

History of the *Schultz Center Leadership Model* and the [Lead 360° Assessment](#)

Standards-based reforms in public education have shaken the very foundation of schooling to its core. Over the past twenty years, most states have adopted some form of content standards as identifying the *things students will know and be able to do* as the basis for curriculum content and performance standards. State accountability systems have focused on schools as the fundamental unit of change, and for that reason, district, state and federal mandates typically hold schools and school systems responsible for their separate and combined contributions toward student learning. Because classrooms and schools are the primary settings in which teaching and learning actually happen, the logic of adopting them as the organizational units held “accountable” for student achievement also makes sense. Most educators, in theory at least, embrace this notion of accountability for achievement, but operate in an environment in which there is considerable variability in the quality of teaching practice and the skill of educational leaders to manage people and schools in such a way that there is a clear connection.

An important role assigned to school administrators is the regular evaluation of teachers and the quality of teaching going on in schools. Recently, Waters and Marzano ¹(2006) reported conclusively that we can attribute a significant amount of influence of administrative leadership at the school and district levels to an explanation of what accounts for variations in school performance. Our dedication to considering evidence-based research about “what works” in schools has confirmed that we are justified in placing confidence in teacher expertise (quality), as a major source of variation in student achievement (Ron Ferguson, Harvard)². In a peer-reviewed paper proposing a new approach to designing leadership programs for the 21st Century, the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA) stated that “the best school leaders have cultivated their craft through many years of experience, dependent upon trial and error, self-reflection, and professional development”. However, the paper goes on to say that this method cannot fulfill the current demand for the quantity and quality of school leaders needed to “turn around poor and failing schools and school districts”.³

In this context, the Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership was asked to develop a model for leadership development and an assessment that could be used in two

¹Waters, J. T., & Marzano, R. J. (2006). *School district leadership that works: The effect of superintendent leadership on student achievement*. Denver, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

² Ferguson, R.F., Hackman, S., Hanna, R. and Ballantine, A. (2008). *Getting it done: raising achievement and closing gaps in whole systems*. Harvard University Achievement Gap Initiative. Downloaded at http://www.agi.harvard.edu/events/2008Conference/GETTING_IT_DONE_02_24_09.pdf

³ Smith, B., Harchar, R., and Campbell, K. (2008). *Reality Check: Designing a New Leadership Program for the 21st Century*. National Council of Professors of Educational Administration.

ways – to assess the potential of existing employees for fulfilling necessary school leadership roles in school districts and to use as a curriculum-based assessment in conjunction with the teaching of a competency-based leadership program. The immediate purpose was to develop a competency-based curriculum and assessment program for use in leadership development by a large urban school district in northeast Florida. The skills, knowledge, and practices required of exceptional school leaders would be the foundation of a series of materials and resources required of school administrators in Florida, and nationally, to meet the requirements of *No Child Left Behind* legislation, and to turn around failing schools.

The critical role played by principals and other school leaders in the success of organizations designed to deliver instruction is not new. The importance of that role, however, has taken on a renewed sense of urgency. In addition to shortages of leaders brought about by natural waves of individuals reaching retirement age, the implementation of the *No Child Left Behind Act* ushered in a period of increased concern about the state of schooling itself. The need to reach the dual goals of *excellence* and *equity* as outcomes of public education focused intensely on the role of school leaders in making this happen. Expectations for the performance of school leaders are becoming much better defined, and include as a goal, the capacity for bringing about complex forms of change in learning environments that encompass individual classrooms and schools as a whole. An understanding of what motivates adults is needed, as well as an understanding of the dynamics of groups as they work collectively to create and manage systems in this way. These characteristics and skills are necessary for leaders to assume personal accountability for schools and districts to raise levels of student achievement, to minimize and eliminate gaps in achievement, and to ensure that all students are taught by *highly qualified* teachers. We ask school leaders at all levels to step into this arena of high pressure, and to understand and maximize the right combinations of resources, both human and material, that will result in improved conditions for learning of all students. At the same time, leaders are expected to recruit personnel and develop the skills of those adults who serve in varied capacities with students, and to use interpersonal communication skills and management practices that will optimize group dynamics in these challenging settings.

