



Making it Happen

A Tool for Mapping & Analyzing Current Infrastructure

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20infrastructure.pdf>

>>Review the prototype of an integrated infrastructure at a school level and at a district level. The aim is to clarify strengths, weaknesses, and needed changes.

Step 1. Put a check mark on the mechanisms that you currently have.

Step 2. Add others you have that are not in the diagram.

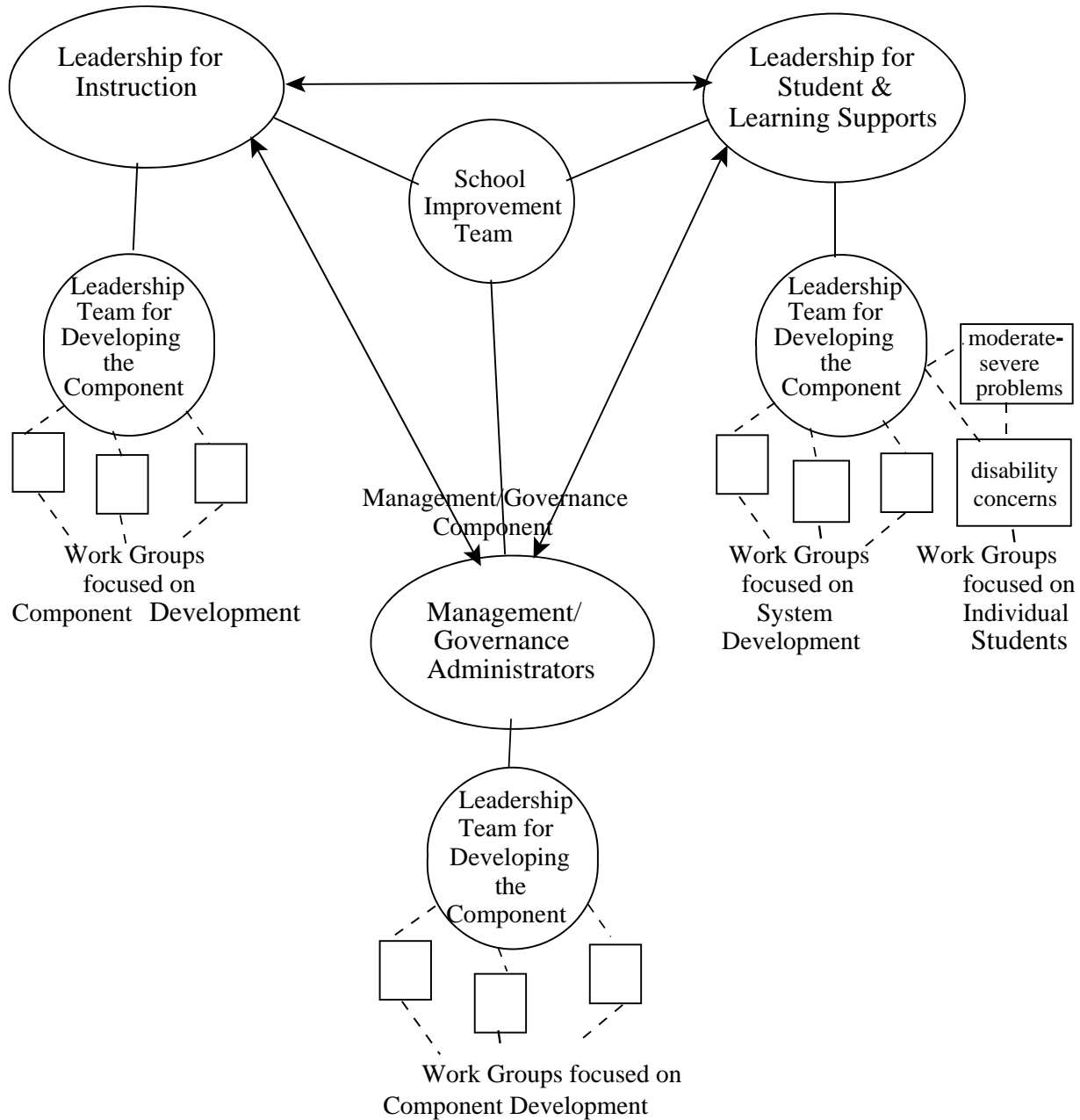
Step 3. Put a double check mark on those you don't have, but think would be important to develop.

