GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Education Leadership Program

EDLE 690, Section 602
Using Research to Lead School Improvement
Fall 2023, 3 credit hours

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Find appointments here: https://calendly.com/viano/
and email for alternate times.

Course Meetings: **Time:** Tuesdays, 5:00-8:00 p.m.
Term: September 5 – December 5, 2023
Locations: Westfield High School, Library H110
Synchronously on Zoom
Asynchronously on Blackboard

I.   COURSE DESCRIPTION

Prerequisite: EDLE 620

University Catalog Course Description
Using Research to Lead School Improvement (3:3:0) Develops skills, insights, and understanding of how leaders use research to improve schools, with emphasis on the use of assessment and research data to identify school improvement needs and to design school improvement projects.

II.   COURSE DELIVERY METHOD

This course will be delivered approximately 33% in-person at Westfield High School, 33% synchronously on Zoom, and 33% using an asynchronous (not "real time") format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before "@gmu.edu") and email password. In the event of inclement weather, quarantine, or school building closure,

course meetings may be rescheduled as synchronous or asynchronous at the discretion of the instructor which would affect the proportion of the course offered in each format. The course site will be available on September 5, 2023.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

III. **COURSE MATERIALS**

Required Text

Hinnant-Crawford, B. (2020). *Improvement science in education: A primer*. Myers Education Press.

Recommended Text

Bauer, S.C. & Brazer, S.D. (2012). *Using research to lead school improvement: Turning evidence into action*. Sage.

Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Other Assigned and Optional Sources

Assigned and optional source material will be available on their links listed on Blackboard. Assigned sources will also be listed on the tentative schedule below.

IV. **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Each class week will include a variety of activities and exercises. Specific process goals for this class are as follows:

1. Classes will reflect a balance of activities that encourage the exploration of and the use of research in instructional leadership. To promote an atmosphere that allows us to accomplish this, we will:
   a. agree to disagree respectfully during class discussions;
   b. give others a charitable read by assuming good intentions;
   c. strive to be open to new ideas and perspectives; and
   d. listen actively to one another.

2. Candidate work will reflect what is expected from leaders. Hence, it is expected that candidates will:

    a. write papers that are well-researched, proofread, submitted in a timely fashion, and conform to APA guidelines;

    b. participate actively in class discussions in a manner that challenges the best thinking of the class; and

    c. provide constructive feedback to others both on their ideas and on their written work, striving to learn from each other and to test each other's ideas.

3. We will endeavor to create an environment that approximate what we know about learning organizations. Consequently, it is important that we create a space that allows participants to try out new ideas and voice opinions without fear or ridicule or embarrassment. The hallmark of a learning organization is a balance between openness and constructive feedback; hence, everyone is expected to:

    a. demonstrate appropriate **respect for one another**;

    b. voice concerns and opinions about the class process openly;

    c. engage in **genuine inquiry**;

    d. recognize and celebrate each other's ideas and accomplishments;

    e. show an awareness of each other's needs; and

    f. **maintain strict confidentiality** regarding any information shared.

V.   COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students completing the course successfully will be able to:
- ✓ understand and apply planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity;
- ✓ understand and apply systems and organization theory;
- ✓ understand and apply management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations;
- ✓ understand and apply improvement science principles as part of professional practice;
- ✓ understand and apply research knowledge to a significant instructional problem.

Student Outcomes
Successful students will emerge from the course with the ability to:
- ✓ gather and analyze student achievement and demographic data available from their school, school division, and the state;
- ✓ search online databases for recent publications relevant to a specific topic, and prepare a brief summary of applied research on a topic relevant to the improvement of instruction at their school site;
- ✓ use education research to develop a position based on more than one's opinion;
- ✓ understand and be able to evaluate basic research designs;
- ✓ lead instructional and school improvement efforts using improvement science principles to fail quickly, learn fast, and accelerate improvement; and
- ✓ prepare and defend a proposal for the Internship Improvement Project (IIP) that becomes the blueprint for the capstone project required in the EDLE program internship.

VI.   **RELATIONSHIP OF COURSE TO INTERNSHIP (EDLE 791)**

Although the internship is a separate course, the Education Leadership program has integrated internship-related activities into course work. During this course, students will prepare and present a proposal for an improvement project that they will implement and evaluate as a part of their internship activities over the remainder of the program.

VII.   **NATIONAL STANDARDS AND VIRGINIA COMPETENCIES**

National Standards
The following National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) standard elements are addressed in this course:

NELP Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Improvement. Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to collaboratively lead, design, and implement a school mission, vision, and process for continuous improvement that reflects a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community.
        1.1 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to collaboratively evaluate, develop, and communicate a school mission and vision designed to reflect a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community.
        1.2 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to lead improvement processes that include data use, design, implementation, and evaluation.

NELP Standard 3: Equity, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Responsiveness. Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive school culture.
        3.1 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to use data to evaluate, design, cultivate, and advocate for a supportive and inclusive school culture.
        3.2 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, cultivate, and advocate for equitable access to educational resources, technologies, and opportunities that support the educational success and well-being of each student.
        3.3 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, cultivate, and advocate for equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive instruction and behavior support practices among teachers and staff.

NELP Standard 6: Operations and Management. Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to improve management, communication, technology, school-level governance, and operation systems to develop and

improve data-informed and equitable school resource plans and to apply laws, policies, and regulations.

> 6.1 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, develop, and implement management, communication, technology, school-level governance, and operation systems that support each student's learning needs and promote the mission and vision of the school.

> 6.2 Program completers understand and demonstrate the capacity to evaluate, develop, and advocate for a data-informed and equitable resourcing plan that supports school improvement and student development.

NELP Standard 7: Building Professional Capacity. Candidates who successfully complete a building-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capacity to promote the current and future success and well-being of each student and adult by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary to build the school's professional capacity, engage staff in the development of a collaborative professional culture, and improve systems of staff supervision, evaluation, support, and professional learning.

> 7.2 Program completers understand and have the capacity to develop and engage staff in a collaborative professional culture designed to promote school improvement, teacher retention, and the success and well-being of each student and adult in the school.

> 7.4 Program completers understand and have the capacity to evaluate, develop, and implement systems of supervision, support, and evaluation designed to promote school improvement and student success.

