Diagnosing Team Effectiveness (School-wide Leadership Team or Teacher Team) Developed by Dr. Shelby Cosner, Professor, University of Illinois at Chicago V4 August 2022

Teams are a critical attribute of the school organization and its improvement. A team's effectiveness relates to a team's performance or the team's productive output (Hackman & Oldham 1980); enhanced with Aguilar (2016), Boudett & City (2015), Conzemius & Morganti-Fisher (2012); McBeth (2008); Scholtes (2003).

How might you diagnose/assess the extent to which and nature of instructional inquiry in your school: Based on your memory, you might reflect back on prior team meetings to consider what occurred in these meetings, what documents/materials/tools were utilized, what you observed or heard during these events. A stronger approach is to collect data relevant to each of the indicators. This would include observation of a team and capturing notes during this observation that relate to some of the effectiveness indicators (those indicators that are best examined through direct observation). You might also collect and review meeting agendas and other materials/tools utilized during team meetings because these data sources are relevant to some of the effectiveness indicators. You might also consider asking members of the school leadership team to provide information or understandings about various indicators (e.g., since the indicator on team's purpose includes look for criteria that consider whether individuals on the team all have the same "shared understanding" of the team's purpose; question to individual team members--what do you believe is the purpose of our school's leadership team). There are other data sources that relate to a particular effectiveness indicator. For example, collecting the actual rosters of the team's members might useful for one of the effectiveness indicators (team has right members on the team).

Diagnosing Effectiveness of Your School's Leadership Team: Indicators of an Effective Team	More effective teams Criteria (look fors) that Relate to each Indicator	What data (data sources/types of data) could you collect to learn about these indicators and look for criteria?
# Organization:		
Team has the Right Members on the Team	• Members of the team represent different vantage points from the school (e.g. content areas or grade levels; various roles; by gender and racial groups), have expertise relevant to the work of the team, have ability to influence others in the school (some of whom are recognized as influencers in your school)	
Team Meets with Sufficient Amounts of Time and with Sufficient Frequency	• Meetings are generally of 45 minutes to 2 hours in length and they occur with regular frequency (e.g., every 2-4 weeks); this team may have larger blocks of time intermittently and/or during the summer	
Team has Strong Meeting Facilitation and Norms that Support Team Productivity/Effectiveness	• Meetings have a stable designated facilitator who has expertise in team norm and agenda setting, time management, conflict resolution, facilitating group brainstorming, collectively weighing options, making collective decisions, seeking involvement and engagement of all team	

(Productive Output that Achieves Team's Goals)	members, assessing and enforcing/reinforcing team norms, leading cycles of inquiry; planning for and **leading active team learning routines that support team learning**; See Aguilar (2016), p. 299 for facilitator core competency assessment tool.	
Team Consistently Uses Productivity Tools such as Meeting Agendas/Meeting Notes and Materials that/Use of Shared Drive for Common Materials Storage; Uses Appropriate Tools to Support Teamwork During Meetings	• Meetings have an agenda that is well aligned to the team's purpose and goals; meetings are documented to ensure that work streams to be taken up following the meeting are understood; all team materials are carefully catalogued and stored in a shared drive for access by all members of the team; see Boudett & City (2015) p. 167 or Aguilar (2016) p. 314 for meeting agenda planning tool; Aguilar (2016) p. 316 for observing and providing feedback to facilitator regarding meeting enactment; see p. 319 for various collaborative tools for use during meetings; see McBeth (2008) p. 191 for collaboratively weighing alternative solution process; see Scholtes for various tools to use to support collaborative work in teams	
Purpose and Function: Team has Established a Purpose that Focuses on Improving Teaching and Student Learning, Where Equity-Oriented Improvement is an Important Consideration; This Purpose is Shared/Understood by Team Members	• The team has established a team purpose that is focused on improving teaching and student learning (cycles of inquiry are a key tool used to achieve this purpose) and where equity-oriented improvement is an important consideration (specifically considers ELL students, DL/SPED students, students of color, etc); All members of the team understand and share in this purpose	
Team's Improvement Processes	• The team has and utilizes appropriate data-based processes (cycle of inquiry) that include equity-oriented considerations to inform and shape its instructional/student learning improvement work	
Team Meeting Time is Used in Ways that Are Aligned to its Purpose	• Team meeting time is used (not just planned) in ways that are aligned to the team's purpose and goals.	

Team is a Learning Team	• The learning needs of the members of the team (that must be addressed if the team is to be able to engage and/or lead envisioned work) are identified and being addressed by the facilitator during team meetings	
Team Sets, Monitors, and Makes Progress with SMARTIE Goals	• The team has established goals (year-end and various during-the-year milestones/benchmarks/checkpoints related to their work processes and desired impact/outcomes from these processes) that are SMARTIE; the team has established processes and timelines for assessing goal progress; the team assesses progress and makes adjustments as needed; goal progress is evidenced; see Conzemius & Morganti-Fisher (2012); for illustrations and tools	
Engagement and Communication Beyond Team:	• The team regularly communicates its work and progress to the school community and helps the school community make sense of key instructional and student learning work	

Here is a listing of literature that can help you and your school learn more about effective teams and about school-wide leadership teams:

The Aspen Institute has various resources related to instructional leadership teams as: http://www.aspendrl.org/portal/browse/CategoryList?categoryId=288

Aguilar, E. (2016). *The art of coaching teams: Building resilient communities that transform schools*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Boudett, K., & City, E. (2015). *Meeting wise: Making the most of collaborative time for educators.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Conzemius, A. & Morganti-Fisher, T. (2012). *More than a SMART goal: Staying focused on student learning.* Bloomington IN: Solution Tree Press.

Curtis, R., & City, E. (2010). *Strategy in action: How school systems can support powerful learning and teaching.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Hackman, J.R., Oldham, G.R. (1980). *Work redesign*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

McBeth, M. (2008). *The distributed leadership toolbox: Essential practices for successful schools*. Thousand Oaks. Corwin Press.

Scholtes, P. (2003) *The team handbook: How to use teams to improve quality. (3rd ed).* Madison, WI; Joiner Associates.

Spaulding, D., & Smith, G. (2016). *Instructional coaches and the instructional leadership team.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.