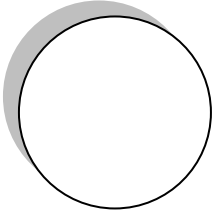




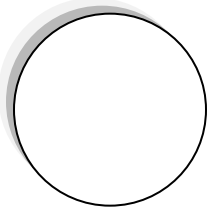
**HIRING**



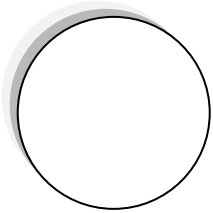
**A Principal's  
Guide**



**INDUCTION**



**To A Learning System  
That Fosters  
Continuous School  
Improvement**



**PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT**



**EVALUATIONS**



**STAFF  
MEETINGS**

*“The Fundamental Role of the Principal is to Help Create the Conditions that Enable Teachers to Effectively Achieve School Improvement Goals” (DuFour)*

“When you talk about school improvement, you are talking about people improvement. That's the only way to improve schools unless you mean painting the buildings and fixing the floors. But that's not the school, that's the shell. The school is people, so when we talk about excellence or improvement or progress, we're really talking about the people who make up the building.” (DuFour & Berkley, 1995)

Focusing on people is the most effective way to change any organization. In fact, it can be argued that organizations do not change, only individuals change. It is only when enough of the people within an organization change that the organization can be transformed (Fullan, 1993).

If this premise that people are the key to school improvement is correct, then it follows that the fundamental role of the principal is to help create the conditions which enable a staff to develop so that the school can achieve its goals more effectively. In short, a key to school improvement is the willingness and ability of principals to assume the role of staff developers who make it their mission to "alter the professional practices, beliefs, and understandings of school personnel toward an articulated end" (Schalock, 1985, p. 14).

It is also important that principals be committed to continuous improvement. Schools can become learning organizations capable of significant change only if those within them recognize that school improvement is a complex, ongoing process rather than a task to be completed. While it is important that principals celebrate the attainment of improvement goals, it is even more important that such celebrations serve as motivators for staying the course rather than signal that the improvement process has ended. (DuFour & Berkley, 1995)

# Effective Teachers are the Key To School Improvement

## *To Improve Student Learning and Educational Opportunities Begins With Recruiting Highly Effective Teachers*

Highly-qualified teachers engage learners and raise student achievement. They bring fresh ideas to the school. A weak hire not only impacts student learning, but lowers faculty morale and costs an administrator hours of time to remediate or release. (Clement, 2010)



### **Recruitment Plan**

Author Nedra Atwell (2006) suggests that a successful recruitment plan does the following:

*Requires a recruitment strategic planning team*

*Develops marketing and outreach strategies*

*Forms partnerships with traditional teacher education institutions and alternative licensure programs*

*Evaluates the hiring process*

*Provides financial incentives (Consider both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for teachers when designing recruitment programs and policies)*

*Ensure hires know the student population and demonstrate a passion and commitment to their success to be the right fit for the school*

The recruitment strategic planning team could include district staff as well as school-based personnel such as principals and teachers. Involving all stakeholders in the process gives everyone greater ownership of the process and can make it much more effective. Atwell suggests that to be most effective the planning team should:

- develop a clear mission
- assess the needs of the district
- collect data to evaluate the effectiveness of the recruitment plan.

***“Traditional routes into teaching do not appear to yield more effective teachers than alternative routes.” National Council on Teacher Quality***

# Know Yourself

To create and sustain improvement and establish a strong academic culture, schools and districts need to know who they are, where they are heading, and what sort of teacher will help get them there. High-achieving schools don't just look for a "good" third-grade teacher. They know the knowledge, skills, experiences, and beliefs they are looking for in teachers, and they develop ways of uncovering those qualities through the screening and interview process. Should the applicant be familiar with a specific reform model? Is it necessary that he or she has experience with team teaching or planning? Does the school want a candidate to demonstrate a strong commitment to reaching all students? The more specific a district and school can be about the vision of the teacher they are looking for, the more likely they are to realize it. (The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement)



## Principals Should Consider Who Should Be Involved in the Hiring Process

**To secure an effective teacher for EVERY child**, schools must do more than hire a qualified teacher. They must select the right teacher for the right context, and then make appropriate classroom assignments.

*Involving principals and teachers in the selection and assignment process can improve the likelihood that the applicant and the school are satisfied with the match between the new teachers and the staff.* (Lui & Johnson, 2006)

Not only do school leaders want applicants whose attitude and ability are a good fit with the school's needs and culture, but applicants also want to feel comfortable in their new workplace.

*Use of DIVERSE HIRING COMMITTEES  
Can Contribute to the Selection of Teacher  
Candidates that are a Good Fit to the School's Culture IF:*