Step 4. X-out any you have that you think should be dropped.

Example of an Integrated Infrastructure at the School Level*

Facilitating Learning/Development
Instructional Component

Addressing Barriers to Learning
Enabling or Learning Supports Component



*The infrastructure for a comprehensive system of learning supports should be designed from the school outward. That is, conceptually, the first emphasis is on what an integrated infrastructure should look like at the school level. Then, the focus expands to include the mechanisms needed to connect a family or complex (e.g., feeder pattern) of schools and establish collaborations with surrounding community resources. Ultimately, central district units need to be restructured in ways that best support the work at the school and school complex levels.

Additional Notes for the Example

As illustrated in the figure, each of the three primary and essential components for school improvement requires (1) administrative leadership, (2) a leadership team to work with the leader on system development, and (3) standing and occasionally ad hoc work groups to accomplish specific tasks. The administrative leaders for the instructional and enabling components are part of the management/governance component to ensure all three components are integrated and that the enabling/learning component is not marginalized. If a special team is assigned to work on school improvement planning, implementation, and evaluation, the leaders for all three components must be on that team.

With specific reference to the component to address barriers to learning, the administrative leader has responsibility and accountability for continuous development of a comprehensive and cohesive system of student and learning supports. In regular meetings with a leadership team, the agenda includes guiding and monitoring daily implementation and development of all programs, services, initiatives, and systems intended to address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students.

Standing work groups are established to pursue tasks related to developing and implementing the component's schoolwide and classroom programs. In our work, we organize them around six major intervention arenas (often with a work group focused on two at a time). The six arenas cover:

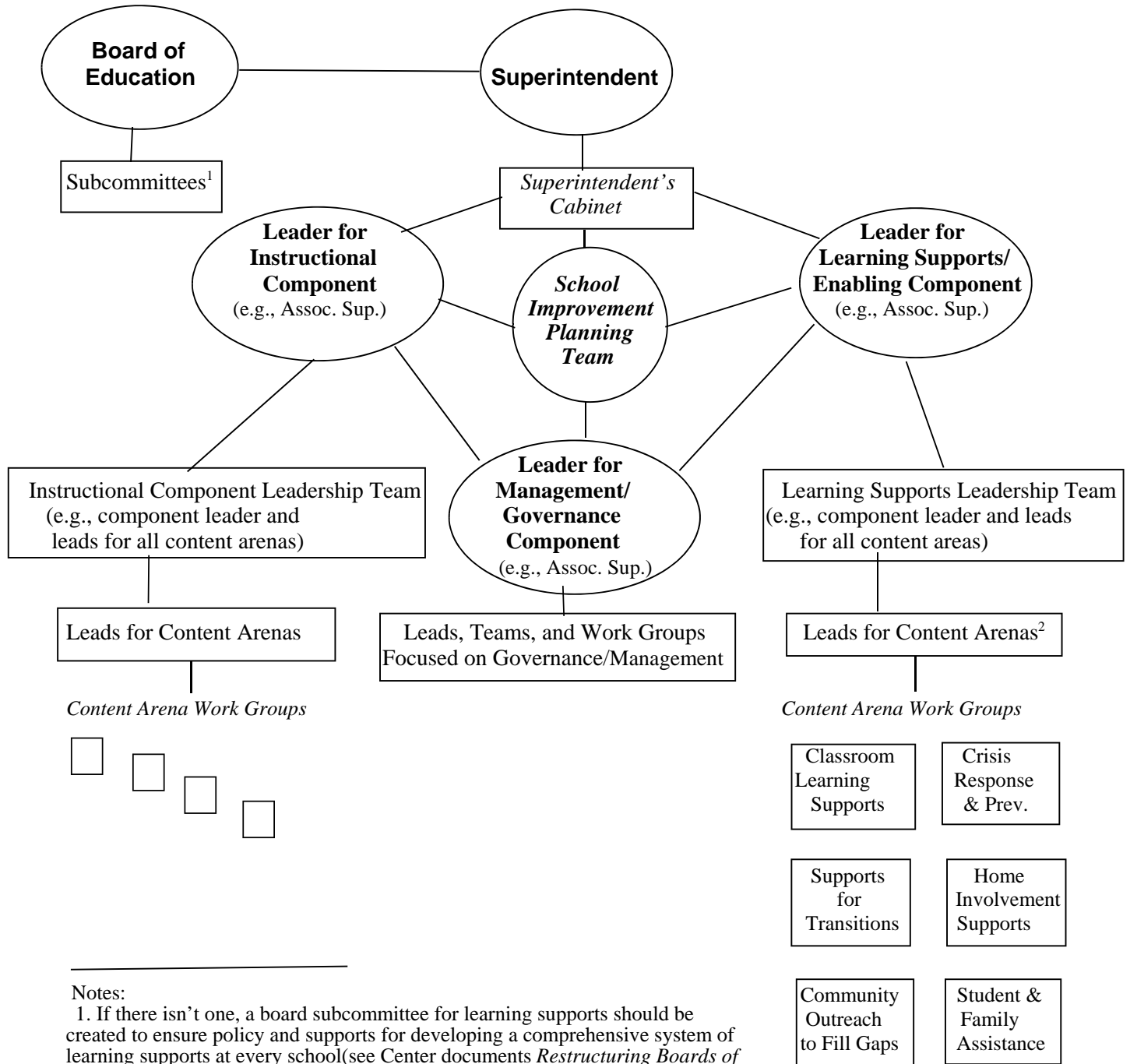
- (1) in-classroom approaches designed to enhance how teachers enable learning through prevention and intervening as early after problem onset as feasible
- (2) home involvement approaches to enhance engagement in schools and schooling
- (3) supports for the many transitions experienced by students and their families
- (4) outreach programs to enhance community involvement and engagement (e.g., volunteers, businesses, agencies, faith-based organizations, etc.)
- (5) crisis response and prevention (encompassing concerns about violence, bullying, substance abuse, etc.)
- (6) specialized student and family assistance when necessary – includes two standing work groups that focus on the needs of specific individual students who are manifesting problems. One group (e.g., a student assistance team) focuses on those with moderate-severe problems that are not the result of disabilities; the other (i.e., an IEP team) focuses on disability concerns.

