The Role of an Instructional Guide in an Expeditionary Learning School

The instructional guide serves as a facilitator and coach, working and communicating on an ongoing basis with the EL school designer, principal and faculty. It is important that the guide:

- Understands the vision of an EL school and consistently models it
- Understands the EL model: its core practices, language, and services to schools
- Has a good working relationship with the faculty
- Can speak frankly to the principal and school designer about issues and concerns

The position entails:

- Working with the principal, school leadership team and EL school designer/other EL staff to schedule and plan professional development
- Providing ongoing assistance to the staff with any aspect of design implementation linked to school improvement
- Tracking progress/data related to specific goals and sharing that data with the faculty

An instructional guide works in many of the same ways as a school designer but has the advantage of being on site every day. Together, school designers and instructional guides do the following:

- **Coordinate professional development** to ensure that implementing the EL model is a means to achieving the school’s mission, grounded in student achievement.
- **Meet regularly** with teachers /teams during common planning time or other regularly scheduled sessions to collectively discuss issues focused on: curriculum, instruction, assessment, and culture, as linked to the school’s work plan.
- **Attend to structures** such as crew, student led conferences, intensives, presentations of learning, school-wide community meetings, and passages as applicable to the work of the school.
- **Provide coaching** to help teachers build a strong culture, implement learning expeditions, and use engaging instructional and assessment practices as linked to the school’s work plan.
- **Support teachers** in other ways, including modeling lessons, supporting planning, assisting with fieldwork or service learning opportunities, contacting community experts, navigating scheduling issues, and providing resources.
- **Provide a variety of ongoing opportunities** for faculty to understand and discuss Expeditionary Learning as school-wide model. The goal is an accurate, shared knowledge of the design as an approach to teaching and learning that will support school improvement goals and increase student achievement.

School leaders can support the Instructional Guide position by:
• Keeping the role focused on school improvement/staff development related responsibilities as much as possible.
• Providing support /authority to the instructional guide so the position is viewed as critical to improvement of teaching and learning at the school.
• Working with faculty to diminish barriers that may interfere with effectiveness of instructional guide's role (Ex: providing common planning time for teachers).
• Minimizing extra duties; last minute class coverage and other unplanned requests occur only when absolutely necessary.