Virginia Competencies
This course addresses the following Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) Competencies:

a. Knowledge understanding, and application of planning, assessment, and instructional leadership that builds collective professional capacity, including:

> (2) Collaborative leadership in gathering and analyzing data to identify needs to develop and implement a school improvement plan that results in increased student learning;

> (7) Identification, analysis, and resolution of problems using effective problem-solving techniques; and

> (8) Communication of a clear vision of excellence, linked to mission and core beliefs that promotes continuous improvement consistent with the goals of the school division.

b. Knowledge, understanding and application of systems and organizations, including:

> (1) Systems theory and the change process of systems, organizations and individuals, using appropriate and effective adult learning models;

> (2) Aligning organizational practice, division mission, and core beliefs for developing and implementing strategic plans;

> (3) Information sources and processing, including data collection and data analysis strategies;

> (4) Using data as a part of ongoing program evaluation to inform and lead change;

> (5) Developing a change management strategy for improved student outcomes; and

> (6) Developing empowerment strategies to create personalized learning environments for diverse schools.

c. Knowledge understanding and application of management and leadership skills that achieve effective and efficient organizational operations, including:

       (8) Application of data-driven decision making to initiate and continue improvement in school and classroom practices and student achievement.

f. Knowledge understanding and application of basic leadership theories and influences that impact schools including:

       (1) Concepts of leadership including systems theory, change theory, learning organizations and current leadership theory.

VIII.   **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

This course will be partially delivered on Mason's Blackboard platform, so students are required to have access to Blackboard. A Blackboard site is available to all students enrolled in the course at http://mymason.gmu.edu. You need to log on using your GMU username and password. To participate in this course, students will need the following resources:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Original/Getting_Started/Browser_Support
  To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see: https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support/Browser_Support_Policy
- Consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard (at least daily access on weekdays), as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs are available for free download by clicking on the link next to each plug-in:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: http://get.adobe.com/reader/
  - Windows Media Player: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player
  - Apple QuickTime Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/
- You will use **Google Docs** to complete select assignments and to participate in various learning activities throughout the semester.
- **Video/Screencasting Tools:** You may use Kaltura, Jing, Camtasia, or Screencast-O-Matic to record videos throughout the semester.
- **A headset microphone** for use with Zoom for synchronous lessons to engage with the instructor. These can also be useful when recording videos for the course.

<u>Email:</u> Per university policy and in compliance with federal law, I will only communicate with candidates via their GMU email accounts and will be unable to respond to emails sent from other accounts (i.e., Gmail, yahoo, work email, etc.).

- **All candidates are required to activate and monitor their GMU e-mail accounts.**
- Any announcements concerning the course will be sent to your GMU email address.
- I will respond to emails within two business days of email receipt (i.e., excluding holidays and weekends).

<u>Video Conferencing:</u> Students are encouraged to communicate with each other and the instructor using Zoom for both group collaboration sessions and the instructor's virtual office hours.

<u>Microsoft Office:</u> It is my expectation that all students have access to Microsoft Office. We will be using Word and Excel for this course. If you do not have access to this software, you are required to obtain it within the first two weeks of the course. It is best, but not required, to have the most recent version of the software.

<u>Google Account:</u> We will be using Google Drive to organize some of our collaborative work this semester. All students are required to have an active gmail account in order to participate in these activities. This gmail account should be distinct from your school division email address, even if you have access to google through your school division account (email should end in @gmail.com).

IX.   COURSE REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT, AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

General Expectations
Consistent with the expectations of a Master's-level course in the Education Leadership program, grading is based heavily on student performance on written assignments. The assignments constructed for this course reflect a mix of skills associated with the application of research to education leadership contexts. Overall, written work will be assessed using the following broad criteria:

- Application of concepts embedded in assigned readings and other materials and reinforced in class activities
- The quality of analysis, synthesis, and application
- The ability to write in a clear, concise, and organized fashion

Additionally, due to this course being partially online, a significant portion of the class grade will be based on participation and the contribution you make to class discussions.

Specific Performances and Weights
The overall weights of the various performances are as follows:

Class participation – 10 points
Candidates are expected to participate actively in class discussions, small group activities, and in serving as critical friends to other colleagues. Being absent to class, arriving at class more than 10 minutes late, or leaving more than 10 minutes before the end of class will result in loss of points. For asynchronous weeks, students are expected to complete all required exercises as stated on weekly check lists. *A rubric for attendance and participation is included at the end of this syllabus.*

In-Class Group Assignment - 10 points
In class, you will be organized into small groups based on common interests in improvement targets. In these small groups, called networked improvement communities (NICs), you will create a charter document in class to guide your collaborative work. *A rubric is included at the end of this syllabus.*

Written Assignments - 80 points
Several different types of performance-based assignments will be completed during the semester. Each assignment relates to the application of educational research in your school setting. *A description of each assignment and a rubric for grading each assignment are included at the end of this syllabus.*

The assignments are designed sequentially to help you define and plan the improvement project *you will be conducting as your capstone project for the internship*. Thus, in the first assignment, you examine school performance data and define a research topic. In the second, you review the available research literature on that topic, and begin to define the specific improvement project you will implement. For the final assignment, you write your Internship Improvement Project—the improvement project that will be implemented during your internship. The Internship Improvement Project is the program-level *Performance-Based Assessment* (PBA) for this course.

Submitting papers: All papers must be submitted **on time, electronically via Blackboard.**

Late work: Students' work is expected to be on time, meaning no later than midnight of the due date. Please take advantage of instructor availability to get assistance prior to assignment deadlines.

Grade Appeals: Grade appeals will only be granted when the number of points awarded for the assignment is less than 80 percent of the possible points available. Grade appeals will only be allowed for the first two written assignments. Students must resubmit the assignment within two weeks of receiving their original grade in order to receive a new grade.

Grading Scale:
A+ = 100 points
A = 95 - 99
A- = 90 - 94
B+ = 86 - 89
B = 83 - 85
B- = 80 - 82
C = 75 - 79
F = 74 or below

VIA Performance-Based Assessment Submission Requirement:
Every student registered for an EDLE course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit these assessments to VIA through Blackboard. EDLE 690's required performance is the **Internship Improvement Project**. Evaluation of the performance-based assessments by the course instructor will also be completed in VIA through Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

X.   ONLINE EXPECTATIONS

Course Week: Because we are scheduled for a Tuesday night class, our week will generally **start** on Tuesdays and **finish** on Mondays, with exceptions communicated to students via email. Besides major assignment deadlines, course activities should be completed on or before the Monday of the course week.

Log in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communication from the instructor, **at a minimum this should be three times per week**.

Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all online course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing of all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.

Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students are expected to seek assistance from the instructor or GMU IT if they are struggling with the technical components of the course.

Technical Issues: Students should expect to experience some technical difficulties at some point in the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not self-paced**. There are **specific deadlines** and **due dates** listed in the **class schedule** section of the syllabus to which you are expected to adhere. **Plan to spend about 10 hours a week to complete all course activities** (including time in class during in-person and synchronous weeks).

<u>Advising:</u> If you would like to schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content, or other course-related issues, we can meet via telephone or web conference. Send an email to schedule a one-to-one session or use the instructor's automated meeting scheduling calendar (https://calendly.com/viano/).