In short, there is a severe shortage of highly qualified school leaders, and the Schultz Center, whose mission it is to provide high quality professional development services to districts in the northeast region of Florida, determined there was an urgent expressed need for providing leadership development programs to prepare school leaders. When work began to design a comprehensive leadership development program equal to the task of preparing leaders in the post-NCLB era of school reform, a commitment was made to include characteristics that would incorporate requirements outlined in the Florida Leadership Principal Standards. At the same time, our review of leadership skills went beyond education to encompass skills and behaviors identified in successful leaders from business and industry as well. We recognized that the current challenges put to school leaders will require that they have the ability to adapt to dramatic culture shifts and changes that occur as a result of systemic reform in all kinds of organizations, not only those that will meet standards of leadership excellence in academia.

The inclusion of a variety of frameworks describing skills, behaviors, and attitudes encompassed in leadership standards were purposefully reviewed to accomplish two purposes: the *identification of frequently repeating sets of skills and competencies* across frameworks and the opportunity to allow for *benchmarking of local and state leadership requirements* with those of other state and national organizations engaged in similar efforts. The work was aimed at providing a standards-based model for curriculum and assessment articulated in the form of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (or dispositions) necessary for fulfilling a variety of roles for the *aspiring* through the *executive* levels of leadership in school districts. In order to develop a comprehensive theoretical model for what constitutes *high quality* leadership in successful and improving schools, we started by reviewing our past.

Current Literature Review on Leadership

Historically, the field of school administration evolved to what we have today out of traditions from philosophy and religion dating back to the early 1800s. In the first half of the nineteenth century, interest in explaining what it meant to be a school “leader” was based on describing features that described *acting leaders* themselves. These efforts resulted in such approaches as the *great man theory* and later the *trait theories of leadership*.⁴ But as the demand on public schools grew to serve and accommodate larger and more comprehensive groups of students, greater demands were placed on the skills of leaders to manage larger and more diverse groups of adults as well. As a result, issues arose from situations where organizational dynamics came into play, and it became clear that separate skill sets were necessary for successfully managing schools as organizations. Effectively managing larger groups of students and teachers required practices and procedures driven for reasons of practical significance. By the 1900s, concepts from business and industry were adopted as the prevailing wisdom used to inform the management theory describing job roles of school administrators. Later, theories from the field of behavioral sciences were added to the mix, and contributed to a more comprehensive vision of what became the prevailing theory defining the field of school leadership.⁵

The form of governance adopted by public education in the United States also played a big part in forming the traditional view that we held of school administration. Since the earliest days of our history as a nation, the allocation of responsibility and authority for administering public schools has fallen to locally controlled schools governed by elected boards of education. Historically, the teaching staff was made up of mostly female workers who remained relatively isolated from one other, and worked under the supervision of “mostly male administrators whose expertise were thought to lie mainly in their mastery of administrative rather than pedagogical skills”.⁶ As the scale of public schooling grew, structures governing the endeavor grew with it in size and complexity. This early development period of public schooling in the United States was characterized by a reliance on local bureaucracies to manage schools, and over

⁴ Murphy, J. (2003). *Reculturing educational leadership: the ISLLC standards ten years out*. Vanderbilt University. Paper prepared for the National Policy Board for Educational Administration.

⁵ Clinton, J.R. (1992). *Leadership Series: A short history of leadership theory*. Altadena, CA: Barnabas Publishers. 19-21.

⁶ Tyack, D. and E. Hansot. (1982). *Managers of Virtue: Public School Leadership in America, 1820-1980*. New York: Basic Books.

time, resulted in a form of institutional structure later referred to as “loose-coupling” in the 1960s and early 1970s by education theorists and sociologists.⁷ The term “loose-coupling” is generally applied in systems where two or more separate organizations have a formal relationship and exchange functions which are expected, but make few assumptions about the inner workings of either. In *Building a New Structure for School Leadership*, Richard Elmore, a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, explained that this tradition of school and district operation brought about a situation in which little was known about “the *technical core of education*”. He went on to describe the absence of “detailed decisions about what should be taught, what students should be expected to learn at any given time, how they should be grouped within classrooms for purposes of instruction, what they should be required to do to demonstrate their knowledge, and, perhaps most importantly, how the learning should be evaluated” at a corporate or district level. The specific knowledge about how that happened, or the extent to which it happened, resided within individual classrooms, and not in the organizations that surrounded them.⁸ At the same time, compulsory attendance laws placed even greater demands on the organizational structures of public schools in the twentieth century by expecting that they accommodate larger and more diverse groups of students representing growing numbers of previously uneducated and under-served populations of students.

