specific, doable, and has a timeframe for completion. It is based on your mission,

Mission and/or vision statements for schools/districts should be created with a group of stakeholders that represents the entire school/district community. For example:

- Superintendent
- Principals
- Teachers
- Parents
- Students
- Business Owners
- Community Members
- Board Members

Your mission statement need to answer the following questions

- Who are we?
- What do we do?
- Why do we do it
- For whom do we do it?

A mission should:

- Be clear and concise
- Be distinctive and memorable
- State your purpose
- Name the primary function of your school/district
- Include all stakeholders voice
- Reflect the programs priorities and values

An effective mission statement is a reminder of your core values and why you do what you doand should be a compass point used frequently for setting priorities and accomplishing your work.

Supporting Research

Osher, D., Moroney, D., & Williamson, S. L. (2018). Creating safe, equitable, engaging schools: A comprehensive, evidence-based approach to supporting students. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press. **https://www.air.org/resource/creating-safe-equitable-engaging-schools-comprehensive-evidence-based-approach-supporting**

Garmston, R. J., & Wellman, B. M. (2016). The adaptive school: A sourcebook for developing collaborative groups. Rowman & Littlefield. **https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=WjDfDAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&ots=brFDjLPpFj&sig=2u6uVe1zJ-C_G7Xd_Hjgak6sBmE#v=onepage&q&f=false**

Segura Pertle, S., PhD, & Doggett, D., MEd. (2013). Leadership Actions for Transforming Schools. SEDL Insights,1(1). Retrieved from http://www.sedl.org/insights/1-1/leadership_actions.pdf
http://www.sedl.org/insights/1-1/leadership_actions.pdf

Ascd. (n.d.). Chapter 2. Developing a Vision and a Mission. Retrieved from
http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/107042/chapters/developing-a-vision-and-a-mission.aspx

Sinek, S. (n.d.). How great leaders inspire action. Retrieved from
https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action/discussion?referrer=playlist-talks_to_watch_when_your_company_s_reorganizing

Resources

InTasc Standards
https://www.ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2017-12/2013_INTASC_Learning_Progressions_for_Teachers.pdf

The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook for Developing Collaborative Groups, Third Edition, 2016
https://www.thinkingcollaborative.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Study-Guide-FINAL-JAN-10-2017.pdf

Seven Norms of Collaboration
https://sites.google.com/site/collaborationskills/Web2collaboration/working-collaboration/garmston-wellman-seven-norms

Why we are Red For Ed
http://neatoday.org/2018/10/12/why-we-are-red-for-ed/

NEA Leadership Competencies

All Competencies
http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/24777_Leadership%20Dev%20Comp%20Guide%202-FINAL-Jan31-2019.pdf

Leading
http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/24777_Leadership%20Dev%20Comp%20Guide%202%20-LEADING%20PROF-FINAL_1-15-19.pdf

Action Plan Template-
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oIxFQb3mLtMEK7Rp9w_Erk8QAvpoQRnpznEyEi7MBjo/edit

Submission Guidelines & Evaluation Criteria

To earn the micro-credential, you must receive a passing score in Parts 1 and 3, and receive a proficient for all components in Part 2.

Part 1. Overview Questions

300 - 500 words

Please answer each of the following questions. You may choose to complete the micro-credential by thinking about your or your school or entire school district.
1. Describe the demographics of your school or district community. Be sure to include cultural, linguistic, race and socio- economic data in your description.
2. Do the decisions being made at your school or district align with your current mission statement? Why or why not?
3. Does your current mission statement align with the values of all stakeholders? Why or why not?

■ **Passing:** Educator answers each question using supporting evidence that clearly demonstrates analytical and reflective thinking. Response advocates for the learners and learning and shows an understanding of the community that is being served by the school or district. Response includes statistics and data that help to illustrate the school or district community.

Part 2. Work Examples / Artifacts

To earn this micro-credential please submit the following **five artifacts** as evidence of your learning. You may choose to complete the micro-credential by thinking about your school or your entire school district.