<u>Confidentiality:</u> By federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.
- Videorecordings — whether made by instructors or students — of class meetings that include audio, visual, or textual information from other students are private and must not be shared outside the class
- Live video conference meetings (e.g., Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio, textual, or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household or recorded and shared outside the class

<u>Netiquette:</u> Our goal is to **collaborative**, not combative. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be misconstrued. A following is a list of suggestions for interacting with others online:
- Re-read your responses carefully before you post.

- Be positive in your approach to others and be diplomatic with your words.

- Remember, you are not competing with each other. You are sharing information and learning from one another as well as the instructor.

- Use descriptive subject lines. Give readers a clue about what's inside.

- Do not use all caps.

- Avoid slang, abbreviations, and acronyms.

- Avoid sarcasm, joking, or other communication styles reliant on visual cues.

- Avoid multiple exclamation points.

- Assume good intentions. Err on the god side of all contributors.

- If you are referring to something that was said or read on the online forum, "cite" the original source to give credit to who originally shared the idea.

XI.   **GMU Policies and Resources for Students**

Policies
- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code **(see** https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/**).**

- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).

- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.

- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see https://ds.gmu.edu/).

Campus Resources
- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to VIAhelp@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments/. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to https://its.gmu.edu/article-categories/teaching-learning/.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For information on student support resources on campus, see https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website https://cehd.gmu.edu/.

Plagiarism:

- Plagiarism Statement: Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; **a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient.** Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions for this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may not be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful, to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly." In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism. (Statement of English Department at George Mason University)

- <u>Plagiarism and the Honor Code:</u> George Mason University operates under an honor system, which is published in the University Catalog and deals specifically with cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. Please familiarize yourself with the honor code, especially the statement on plagiarism (https://oai.gmu.edu/full-honor-code-document/). If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor or utilize the GMU writing center.

- <u>Plagiarism and the Internet:</u> Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, information from Web sites, including graphics.

- If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor utilize the GMU Writing Center.

<u>Academic Integrity & Inclusivity:</u> This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences. That means, we each have the freedom to express our ideas, but we should also do so keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e., we may disagree without being disagreeable. https://oai.gmu.edu/

<u>Diversity, Religious Holiday:</u> Please refer to George Mason University's calendar of religious holidays and observations (http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/). It is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments.

<u>Student Privacy Policy:</u> George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/ .

<u>Professional Dispositions:</u> Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See http://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/.

<u>Core Values Commitment:</u> College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/.

<u>Other Concerns:</u> If you have concerns or issues relating to the content or conduct of the class, please talk with me directly. Although the specifics of these conversations are entirely confidential, they may provide me with useful suggestions that may be shared indirectly with the class to improve the learning experience for all students. As a matter of policy, I do not respond to anonymous e-mails.

Tentative Class Schedule
EDLE 690.602 (Viano) Fall 2023

To accommodate the learning needs of the class, the topics and reading schedule may be amended during the semester.
Note: Please refer to the Weekly Schedule on Blackboard for the most up-to-date version of the course schedule.

All readings and assignments are to be completed by the beginning of each in-person/synchronous class session (i.e., the week the readings and assignments appear next to), unless noted otherwise.

The *Class Date* indicates when we have class in-person or online (synchronously). *Asynch* stands for asynchronous indicating the time range for activities that you complete anytime within the indicated date range. Weeks with no *Class Date* only have asynchronous activities.

Week #	Class Date	Asynch Dates	Topics/Modules	Readings (complete by class date)	Activities/Assignments
1	9/5 Online	n/a	**Introduction to the Course and School Improvement** *Synchronous Meeting* 1) Introductions and class norms. 2) Motivating the course content on data, research, and improvement science. *Asynch Modules* 1) Course overview and syllabus review.	• Introduction (p. 1-19) of Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Harvard Education Press. *Pdf will be on Blackboard.* • Introduction to Section 1 (p. 1-5) and Chapter 2 (p. 23-40) of Hinnant-Crawford, B. (2020). *Improvement science in education: A primer*. Myers Education Press. *Optional:* • Preface (p. xiii-xx); Introduction to Part I and Chapter 1 (p. 1-15) of Bauer, S. C., & Brazer, S. D. (2012). *Using research to lead school improvement: Turning evidence into action*. SAGE.	• Pre-course survey online. • Watch course tour video. • Review online course orientation. • Take the syllabus quiz.
			Unit 1: Problem Articulation – Using Evidence to Find Improvement Needs		

Week #	Class Date	Asynch Dates	Topics/Modules	Readings (complete by class date)	Activities/Assignments
2	9/12 In-person	9/5 – 9/11	**Finding Data to Define Problems** *In-person Meeting* 1) Overview of Assignment #1. 2) Finding data workshop. 3) Mock empathy interviews. 4) Reflection on discipline disparities report and data visualization. 5) Investigating your school's SIP.	• Executive Summary (p. 1-7) of Losen, D. J., Hodson, C., Keith, M. A., Morrison, K., & Belway, S. (2015). *Are We Closing the School Discipline Gap?* The Center for Civil Rights Remedies at The Civil Rights Project. • Hinnant-Crawford, Chapter 3 *Optional:* • Bauer & Brazer, Intro to Part II (pg. 69-71) and Chapter 4.	• Complete online activities listed in Week 1. • Sign up for a data visualization report (for Week 3) • Secure and review your school's most current SIP plan and mission/vision statements.
3	9/19 Online	9/12 – 9/18	**Using Data to Motivate Attention** *Synchronous Meeting* 1) Data visualization report activity. 2) Displaying data workshop. *Asynch Modules* 1) Using Data to Tell Stories	• Data visualization report you signed up for. • Hinnant-Crawford, Chapter 4 *Optional:* • Bauer & Brazer, Chapter 5. • *Learning to Improve,* Chapter 2	• Review the Using Data to Tell Stories module. • Have data intend to use for Writing Assignment #1.
4	9/26 Online	9/19 – 9/25	*Synchronous Meeting* 1) Peer review of Assignment #1. *(no asynch modules)*	*(none)*	• Have an outline or draft of Writing Assignment #1 ready to share for peer review.
------	**10/1**		**Writing Assignment #1 (Improvement Target Proposal) Due**		

Week #	Class Date	Asynch Dates	Topics/Modules	Readings (complete by class date)	Activities/Assignments
			Unit 2: Building a Deep Understanding of the Problem		
5	10/3 In-person	9/26 – 10/2	**Root Cause Analysis & Finding Research** *In-person Meeting* 1) Fishbone diagrams. 2) Introduction to research. 3) Finding peer-reviewed articles. 4) How to read peer-reviewed articles. 5) What Works Clearinghouse	*Optional:* • Bauer & Brazer, Intro to Part III and Chapter 6-7. • *Learning to Improve*, Chapter 1	*(none)*
6	*n/a*	10/3 – 10/9	**Classifying Research** *(no class meeting)* *Asynch Modules* 1) Overview of Assignment #2: The Research Brief. 2) Assignment #1 glows & grows. 3) Introduction to research, qualitative & quantitative research designs.	• Hinnant-Crawford, Chapter 1 • Chapter 1 of Schutt, R. K. (2011). *Investigating the social world: The process and practice of research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. *Optional:* • Bauer & Brazer, Chapter 8.	• Watch overview of Assignment #2 video and submit questions. • Review Assignment #1 class feedback (available by 10/8). • Review research design module and complete optional exercises. • Mid-term course feedback. • Sign up for an article to read for Week 7.