Understanding the fact that *loose-coupling* has been the norm for so long, it is easy to see how a serious intent to embrace standards-based reforms in schools and school districts will also require a better understanding and description of the “technical core” of schooling, and how school leaders can and do influence the effectiveness of mechanics at work there. If quality of the *teaching-learning interaction* is strictly within the purview of individuals in classrooms to control, then school administrators are relegated to the role of cheerleaders on the side. The notion that someone could actually “manage conditions” in classrooms and schools to bring about learning is the substance of a new form of leadership that now must be described in such a way that it can be readily recognized, and that early descriptors and leading indicators of these behaviors can be spotted and developed over time to create a *leadership pipeline* on which districts can rely.

Assumptions About Leadership

In this climate of change, a request was made of the Schultz Center to design and develop leadership programs that could meet the needs of adults who wish to serve as high performing leaders in schools today. This was the impetus for creation of a model defining leadership dimensions of *high performing twenty-first century school leaders*. A group of educators came together to start this work, and certain consistent messages emerged as themes which would systematically guide and inform the development work:

⁷ Weick, K.E. (1976). “Educational Organizations as Loosely-Coupled Systems.” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21(1):1-19.

⁸ Elmore, R.F. (2000). *Building a New Structure for School Leadership*. The Albert Shanker Institute. Graduate School of Education, Harvard University and Senior Research Fellow, Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

- The need to be informed by experts from a cross-functional point of view (including business leadership, leadership development experts, higher education content experts, and instructional leadership experts, and those having expertise as principals).
- The need to assess leadership dimensions, and best practices in both education and business.
- The need to evaluate the cost, and best approaches for data collection methods, materials and strategies utilized in existing programs of leadership development.
- The need to develop a vision, mission, core values, and theory of action to inform the work.
- The understanding that successful school leaders need specific core knowledge about teaching and learning, as well as having strong leadership skills necessary for prepare them for leading and managing schools in the twenty-first century.
- The desire to assess, develop, and evaluate high performing leader competencies and to deliver tools and support for the development of these high performing leaders.

In addition to the guiding principles provided by the screens above, the development of a comprehensive leadership program appropriate for multiple constituent groups was also based on the adoption of a set of core values which would frame its development. Core values at the heart of all content and programming efforts as a function of the newly formed Leadership Development team included: *continuous improvement and learning which would lead to excellence; equitable access to learning experiences, services, and resources; diversity of people, ideas, perspectives and approaches to learning; and the power of building collaborative relationships.*

Leadership Model Design

A review of current research in school leadership began with a commitment to fully encompass both the spirit and content of standards outlined in the *Florida Principal Leadership Standards*⁹. Once that linkage was assured, the literature review was expanded to include major leadership and change management theories, particularly those relevant to the challenges of educational leadership in the 21st Century. Specific content analyses were completed on current taxonomies of leadership standards to develop a matrix of standards aligned and cross-referenced. Prominent among these sources were the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) *Standards for School Leaders*,¹⁰ the College Board, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), and the Midcontinent Regional Educational Laboratory (McREL), which provided a major contribution through the highly impactful work of Robert Marzano¹¹ done in 2005. The significant findings from this work identified school leadership

⁹ *Florida Principal Leadership Standards*. Retrieved August 26, 2009 <https://www.floridaschoolleaders.org/fpls.aspx>

¹⁰ Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium: *Standards for School Leaders*. (1996). Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers.

¹¹ Marzano, R.J., Waters, T. and McNulty, B.A. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (2005).

practices which can individually and collectively be shown to impact student achievement. No more would research on principal leadership be content to report general relationships between leadership practices and general characteristics of personality. Instead, the meta-analysis conducted by Marzano's group at McRel was able to isolate specific actions of principals that contribute significantly to student achievement. These behaviors could then serve greatly to help define the leadership skills and behaviors necessary for those leaders to possess.