Additional, ad hoc work groups/committees are formed by the leadership team only when absolutely needed to deal with exceptional matters (e.g., formulating a set of guidelines, developing a specific resource aid). Tasks for ad hoc groups always are clearly defined and the work is time limited.

Small schools, obviously, have less staff and other resources than most larger schools. Thus, in a small school, a leadership team and work groups will consist of fewer members. Nevertheless, the three major components necessary for school improvement remain the same in all schools. The challenge in any school is to pursue all three components in an integrated and effective manner. The added challenge in a small school is how to do it with so few personnel.

In a small school, the principal (and whoever else is part of the governance leadership team) will need to ensure that someone is assigned leadership for each of the three components. For the enabling/learning supports component, this may be someone already on the leadership team or someone in the school who has major involvement with student supports (e.g. a pupil services professional, a Title I coordinator, a special education resource specialist). If not already in an administrator's role, the newly designated component leader needs to become part of the administrative team, assigned responsibility and accountability for ensuring the vision for the component is not lost, and provided additional training for the tasks involved in the new leadership assignment.

Prototype for an Integrated Infrastructure at the District Level with Mechanisms for Learning Supports That Are Comparable to Those for Instruction



Notes:

1. If there isn't one, a board subcommittee for learning supports should be created to ensure policy and supports for developing a comprehensive system of learning supports at every school (see Center documents *Restructuring Boards of Education to Enhance Schools' Effectiveness in Addressing Barriers to Student Learning* <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/boardrep.pdf> and Example of a Formal Proposal for Moving in New Directions for Student Support <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/newdirections/exampleproposal.pdf>)

2. All resources related to addressing barriers to learning and teaching (e.g., student support personnel, compensatory and special education staff and interventions, special initiatives, grants, and programs) are integrated into a refined set of major content arenas such as those indicated here. Leads are assigned for each arena and work groups are established.

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| Classroom Learning Supports | Crisis Response & Prev. |
| Supports for Transitions | Home Involvement Supports |
| Community Outreach to Fill Gaps | Student & Family Assistance |