Week #	Class Date	Asynch Dates	Topics/Modules	Readings (complete by class date)	Activities/Assignments
7	10/17 Online	10/10 – 10/16	**Differentiating Research** *Synchronous Meeting* 1) Check for understanding on research designs and validity. 2) Jigsaw on research design. *Asynch Modules* 1) Mid-term feedback reflection video. 2) Threats to validity module. 3) Experimental and quasi-experimental design module.	• Jigsaw article on research design you signed up for on Blackboard. • pp. 214-222 of Schutt, R. K. (2011). *Investigating the social world: The process and practice of research.* SAGE.	• Validity modules and activities.
8	10/24 In-Person	10/17 – 10/23	**Critiquing Research & Building Your Network to Accelerate Learning** *In-person Meeting* 1) Intro to NICs, write your aim statements, compile a fishbone diagram. 2) Small group activity with selected articles.	• Selected article you think you will summarize in the Research Brief. • Hinnant-Crawford, Chapters 9 and 10. *Optional:* • *Learning to Improve*, Chapters 6 and 7	• Select an article, be prepared to summarize selected article including the research design and findings. • Submit your proposed Research Brief citation list.
9	*n/a*	10/24 – 10/30	*Asynch Modules* 1) Peer review of Research Briefs.	*(none)*	• Prepare a draft of Writing Assignment #2 to share for peer review.
------	**11/5**		**Writing Assignment #2 (Research Brief) Due**		

Week #	Class Date	Asynch Dates	Topics/Modules	Readings (complete by class date)	Activities/Assignments
			Unit 3: Completing the Journey – Writing your IIP		
10	11/7 Online	10/31 – 11/6	**Developing Theories to Drive Improvement** *Synchronous Meeting* 1) Driver diagrams and interrelational diagrams.	• Hinnant-Crawford, Chapter 6. *Optional:* • *Learning to Improve,* Chapter 3.	*(none)*
11	11/14 In-Person	11/7 – 11/13	**How to Measure Implementation and Change, Purposeful Continuous Improvement** *In-person* 1) Measurement 2) Work in NICs on diagrams and common measures. 3) Plan-Do-Study-Act and the IIP. *Asynch Modules* 1) Overview of Assignment #3	• Hinnant-Crawford, Chapters 7 and 8. *Optional:* • *Learning to Improve,* Chapters 4 and 5. • Bauer & Brazer, Introduction to Part IV, Chapter 9, and Chapter 10.	• Watch overview of Assignment #3 video and submit questions. • Assignment #2 class feedback.
12	11/28 Online	*n/a*	*Synchronous Meeting* 1) Final course evaluation 2) PDSA cycle exercise. 3) IIP and NIC Charter work session.	*(none)*	• Work with NICs on NIC Charter components. • Be prepared to share idea for a PDSA cycle in your IIP.

Week #	Class Date	Asynch Dates	Topics/Modules	Readings (complete by class date)	Activities/Assignments
13	12/5 Online	11/28 – 12/4	NIC Charter and IIP Presentations	*(none)*	• Prepare to share overview of IIPs and NIC Charter. • NIC Charter completed by class time.
------	**12/5**		**Writing Assignment #3 (Internship Improvement Project Proposal) Due**		

Writing Assignment 1: Improvement Target Proposal
20 points

Overview:

Data are tools – they represent a primary source of knowledge-building for school improvement. As leaders in your school, one of your primary tasks is to understand available data relating to your school's performance in meeting its goals and objectives. Additionally, you need to learn how to communicate about these data to various stakeholder groups. In this task, you are asked to assemble some of these data, and prepare a short summary suitable for presentation to a school leadership team or local community group.

Tasks:

1. Identify the variety of published data relating to your school's demographic characteristics (e.g., enrollment, attendance, composition of the student body, staffing); measures of student learning; and any perceptual data that might exist relating to such things as school climate. These data may be available on your school or school system's website, on related websites (e.g., state education department), or in published material.

2. Determine your school's primary performance objectives: What is the school expected to achieve? Dig deeper than routine accountability requirements; examine the school's current improvement plan, for instance, to identify one or more current improvement priorities. **Conduct an empathy interview with a leader in your school.**

3. Examine relevant assessment data for <u>at least</u> a two-year period. To do this, you will need to <u>triangulate the data</u> available to you – look across various sources to answer the question: How well are we doing? As a leader in your school, you will add value to your analysis by using your craft knowledge to interpret what these data means. You may limit your focus to one or more areas identified as priorities for your school (in other words, you do not need to present data on each and every curricular objective, but you should provide a reasonable synopsis of "how well we're doing.").

4. Identify any areas that reflect priorities – for instance, areas in which students are achieving at a level below your school's goals and objectives. Be careful to identify performance indicators that clearly relate to the objective(s) you've identified. **The goal here is NOT to "solve" an identified problem or identify causes of the problem, but to highlight areas that are in continued need of attention in your school's improvement plan.**

5. Prepare a short paper intended to inform and persuade your team regarding an area that requires attention. Includes a brief overview of important school demographic characteristics (particularly characteristics of the student body); information related to the school's improvement goals; data relevant to current levels of performance; tables and figures <u>you create</u>; and a clear statement of the challenge area(s) you believe require attention in your improvement planning. **Use the attached rubric as a guide to structure your paper.**

This is an exercise in leadership communication. Be selective – you cannot provide an overview of all of the data that might be available. Craft your examination to focus on important areas of concern. NOTE – the tone of the paper is **persuasive**: you are providing your expert judgment based on your analysis of school performance data, and in the end you are lobbying the team to adopt the focus you identified as important.

Direct the paper to your school's leadership team as the audience – the team may include new members, including one or more parents or community members. Avoid jargon, and be aware of the clarity of your presentation – if you confuse your audience or present a lot of disparate data that don't connect to your school's objectives, you've failed to add value to the discussion. Use tables or graphs sensibly -- to briefly summarize the discussion and direct the reader's attention. Tables and graphs must be clearly legible and tell a compelling story.