After a review and comparative analysis of these national standards, and numerous published assessment tools currently available that purport to measure the qualities of leadership performance, a matrix of standards and indicators was compiled resulting in over 850 separate descriptors of leadership ability, observed behaviors, and performance. A content analysis conducted on these various documents resulted in the following list of *themes* and *competencies* which comprise the Schultz Center Leadership Model:

Theme 1: Establishing and Living a Clear Vision and Purpose

- Direction - *successful leaders establish and define clear goals and are able to set strategic operational objectives that keep the focus on long term progress.*
- Optimizer - *successful leaders are able to negotiate effectively and persuasively with diverse groups while articulating goals and directions in positive and convincing ways.*
- Culture - *successful leaders establish a positive learning environment characterized by shared beliefs, cooperation, and a safe and secure setting conducive to learning.*
- Ethical Leadership - *successful leaders act confidently and proactively with purpose and integrity, displaying characteristics of fairness and honesty when dealing with others.*

Theme 2: Leading and Managing Innovation and Improvement

- Change - *successful leaders are able to challenge the status quo when necessary and facilitate the change process with multiple stakeholder groups.*
- Situational Adeptness - *successful leaders are able to use information from a variety of sources, dynamics, and relationships in order to effectively manage innovations and implement solutions.*
- Innovation - *successful leaders recognize appropriate and promising new practices, technologies, and methods which offer the potential for increased or enhanced learning.*
- Decision Making & Problem Solving - *successful leaders gather information (data) to inform and analyze situations using effective group techniques to engage in meaningful dialogue about potential solutions.*

Theme 3: Acquiring and Implementing Deep Knowledge of Teaching and Learning

- Instructional Leadership - *successful leaders establish an effective*

instructional program, ensuring that provisions are made for meeting individual needs, and appropriate assessment methods are used to diagnose, monitor, and guide instruction.

- *Managing the Learning Environment - successful leaders organize processes and procedures to maximize opportunities for learning and make informed choices about methods, materials, and technologies that support learning.*
- *Developing and Mentoring Others - successful leaders are able to recognize the potential in others and use effective communication and mentoring skills to encourage and motivate.*

Theme 4: Developing Capacity for High-Performing Teams and Collaborative Relationships

- *Managing Conflict - successful leaders are able to recognize multiple perspectives and use effective communication skills to find solutions and reach consensus, clearly articulating opposing views in respectful and equitable ways.*
- *Communication - successful leaders establish routine and multiple pathways for communicating, value open and honest feedback, and seek to improve communication with all stakeholders.*
- *Leveraging Diversity - successful leaders recognize and value the diversity of groups and opinions expressed in their communities and staffs and are able to collaborate successfully by responding to diverse interests and needs.*
- *Building Effective Teams - successful leaders are able to create functioning groups which communicate effectively and work together collaboratively to plan, implement, and evaluate strategies and improvement processes.*
- *Developing People - successful leaders are able to identify, recruit, nurture, and encourage staff members to recognize their own talents, and set high standards for their professional growth and continuous learning.*

Theme 5: Creating Organizational Accountability Systems that Sustain Results-Driven Performance

- *Follow-through and Accountability - successful leaders create feedback loops and procedures to allow for interim and long term checkpoints appropriate for gauging progress toward achieving goals.*
- *Leveraging Technology - successful leaders make effective use of technology for instruction and administration, and provide efficient and timely access to data necessary for planning, monitoring, and evaluating progress.*
- *Leveraging Resources - successful leaders optimize the allocation of resources (human, financial, material, and time) to support the mission and priorities of the district for learning.*

Theory of Action

A program's *logic model* links theoretical ideas from a review of literature and best practices in a field, together with practical actions and resources, to explain the impact we expect a program to have, and to illustrate a schematic drawing of *how things will work*. In its graphic form, a logic model will illustrate the ideas that provide the conceptual design for a program. Work to determine the *Schultz Center Leadership Program's* logic model resulted in the adoption of four belief statements that express the direction and relationship among factors in the model:

