



# Supporting Districtwide Continuous Improvement by Building Instructional Capacity



## **OLi<sup>4</sup> THEORY OF ACTION:**

When principals use a set of inclusive practices, collaborative learning teams, and ongoing instructional discussions with teachers, their teacher teams will adopt instructional strategies that will then lead to improved inclusiveness and student engagement as well as improved student achievement.

## **TWO AREAS OF PRINCIPALS' WORK:**

1. Work to Lead Leadership Teams
2. Work to Coach Instruction

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## **LEARN MORE AND ENROLL**

Visit our website or contact us directly to learn more about OLi<sup>4</sup> and funding opportunities.

[oli-4.org](http://oli-4.org)

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## **Promoting Instructional Leadership for Equity and Social Justice**

School districts across the country struggle to find professional development programs for principals and other school leaders that will support system-wide and sustainable improvements in school achievement and equity. The Ohio Leadership for Inclusion, Implementation, & Instructional Improvement (OLi<sup>4</sup>) program provides this support. The program, in fact, was built with this challenge in mind: improving learning and results for all students, including those from marginalized groups (e.g., students with disabilities and learning difficulties) through the development of instructional leadership capacity. The potential outcome: high-quality instruction and equitable outcomes, for every single child.

With a foundation in research, OLi<sup>4</sup> draws its strength from a theory of action that treats improved performance and increased equity as inseparable. With a focus on improvement, OLi<sup>4</sup> also continuously evaluates and revises the program based on new research and evidence-based feedback from participating districts and other stakeholders.

**OLi<sup>4</sup> cultivates a reflective—rather than a compliance-oriented—approach to leadership based on trust, collaboration, and inquiry.**

## **Grounded in Research and Best Practices**

Grounded in a theory of action, OLi<sup>4</sup> focuses on six areas of practice operationalized through two areas of work. The OLi<sup>4</sup> curriculum draws from research on leadership for district and school improvement and social justice to create this first-of-its-kind program.

- Viviane Robinson's *Student-centered Leadership*
- Brian McNulty and Laura Besser's *Leaders Make It Happen*
- Michael Fullan's *Educational Leadership*
- Elle Allison's *Leadership Performance Coaching*
- NCEO's *Moving Your Numbers* initiative
- Doug Reeves' *Accountability in Action*
- And many more

The resulting program includes four components: centralized professional learning, regional professional learning, coaching, and in-school activities accompanied by online reflection.

“ This work has really changed our perspective about meeting the needs of children exactly where they are, not needing to put a label on them.”

—Principal (participating district)

“ Most of the time, principals operate in isolation; to have this opportunity to not only learn about BLTs and instructional strategies, but also to learn from other principals and colleagues, was really beneficial to me.”

—Principal (participating district)

## Six Inclusive Leadership Practices



### VISIONING

Principal sets specific achievement targets for all classrooms and students and ensures use of evidence-based instructional strategies to reach them.



### USING DATA WELL

Principal uses data to make effective decisions and helps teachers use data to make more effective decisions.

### USING RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE TO GUIDE INSTRUCTION

Principal guides teachers in their selection of evidence-based instructional practices for diverse learners.



### SHARING LEADERSHIP

Principal shares leadership with teachers based on their expertise and engages teachers in collaborative problem-solving and learning.

### REFLECTING ON PRACTICE

Principal reflects on his or her own practice and models and encourages self-reflection, active learning, and application of that learning.



### COACHING TEACHING

Principal monitors teaching for effectiveness and calls into question teaching practices that appear to be ineffective.

## A Program Built by Educational Leaders for Educational Leaders

A two-year professional learning program for school principals, assistant principals, and teacher-leaders, OLi<sup>4</sup> offers:

- **Centralized Professional Learning:** Six sessions (three per year) with nationally recognized experts in district and school improvement, systems change, curriculum and instruction, and data-based decision making.
- **Regional Professional Learning:** 12 sessions (six per year), 2.5 hours each providing principals the opportunity to delve deeper into leadership practices, challenges with implementation, and the impact of practices on improvement efforts in their schools and districts.
- **Principal Coaching Sessions:** Monthly 60–90-minute sessions enabling the principal and coach to discuss progress in the two areas of work as well as emerging competence with inclusive instructional leadership practices.
- **In-district Progress Checks:** Quarterly opportunities for the superintendent, coaches, participating principals, and other district leadership to review the work and overall progress.
- **Online Readings and In-school Activities:** Ongoing guided readings, practical assignments in schools, and reflection prompts via the program website.

## Participant Resources

- Interactive Rubrics
- Online Principal/Coach Notebook
- Cross-cohort Blog
- Small-group Discussions
- One-on-One Discussions
- District Discussion Guide (Moving Your Numbers)
- And many more

In its fifth project year and sixth cohort, the OLi<sup>4</sup> program continues to gain momentum and interest within Ohio and across the country. With support from the Ohio Department of Education, OLi<sup>4</sup> is built on feedback received from more than 500 principals from over 90 school districts.

With a rigorous evaluation process embedded in the program, OLi<sup>4</sup> continues to gather data to inform program implementation and gauge program effectiveness and impact. OLi<sup>4</sup> principals report greater confidence and competence for working collaboratively with teachers on instruction.

## Collaborative Partners

Bringing a diversity of perspectives to bear while maintaining an unwavering commitment to developing principal capacity, OLi<sup>4</sup> draws on a strong network of partners.

Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators (OAESA)  
Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators (OASSA)  
Ohio Council of Professors of Educational Administration (OCPEA)  
Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children  
Ohio Department of Education (ODE)  
Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT)  
Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC)  
Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA)



 Systems Development & Improvement Center