This paper is a **maximum of 12 pages**, including all tables and figures, and should be written in a fashion that is suitable for the audience described above. Papers should be a minimum of 8 pages to meet all of the requirements.

Improvement Target Proposal Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Introduction and thesis (2 points) Any written statement should begin with an introduction that draws the reader into the topic and includes a one-sentence thesis. The thesis states what the author intends to prove or demonstrate in the body of the written work. For this paper, the thesis must name the focal area(s) for improvement.	The paper starts with an introduction that provides a clear roadmap for the reader, foreshadowing what the Improvement Target Proposal is intended to provide in the way of information. The thesis appears as the last sentence of the introductory paragraph and describes the problem being motivated in the paper.	The paper starts with a brief introduction that alludes to the purpose of the paper and provides a general foreshadowing of what is to be included in the document. The thesis may not be entirely clear or appropriate.	The introduction provides only the barest hint about the purpose of the paper and the information to be shared. The thesis is either confusing or missing.	The paper lacks an introduction entirely, or the introduction fails to provide useful information that is linked to the intended purpose of the document.
Characteristics of the school and diversity of the school community (5 points) (NELP 1.1) This section is intended to help the reader understand the nature of the school so that the priority area will make sense.	The paper includes a thorough and concise overview of the demographic characteristics of the school, school staffing, and the school community. The school's current improvement objectives are highlighted, and (if available) data related to characteristics of the school climate are described.	The paper includes a general overview of the demographic characteristics of the school, school staffing, and school community; the school's current improvement objectives, and measures of school climate. Some important demographic data are not evident and/or this section is not concisely written with extraneous information or description.	The paper includes a limited review of demographic and staffing data; the school's current improvement objectives, and measures of school climate. Important data are omitted or inaccurately presented.	The presentation of demographic data is missing or wholly inadequate.
Use of data to analyze school performance related to the school's vision and objectives (5 points) (NELP 1.1, 6.1, 6.2)	The paper includes a clear and concise summary of the school's performance in the area of interest based on an assessment of	The paper includes a summary of the school's performance over at least a two-year period, using general measures of important	The paper includes a summary of the school's current performance in general terms. Specific indicators or educational	The assessment of school performance is missing or wholly inadequate.

This section summarizes the data narratively as well as through visual displays to make a convincing argument of the problem that deserves additional attention.	important educational outcomes reflecting the school's vision and objectives, over at least a two-year period. Data are triangulated – i.e., the problem is shown to exist in at least three ways.	educational outcomes. Writing may not be clear and concise. Data triangulation might be missing or inadequate.	outcomes are unclear or missing.	
Conclusion: Identification of improvement area (4 points) (NELP 1.2, 3.2) This is the most important point of the paper in which you summarize the exact problem that deserves additional attention at your school that you motivated in the previous section.	The paper concludes with a recommendation of one or more problem areas. The identified achievement/ opportunity gap(s) are well supported by the analysis of school data, and are clearly connected to the school's vision, improvement objectives, and the emerging needs of the school community. Focus is on identifying the problem with no discussion of solutions or root causes.	The paper concludes with a recommendation of one or more problem areas. The identified achievement gap(s) are generally supported by the analysis of school data, and are at least loosely connected to the school's vision and improvement objectives.	The paper concludes with a general recommendation of one or more problem areas. The identified achievement gap(s) are not clearly supported by the analysis of school data.	The recommendation is missing or wholly inadequate.
Use of tables and figures to summarize data (2 points) Tables and/or figures should appear as support to the text. Data should be organized for ease of understanding.	Tables and/or figures are powerfully used to present demographic and/or school performance data. They are legible, clearly created by the author, and compelling.	Tables and/or figures are used sparingly, but effectively, to present demographic and/or school performance data. The tables and figures are legible but are all copied from other sources.	Tables and/or figures are used somewhat effectively, but in some instances they are distracting, mislabeled, illegible, or otherwise confusing.	Tables and/or figures are not evident.
Mechanics (2 points) Your written work should always represent you as accurate and precise.	The paper is nearly error-free which reflects clear understanding and thorough proofreading.	There are occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice.	Errors in grammar and punctuation are present, but spelling has been proofread.	There are frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Writing Assignment 2: Research Brief
20 Points

Overview:

A research brief is a short <u>literature review</u> or compilation and thematic summary of published work on a topic that both summarizes and evaluates what is known on the topic. The main difference between a research brief and a formal literature review is the intended audience: address your research brief <u>to a practitioner audience</u> (e.g., your principal or a school leadership team). The research brief is intended to use published research to make a persuasive case regarding the **root causes** of the problem, challenge, or gap you have identified in your school and **one or two promising solutions** that address the root cause(s). Provide a synthesis of the knowledge base to summarize the extant research on the causes and solutions of your problem of practice.

Tasks:
1. Write an introductory **paragraph** that includes a clearly-worded, one-sentence <u>guiding</u> <u>question</u> that describes the purpose of your investigation. Your introduction must also include a thesis that clearly states in one sentence the argument you are putting forward in the paper with respect to root causes and promising solutions that would address them.

2. Write a <u>review of the literature</u> that addresses the question and supports your thesis. The body of the document should summarize <u>and analyze</u> the existing research. Remember that this is <u>not simply a listing</u> of the research cited – your review adds value by organizing various studies, and identifying strengths and weaknesses of established work. Organize your review around root causes and solutions with <u>at least 2 sources supporting each root cause and solution</u>. In a research brief with only one root cause and solution (i.e., *the minimum*), this would lead to 4 sources.

3. For purposes of this exercise (and the intended audience – your school's leadership team), conclude the paper with a section that briefly summarizes this literature and provides a <u>recommendation</u> based on the available research. For instance, if your question was, "Why do second language learners experience disproportionately low achievement in mathematics?" and the research focuses your attention on the need to teach mathematics vocabulary prior to introducing new concepts, you might recommend that your school's improvement team work toward an improvement objective that addresses the mathematics curriculum in this way. Be as persuasive as you can – this recommendation will be what you write about in your Internship Improvement Project (IIP) proposal (the next writing assignment) and <u>implement in your internship</u>.

Your paper should be no more than eight (8) pages (excluding title page and references), and must include citations and a reference list in APA format.

HINT: Your paper should be closely related to your Improvement Target Proposal, leading you to write your guiding question in a manner that suggests a potential course of action for your IIP. Remember, to get the most out of your efforts, you should use the literature and your own investigative work to identify likely ***root causes*** of the performance challenge and ways to reduce or eliminate these ***root causes***.