1. We commit to developing a comprehensive Leadership Development Program designed to recruit and develop leaders for multiple roles in school administration: *teacher leaders, aspiring principals, principals, district level administrators, and executive staff team members*.
2. We believe that effective school leadership positively impacts student achievement in both *direct ways* (via instructional leadership) and indirect ways (by understanding how to support teachers, to engage them fully in the work, and to create a school culture that embraces and accommodates change).
3. We believe that Professional Learning Communities will provide the time, opportunity, and structure within which leaders will share knowledge and best practices in a dialogue of inquiry.
4. We commit to developing *high performing* school leaders who understand and embrace the notion of continuous improvement and the need to participate actively and fully in their own professional development.

After completing our review of current literature and available instruments used to assess leadership ability, it was important to describe what our vision of the behavior of high performing leaders in public schools would *look like* in practice. The structure of themes & competencies provide the substance of leadership behaviors, skills, and dispositions that are assessed on the [Lead 360°](#). (See attachment.)

The logic model for the Schultz Center Leadership Program links theoretical ideas together expressing the underlying core values, program assumptions, and the program's theory of action with resulting themes and competencies assessed, and the program components necessary to develop leadership skills in participants. The [Lead 360°](#) assessment tool captures indicators of the skills that are determined to link most directly with school improvement and student achievement. In its entirety, the *Schultz Center Leadership Model* provides a system of design principles, curriculum, and competency-based assessments which enable us to:

- Evaluate leadership skills for all levels of leaders;
- Provide diagnostic and prescriptive feedback useful for both individual and organizational improvement;
- Utilize 360-degree feedback loops for ongoing and continuous improvement; and
- Provide school leaders with job-imbedded and collaborative professional learning experiences that will enhance their current skills and future leadership potential.

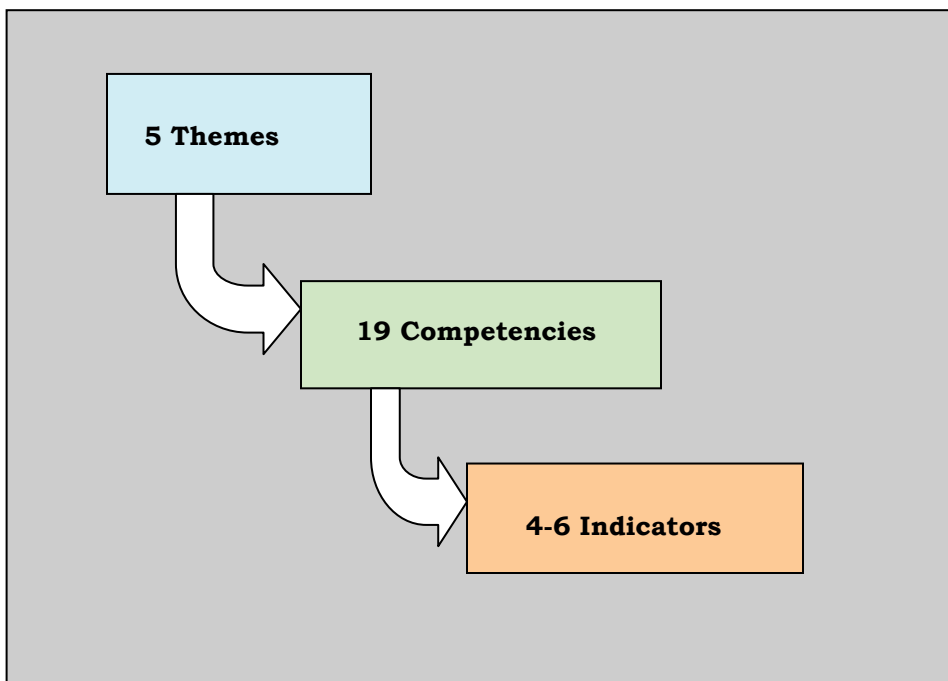
Lead 360° Blueprint for Design

The uses of data outlined in the *Schultz Center Leadership Model* support a curriculum and assessment system that is based on information gained from administering the Schultz Center *Lead 360°*. These data are useful for building *organizational intelligence* in school systems, and will include the opportunity for feedback at two levels:

- Individual level (for identifying and prescribing the leadership development needs of individuals).
- Organizational group level (reports in the aggregate for environmental scans, culture assessments, diagnosis of needs, and prescribing leadership development needs for organizational development).