Artifact 1: Comparable Mission Statements

(300-600 word limit not including the mission statements)

In one document:

■ Collect 3 mission statements from schools or school districts that are similar to yours.
■ For each mission statement answer the following:
  - Is it clear and concise
  - Is it distinctive and memorable
  - Does it state the purpose
  - Does it name the primary function of the school/district
  - Does it reflect all stakeholders voice
  - Does it reflect the programs priorities and values
■ Analyze these 3 mission statements wholistically by answering the following questions:
  - What is similar across all statements?
  - Was there any important element missing in most or all of these statements?

Artifact 2: Good Mission Statements

(300-600 word limit not including the mission statements)

In one document:

■ Collect 3 mission statements from schools or school districts that resonate with you
■ For each mission statement answer the following:
  - Is it clear and concise?
  - Is it distinctive and memorable?
  - Does it state the purpose?
  - Does it name the primary function of the school/district?
  - Does it reflect all stakeholders voice?
  - Does it reflect the programs priorities and values?
■ Analyze these 3 mission statements wholistically by answering the following questions:
  - What was it that stood out to you in these mission statements?
  - Why do you think they all resonated with you?

Artifact 3: Mission Statement Analysis

(300-600 word limit not including the mission statement)

In one document:

- Add your mission statement to the top of the page
- Answer the following questions:
  - Is it clear and concise?
  - Is it distinctive and memorable?
  - Does it state the purpose?
  - Does it name the primary function of the school/district?
  - Does it reflect all stakeholders voice?
  - Does it reflect the programs priorities and values?
- How was it developed?
- Where can you find it?
- How is it used?

Artifact 4 Stakeholder Feedback

- Use these same questions to Interview at least one person from at least 5 different stakeholder groups.
  - Is our school/district mission statement clear and concise?
  - Is our school/district mission statement distinctive and memorable?
  - Does our school/district mission statement state the purpose?
  - Does our school/district mission statement name the primary function of the school/district?
  - Does our school/district mission statement reflect all stakeholders voice?
  - Does our school/district mission statement reflect the programs priorities and values?
- Upload your questions and label the responses with the stakeholders role, in one document.

Artifact 5: Action Plan for Alignment

Complete the template found in the resource section to make 3 -5 recommendations for aligning your mission statement.

	Proficient	Basic	Developing
Artifact 1: Comparable Mission Statements	Includes: 3 mission statements from 3 different similar schools or districts All questions were answered thoughtfully and thoroughly	Includes: Less than 3 mission statements and/or less than 3 different similar schools or districts All questions were answered but not thoughtfully and/or thoroughly	Includes: 1 or less mission statements Not All questions were answered
Artifact 2: Good Mission Statements	Includes: 3 mission statements from 3 different similar schools or districts	Includes: Less than 3 mission statements and/or less than 3 different similar schools or districts	Includes: 1 or less mission statements

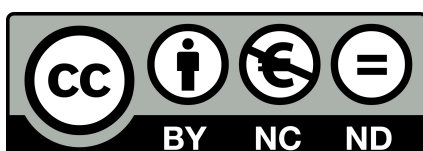|	All questions were answered thoughtfully and thoroughly	All questions were answered but not thoughtfully and/or thoroughly	Not All questions were answered
Artifact 3: Mission Statement Analysis	All questions were answered thoughtfully and thoroughly with details and examples from real experiences.	All questions were answered but important details were left out.	Not all questions were answered
Artifact 4: Stakeholder feedback	At least one person from at least 5 different stakeholder groups answered all questions Responses are labeled with the stakeholder role	Not all stakeholders were represented and/or they did not answer all of the questions	Only 1 or 2 people responded to some of the questions
Artifact 5: Action Plan for Alignment	Complete Action plan includes: 3-5 suggestions And for each suggestion all of the following: -Timeline -Available Resources -Needed Resources -Potential Barriers -Communications plan	Action plan includes less than 3 suggestions and/or some but not all of the following: -Timeline -Available Resources -Needed Resources -Potential Barriers -Communications plan	Action plan is missing most of the following: -Suggestions -Timeline -Available Resources -Needed Resources -Potential Barriers -Communications plan

Reflection

175 - 250 words

While reflecting on the process, address the following questions.

1. How do your suggestions advocate for student learning?
2. What issues were identified during this process?
3. What are your next steps?

- **Passing:** Reflection provides evidence that this activity has had a positive impact on both educator practice and student success. Specific examples are cited directly from personal or work related experiences to support claims.