Research Brief Assessment Rubric:

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Introduction: research problem, overview (4 points) The introductory paragraph must be very clear about the direction and focus of the paper through guiding question(s) and a thesis statement.	The paper starts with a clear and concise statement of the research question(s) and an introduction that leads to a clear thesis for the reader that lays out the author's main argument. The thesis should clearly state the solution you identified using research and the root causes that solution will address. The introduction is one paragraph long.	The paper starts with a brief introduction that alludes to the research question and provides a general thesis. The research questions might be missing or the thesis unclear.	An introduction is provided that gives only the barest hint about the research question or the information to be shared.	The paper lacks an introduction entirely, or the introduction fails to provide useful information that is linked to the research question.
Body: Application of research to school improvement (8 points) (NELP 1.2, 6.2) For the research to be meaningful, it must be directly related to a specific question and argument.	The body of the paper presents a systematically organized synthesis of research directly relating to the question and supporting the thesis. Analysis is provided that reflects an awareness of and judgment about the quality of published work. At least one root cause is included and research supporting that the proposed solutions directly relate to the root cause(s). Each claim in the body of the paper is supported by published research.	The body of the paper provides a loosely organized synthesis and analysis of published work related to the research question and the thesis. Root cause(s)/solution(s) are not included, not supported by literature, and/or not effectively paired with solutions. There might also be a lack of discussion about quality of the published work.	The body of the paper describes published work generally related to the research question, but provides a limited synthesis or analysis of published work.	The synthesis and analysis of published work is wholly missing or inadequate.

Conclusion and recommendation (3 points) (NELP 1.2, 6.1, 7.2, 7.4) A conclusion should be both summative and analytical. Re-stating the thesis is an important vehicle for tying the paper together and summarizing the body of the paper.	The paper concludes with a clear and concise summary of research directly related to the research question (including a re-statement of the thesis), and a recommendation and rationale advocating for a possible course of action that could effectively result in the desired improvement(s).	The paper concludes with a general summary of research related to the research question and the thesis. A recommendation advocating for a possible course of action that could effectively lead to desired improvement(s) is presented in general terms, but the rationale for the recommendation is not entirely persuasive since the research cited does not substantiate the recommendation.	The paper concludes with a general summary of research on the research question. A recommendation advocating for a possible course of action is not evident.	The conclusion is missing or wholly inadequate; the paper ends abruptly.
Quality of research support (2 points) (NELP 1.2) The best way to make a persuasive argument is with high quality research.	Research cited is well balanced, including original research and synthesis pieces from high-quality, credible sources.	Research is cited from quality sources, but lacks specificity or is not connected in a set of coherent arguments.	General supporting research evidence is referenced, but appears dominated by syntheses or opinion pieces, or material from questionable sources.	Few solid supporting ideas or evidence from research are included.
Quantity of Sources (1 points) (NELP 1.2) The root causes and intervention have sufficient research support.	The synthesis relies on at least 4 or more sources.	The synthesis relies on 2-3 sources.	The synthesis relies on one source.	The synthesis relies on no sources.
Organization, Mechanics, and APA (2 point)	The paper is powerfully organized and fully developed with clear, descriptive headings. The paper is nearly error-free, including strict adherence to APA format for references. Proofreading is thorough.	The paper includes a logical progression of ideas aided by clear transitions. Occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice are present. Some APA errors may be present.	The paper includes most required elements, but lacks transitions. Errors in grammar and punctuation are present, but spelling has been proofread. Adherence to APA format is weak.	The paper lacks a logical progression of ideas. Frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation are present.

Writing Assignment 3: IIP Proposal
40 points

Overview:

School leaders are increasingly expected to engage in short-term action research projects to demonstrate the efficacy of school programs and practices. As a part of your internship, you will propose an Internship Improvement Project (IIP) that addresses a problem or "achievement gap" identified through research on your school. Your proposal will describe a specific improvement project you will **design, implement**, and **evaluate** during your internship and later analyze in one of your concluding courses. The expectation is that you will lead a team in the implementation of this project and plan for at least one round of plan-do-study-act (PDSA) short-cycle inquiry to inform the implementation of your project.

Tasks:

1. OVERVIEW: The proposal should start with a concise and well-thought-out description of the achievement gap you have identified through your assessment of student performance and achievement data, followed by a clear **statement of purpose** that generally demonstrates how you intend to address the performance gap. After stating this purpose, including an overview of the project and briefly describe what you intend to do to implement your proposal. **(NELP 1.2)**

2. RATIONALE: Include a concise and well-thought-out **rationale** that describes why it is important to address the performance gap you identified and your espoused theory of action, through a **driver diagram**, that suggests why taking the proposed action will lead to improvement in the targeted area. Be sure to describe how your IIP connects to or reinforces your school's vision and objectives. Use the research literature to support your strategy for addressing your identified achievement gap. **(NELP 1.1)**

3. INVOLVEMENT: The expectation is that you will be engaging members of your school community in designing and enacting your improvement project. Provide a short summary of who you are involved in the creation of this proposal and which stakeholders you envision involved in the enactment and assessment of the IIP. Describe how you plan to enlist their support and build your team, including means you will use to maintain effective communication throughout the project. **(NELP 7.2)**

4. ACTION PLAN: The proposal must include a clear, step-by-step **action plan** that defines the objective of the project (i.e., restates your purpose as an action objective) and delineates each of the major tasks that need to be completed during the project; when each task will be completed; who is responsible for each task; the resources needed to complete each task; and specific "success signals" that serve as indicators of the completion of major steps in the project. Use worksheets 9. 1 – 9.4 from *Using Research to Lead School Improvement* to help you prepare your action plan. **(NELP 6.1)**

5. PLAN-DO-STUDY-ACT CYCLES: Describe **at least one PDSA cycle** that will be embedded into the implementation of your project. Keep in mind that the PDSA cycle should inform how you implement your project, leaving open the possibility that the findings will indicate the need to adapt or abandon part of your plan. It is important to

integrate insights and be open to iteration. This section should indicate how you will use the results to inform implementation, suggesting how you can change course mid-implementation in response to findings from the PDSA cycle. Specify the exact plan for at least your first PDSA cycle using the provided worksheet as a planning tool. **(NELP 7.4)**

6. BUDGET: Specify why the project will be cost-neutral for your school or how these costs will be covered if there are extra costs. This should be a short narrative presentation (you do not need budget codes, etc.). Describe existing resources already in your school/division budget, any additional resources that need to be procured, and how those will be procured. **(NELP 6.2)**

7. EVALUATION PLAN: Include a narrative explanation of how you plan to **evaluate your project**, which includes a) the specific indicators you will examine to determine the impact of the project on student performance or the learning environment; b) a description of how and when you plan to collect data about these indicators, and c) a brief description of the Analysis you plan to conduct to examine these data in order to ascertain the impact of the project on your intended outcomes. **(NELP 3.1)**

8. CONSEQUENCE ANALYSIS: In closing, briefly discuss the advantages and the potential limitations of the project. In particular, conduct a **consequence analysis** to predict any issues that might arise during implementation or any limitations you might face in terms of using the evaluation design to draw trustworthy inferences about the effectiveness of the project. If possible, include reference to issues raised in the literature. **(NELP 6.2)**

NOTE: The proposal is not an essay, per se; it can be written using each of the sections listed above, and some information can be presented in bullets (e.g., a listing of outcomes measured) or in tables (e.g., the action plan). There will be some redundancy (e.g., you might describe the PDSA cycle in your action plan, and in that section, the description of involvement likely will be reflected in your action plan). Your audience for this proposal is your principal – imagine that you are presenting this document to him/her and lobbying for the adoption of this project (which you will lead).