Promising practices in organizational management, change theory, and team building were combined with what research reports as the most highly correlated leadership practices predicting school improvement, the productive operation of professional learning communities, and practices most highly predictive of improving student achievement. Construction of the instrument was based on the following structure:

Schultz *Lead 360°* Instrument



Each indicator will be rated on a 9-point likert scale.

Ratings will be completed by 4 rater groups:

- **Self (1)**
- **Peers (3 or more)**
- **Direct Reports (3 or more)**
- **Supervisor or Other Stakeholders**

Managing and Reporting [Lead 360°](#) Data

Once individuals have chosen to participate in the [Lead 360°](#) process and invited their feedback providers, actual completion of the survey is completed by electronic means. After feedback providers are invited, the process is managed confidentially and efficiently by way of a web-based survey deployment and data entry portal. The process of choosing, communicating with invited feedback providers, and reminding participants when deadlines for data entry are approaching, is all managed by way of the assessment's administrative site: <http://www.lead360feedback.com>. The entire process is completed in a four-week period, and individually and confidentially prepared reports are produced in a series of custom designs to give different perspectives on the data, and use a variety of formats to examine the information. Following are brief descriptions of the series of [Lead 360°](#) custom reports:

Custom Designed Reports for the [Lead 360°](#) Assessment

1. Individual Summary Report

The Individual Summary Report provides “consolidated” feedback from all feedback providers and is reported in a Total Group Average (TGA) along with Self feedback.

2. Feedback by Provider Group Report

The Feedback by Provider Group Report provides feedback by your individual groups of feedback providers. Feedback from your direct reports will be reported as a group; feedback from your peers/colleagues will be reported as a group; and feedback from your supervisor(s) will be reported as a group. For each competency you will again receive a Total Group Average (TGA) which will be identical to the TGA for each competency reported on the Individual Summary Report. “Self” responses are not included in the TGA.

3. High to Low Report

The High to Low Report provides a listing of all nineteen competencies rank-ordered from highest to lowest based on the Total Group Average (TGA). The Total Group Average does not include Self feedback.

4. Perception Gap Report

The Perception Gap Report provides feedback on competencies for which there

are “distinguishable differences” (gaps) between the Total Group Average (TGA) and Self perception. If your TGA is significantly higher on a given competency than Self perception the competency may be considered a hidden strength. If your TGA is significantly lower on a given competency than Self perception the competency may be considered a blind spot.

5. Snapshot Report

The Snapshot Report provides a type of summary for selected feedback that has appeared on previous reports. This snapshot includes your top four strengths, top four opportunities for development, four positive gaps (hidden strengths) and four negative gaps (blind spots) all determined by your Total Group Average (TGA) for each competency.

6. Detail Report

The Detail Report provides feedback on each of the nineteen competencies by showing how each feedback provider group responded to those indicators used with each competency. This report “drills deeper” so that each participant can study each item/indicator for each competency by feedback provider group.

7. Comments from Feedback Providers

The Comments from Feedback Providers report provides verbatim comments from your feedback providers. It is the intended spirit of this report to assist participants in gleaning a better understanding of how feedback providers view their strengths and opportunities for further development by sharing specific comments.

Validation and Further Development

The Lead 360° was first administered to groups of principals, assistant principals, and executive level school leaders in school year 2007-08. Since that time, data on participants has been collected for ongoing research into the technical reliability and validity of the measure. Initial exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis has been performed on the current set of feedback data (**N=603**) representing those who have participated thus far in the process. The internal consistency resulting among the data for all themes and competencies was high (**.979**). Examining the data further, we found that variation ranged from **.83** to **.94**, with an average inter-item correlation of **.903** among indicators within themes and competencies. Technical validation work of this instrument will continue as we accumulate larger numbers of participants, and will include studies of concurrent validity with data on the same participants from other forms of published leadership assessments, and with other forms of external or criterion-related leadership performance such as success on the job and career advancement.