Your IIP Proposal should include citations and a reference list in APA format.

Internship Improvement Project Proposal Assessment Rubric

	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Mets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Statement of purpose and overview of the project: Use of data to identify IIP topic that relates to and supports the school's vision and objectives (NELP 1.2) (10%)	The proposal begins with a clear statement of purpose, which relates specifically to a problem identified by focusing on variation in performance using data that could include assessment results, surveys, empathy interviews, demographic data, and analysis of school and community needs. A concise but thorough description of the proposed project is provided that spells out the actions proposed to drive improvement.	The proposal begins with a statement of purpose which generally relates to a problem identified using performance data. A brief description of the proposed project is provided.	The statement of purpose and/or description of the project is evident but is vaguely worded or poorly spelled out. It is difficult to discern a clear focus of the project.	The statement of purpose and/or project description is missing or wholly inadequate.
Rationale: Use of research-supported strategies to promote continual and sustainable improvement (NELP 1.1) (15%)	The proposal includes a concise and well-supported rationale that describes the nature of the problem being addressed, why the problem is important to the attainment of the school's vision, and how taking the proposed action is intended to drive improvement through a driver diagram. Specific, research is presented in support of the strategy selected to address the identified problem.	The proposal includes a rationale that describes the nature of the problem being addressed and why the problem is important to the attainment of the school's vision, but it is somewhat unclear about how taking the proposed action is intended to lead to improvement. Research supporting the general improvement strategy is referenced.	The proposal includes a rationale, but only generally connects the proposed action to mitigation of the identified problem. Research supporting the proposed action is weakly presented or not evident.	The rationale is weak or wholly inadequate. It is not clear how enacting the proposed project relates to mitigation of the identified problem.

Involvement: Understand and sustain a culture of trust, collaboration and high expectations for students (NELP 7.2) (10%)	The proposal clearly describes which stakeholders will be involved in enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the IIP. All stakeholders who are important to the success of the project are involved. Team member roles and responsibilities are outlined. The proposal clearly describes how the candidate will build a collaborative team to promote improvement goals and build trust throughout enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the IIP.	The proposal describes the primary stakeholders who will be involved in enactment of the IIP. One or more groups whose involvement may be important are omitted. Attributes of team organization are described in general terms. The proposal describes some ways the candidate will build a collaborative team and build trust in enactment, monitoring, and evaluation of the IIP.	The proposal is unclear about stakeholders' involvement in enactment of the IIP, or fails to mention groups who are obviously important to the success of the project. Attributes of team organization are referenced in general terms. The proposal is unclear about ways collaboration and involvement will be fostered throughout the project.	Stakeholder involvement in planning and/or implementation is not evident. The proposal is silent with regard to stakeholder involvement and/or trust building.
Action Plan: Development of action plan to guide the implementation of IIP (NELP 6.1) (15%)	The proposal includes a clear and well thought out action plan that focuses on effective deployment of human, fiscal, and material resources to guide the implementation of the IIP. The plan thoroughly delineates each of the major tasks to be accomplished in enacting the project; approximately when each task will be completed; who is involved in accomplishing each task; the resources needed to complete each task.	The proposal includes an action plan that describes how human, fiscal, and material resources will be used to implement the IIP. The plan delineates most of the major tasks needed to enact the project; approximately when various tasks will be completed; who is involved in accomplishing each task; the resources needed to complete each	The action plan includes details tasks, time lines, persons responsible, and resources, but does so in a fashion that is unlikely to result in successful deployment of human, fiscal, and material resources to accomplish the stated purpose. Significant tasks are inadequately spelled out or are missing entirely.	The action plan is poorly organized, severely lacking in detail, or wholly missing. It is entirely unclear how any proposed actions can result in successful implementation of the project.

		task. Some necessary tasks or implementation details are vaguely described or missing.		
Plan-Do-Study-Act Cycles: Inclusion of appropriate inquiry cycle plans (NELP 7.4) (10%)	Clear mapping of at least one PDSA cycle that is inserted within the implementation phase of the proposed school improvement plans. Specify what data will be collected, by who, from whom, when the data will be collected, how the data will be analyzed, and how the results will inform continued implementation of the school improvement project.	At least one PDSA cycle is described with complete information except it is unclear how the results of the PDSA cycle will inform changes to the implementation of the school improvement project.	One or more essential elements for planning the PDSA cycle is missing.	The PDSA cycle is not described.
Evaluation Plan: Monitor and evaluate the project (NELP 3.1) (10%)	Specific lagging, leading, process measures are identified and described that will be used to monitor and evaluate the implementation and impact of the project. Each indicator is demonstrably connected to either monitoring implementation of the project or mitigating the identified problem. A clear, well developed plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, which specifies how data related to each educational indicator will be collected, approximately when	Specific measures are identified and described that could be used to monitor and evaluate the impact of the project. Measures used to monitor implementation fidelity are unclear. A plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, which specifies how data related to most of the identified educational indicators will be collected, approximately when these data	The proposal makes general reference to the kinds of outcomes sought, but specific measures of implementation fidelity and/or project outcomes are not clearly identified. A plan to monitor and evaluate the project is presented, but it lacks specificity and/or is not clearly connected to the espoused objectives of the IIP. Steps that will be taken to collect and analyze various data are unclear, as are methods that will be used to monitor	The outcomes associated with the project are not specified, or outcomes that do not relate to the identified performance gap are proposed. The evaluation plan is poorly organized, lacks sufficient detail, or is wholly inadequate to support the evaluation of the project.

	these data will be collected, and how they will be analyzed. The evaluation plan includes steps that will be taken to examine and adjust the project during enactment (i.e., monitor implementation) and to assess summatively the efficacy of the project in terms of reducing the identified performance gap.	will be collected, and how they will be analyzed. The evaluation plan includes general steps that will be taken to monitor implementation and to assess summatively the efficacy of the project.	implementation and to summatively assess the efficacy of the project.	
Consequence analysis: Identification of potential issues related to enactment of plan within the school and school community to positively influence the school context (NELP 6.2) (10%)	The proposal concludes with a detailed analysis of the benefits and limitations of the proposed project design, highlighting possible issues relating to enactment of the plan within the school and school community. Advantages and disadvantages of the project and evaluation design are highlighted, including an assessment of issues relating to the involvement and support of important stakeholders within the school community. Issues relating to implementation fidelity and the trustworthiness of the evaluation research design are clearly spelled out.	The proposal concludes with a general analysis of the benefits and limitations of the proposed project design, including issues relating to the support and involvement of important stakeholders. Obvious advantages and disadvantages of the project and evaluation design are identified. Select issues related to implementation fidelity and trustworthiness of the research evaluation design is explored, though some important potential issues are not identified.	The proposal concludes with a cursory analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed design. Issues of stakeholder involvement, implementation fidelity, and trustworthiness are only superficially addressed.	The proposal concludes with a general restatement of the project's purpose and/or description, but lacks any reasonable reflection on the strengths or weaknesses of the proposed design. A consequence analysis is not evident.
Budget: Use of new and existing resources to	The proposal includes a brief budget summary that describes how the project will be cost	The proposal includes a brief budget summary. Funding needed to accomplish the	A budget summary is presented, but it is lacking or is missing necessary components. The	The budget is poorly organized, severely lacking in detail, or

facilitate IIP (NELP 6.2) (5%)	neutral with an explanation for why the project comes at no additional cost or specifically demonstrates the ability to identify and procure resources to facilitate the implementation of your project. Include a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been or will be procured for both in-kind and additional expenditures. This description includes all aspects of the action plan that would involve additional or in-kind expenditures.	project is identified; a description of any existing resources that will be devoted to the project is outlined; and a discussion of how authority to use these resources has been or will be procured is described.	use of existing resources is not well thought out, and/or procedures for leveraging these resources are undeveloped or missing.	wholly inadequate to support the objective and action plan described.
Support: Use available knowledge related to current and emerging trends (5%)	Specific, developed ideas and/or evidence from research are used to support the selection of the improvement target and the strategy identified for addressing it	Supporting research used to support the project lacks specificity or is loosely developed.	General supporting ideas or evidence are presented.	Few to no solid supporting ideas or evidence from research are included.
Organization of proposal: (5%)	The proposal is powerfully organized and fully developed.	The proposal includes a logical progression of ideas aided by clear transitions.	The proposal includes a brief skeleton (introduction, body, and conclusion) but lacks effective transitions.	The proposal lacks a logical progression of ideas.
Mechanics and APA: (5%)	The proposal is nearly error-free, which reflects a clear understanding of APA and thorough proofreading.	Occasional grammatical errors and questionable word choice are present.	Errors in grammar and punctuation are present, but spelling has been proofread.	The proposal contains frequent errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

In-Class Group Assignment: The NIC Charter
(10 Points)

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Aim Statement (2 point)	Aim statement is measurable, relates to the problem, is specific, and is motivating.	Aim statement is measurable, relates to the problem, and is specific, but lacks motivating language.	Aim statement is either not measurable, does not relate to the problem, or lacks specificity.	Aim statement is missing or wholly inadequate.
Causal Systems Analysis Through a Fishbone Diagram (3 points)	Causal systems analysis is thorough, incorporates class and instructor feedback, and directly relates to the group members' assignments.	Causal system analysis is thorough but did not incorporate feedback or is not related to group members' assignments.	Causal systems analysis contains holes and needs more thorough consideration.	Causal systems analysis is missing of wholly inadequate.
Working Theory of Practice Improvement Through the Driver Diagram and Inter-relational Diagram (3 points)	Working theory of improvement is thorough, incorporates class and instructor feedback, builds off of the causal systems analysis, and directly relates to the group members' IIP Proposals.	Working theory of improvement is thorough but did not incorporate feedback or is not related to group members' IIP Proposals.	Working theory of improvement contains holes and needs more thorough consideration.	Working theory of improvement is missing of wholly inadequate.
Common Measures of Implementation and Outcomes (2 points)	The group has compiled a robust set of common measures that are applicable to all or almost all of the group members' IIP Proposal. These measures address both implementation, proximal outcomes, and distal outcomes.	The group has compiled a set of common measures that are applicable to all or almost all of the group members' IIP Proposal. These measures fail to address either implementation or proximal outcomes.	The group has compiled one or two common measures that are only tangentially relevant to the group members' IIP Proposals.	The group did not create common measures.

Class Participation Assessment Rubric
(10 Points)

Levels/Criteria	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Meets Expectations (3)	Approaching Expectations (2)	Falls Below Expectations (1)
Attendance (2 points)	Exemplary attendance, no tardies.	Near perfect attendance, few tardies.	Occasional (2-3) absences and tardies.	Frequent (>3) absences and tardies.
Quality of questions and interaction (2 points)	Most queries are specific and on point. Deeply involved in class dialogue. Challenges ideas, seeks meaning.	Often has specific queries, stays involved in class dialogue, though sometimes tentative or off-base.	Asks questions about deadlines, procedures, directions or for help with little specificity. Little discussion of ideas.	Rarely asks questions of any quality.
Participation in online activities (2 points)	Volunteers as appropriate and often leads in group settings. Engages and brings out the best in others. Completes all required asynchronous activities.	Willingly participates with instructor and classmates. Engages others. Completes most required asynchronous activities.	Reluctantly participates when asked (rarely volunteers) Seeks easiest duties within groups. Completes few required asynchronous activities.	Actively avoids involvement. Complains about others and uses excuses to explain deficiencies. Does not completes required asynchronous activities.
Demonstration of preparation for class (2 points)	Demonstrates preparation regularly by referring to previous learning, text and other sources to contribute to class discussion and is prepared for each and every class. Clearly engages in asynchronous learning opportunities.	Demonstrates preparation regularly by referring to previous learning, text and other sources to contribute to class discussion. Inconsistently engages in asynchronous learning.	Demonstrates preparation and readiness periodically. Does not engage in asynchronous learning.	Is unable to demonstrate readiness for class. Does not engage in asynchronous learning.
Responsible use of technology (2 points)	Laptop/tablet is utilized for classroom activities only. Very limited cell phone use during class activities.	Laptop/tablet is utilized for classroom activities only. Cell phone is in use on a regular basis in a distracting manner.	Laptop/tablet is sometimes utilized for unrelated activities. Cell phone is in use on a regular basis in a distracting manner.	Is consistently off task on laptop/tablet and constant cell phone usage.