- (1) Committee Members are Trained*
- (2) The Committee Uses a Rubric*

## "Do's" and "Don'ts" of Interviewing

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take written notes; include only job-related comments. Give notes to administrator in charge.</li> <li>• Ask all applicants the same questions.</li> <li>• Use a written list of interview questions that directly relate to the job description.</li> <li>• Work at making the applicant feel at home. If the candidate is nervous or ill at ease, it is probable that you are only going to get surface-level information and not the true picture of attitudes, feelings, motivation, etc.</li> <li>• Be aware of your own biases or preferences. Some people tend to accept or reject someone automatically because of a certain background factor or personal characteristic.</li> <li>• Let the applicant do most of the talking. If you are doing much of the talking, you will learn very little about the candidate. Rule of thumb: interviewer(s) should talk about 20% of the interview.</li> <li>• Phrase questions in a way that does not suggest the answer you are looking for. Candidates want to please you. If your point of view is implied in the question, you may not get a totally frank response.</li> <li>• Avoid asking questions that can be answered with 'yes' or 'no' (unless this type of answer is sufficient). Yes/no questions may force you to explain or ask another question in order to get more information from the candidate.</li> <li>• Be careful of your non-verbal communication. Non-verbal actions can "turn-off" or make a candidate nervous.</li> <li>• Pause a few seconds after a candidate appears to have completed a response. The pause may encourage the candidate to continue and reveal useful information s/he might have withheld.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include extraneous observations in your notes (e.g. references to appearance, mannerisms, etc.).</li> <li>• Prejudge a candidate. This occurs when the interviewer develops positive or negative expectations of the applicant before the interview based on the written materials or a verbal comment from someone else.</li> <li>• Rely on first impression. Some people unconsciously 'lock in' their first impression and, during the interview, look only for the information that will back up that initial impression.</li> <li>• Compare candidates with each other until all have been interviewed. Research has found that if you rate an 'average' candidate after evaluating 3-4 unfavorable candidates, you tend to rate the average one very high.</li> <li>• Make the "halo effect" error. The "halo effect" occurs when the interviewer is overly impressed by one positive or negative factor and then judges all other factors in the same light.</li> <li>• Rely on your intuition. Some interviewers feel that their "intuitive feel" is more reliable than objective factors or evidence. Research has shown that this is not a desirable practice. Our memory conveniently allows us to forget the number of times our intuition let us down.</li> <li>• Waste time by asking questions that are answered on the application form or other written information.</li> <li>• Ask trick questions or questions designed to trap the candidate.</li> <li>• Ask questions that violate the candidate's civil rights.</li> <li>• Contradict or argue with the candidate or appear to cross-examine him/her. These things can cause the candidate to "clam up" or be deceptive about his/her true feelings.</li> </ul>

*"Past behavior is the best predictor of future performance,"*

*Mary C. Clement*

*Hiring Expert*

# **Mentoring and Induction Programs**

***Have Been Linked to Numerous Benefits for Students and Schools Including:***

- 1) Higher Teacher Retention Rates***
- 2) Higher Student Achievement and Test Scores***
- 3) Stronger Staff Connections and a Positive Learning Environment***
- 4) Less Time Spent on Recruiting and Hiring Replacement Teachers***

Northwest Regional Education Library (May 2001)

## **What Can Principals Do To Support New Teachers ?**

***Make new teacher support a priority and take the lead in developing a formal program.***

- Make plans for new teachers to be involved in an induction program for 1-3 years; including orientation for first year
- Perform a needs assessment of your new staff members
- Assign mentors to new teachers and build time into the schedule for collaboration

***Make your expectations for beginning teachers clear.***

- Having a clear idea of what they are being asked to do will reduce some of the beginners' anxiety

***Tell new teachers you are invested in their success.***

- Encourage them to talk to you about any problems they are not sure to handle
- Talk to new teachers frequently to build their confidence

***Set aside time to meet informally with new teachers weekly***

- This shows your supportiveness and provides a forum for discussing issues teachers are facing before they become overwhelming.

***Find ways to draw new teachers out of their classrooms and into the larger school community***

- Do so in ways that allow new teachers to showcase their strengths, and that don't pile on added responsibilities."
- Send frequent emails; write short notes of encouragement throughout the year

***Support new teachers' participation in professional development activities.***

- Provide a Resource Book Especially Written To Help New Teachers
- Help new teachers identify priorities for development



## How Principals Can Support An Effective Mentoring Program

The purpose of an effective mentoring program is to build a relationship between the mentor and the mentee that is supportive and also maximizes the effectiveness of the new teacher in the classroom. (National Regional Educational Library, May 2001)

Considerations That A Principal Should Make When Pairing New Teachers with Mentors are:

- 1) Avoid pairing a new teacher with a mentor that may be considered in a supervisory position such as a department chair as this will make the new teacher less likely to be open and ask questions
- 2) Assign new teachers to mentors with similar interests and outlooks on teaching
- 3) If possible, the mentor should teach at the same grade level or in the same subject
- 4) Build release time into the master schedule for new teachers to meet with their mentor
- 5) Provide support and training for the mentors



*"New teachers who develop a powerful bond with their principals derive benefits that last them well past their first year on the job."*

Education Oasis (2011) <http://www.educationoasis.com/>

# *EVALUATING TEACHERS IS ONE OF A PRINCIPAL'S MOST IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES*

Principals strive to use their observations and evaluations to help teachers develop new skills and learn new research-based best practices – TO HELP THOSE TEACHERS BECOME THE BEST TEACHERS THEY CAN BE.

Teachers need to know the purpose of evaluations is to assist them in developing their craft to the highest level. *But before this can occur:*

## *PRINCIPALS MUST TAKE TIME TO BUILD TRUST.*

### How Can a Principal Build Trust ?

1. **Demonstrate Personal Integrity** – *show honesty and commitment to all stakeholders.* (Barlow, 2001; Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Sebring & Bryk, 2000)
2. **Show That You Care** – *take a personal interest in the well-being of others.* (Sebring & Bryk, 2000)
3. **Be Accessible** – *have open lines of communication; allow teachers to ask questions, engage in discussions; express their comfort level with suggestions.* (Black, 1997; Blasé & Blasé, 2001; Sebring & Bryk, 2000)
4. **Facilitate and Model Effective Communication** – *give teachers guided practice in conducting appropriate conversations, making decisions, and managing conflict* (Blasé & Blasé, 2001, p. 25).
5. **Involve Staff in Decision Making** – *treat teachers as capable professionals whose insights are valuable* (Black, 1997; Blasé & Blasé, 2001).
6. **Celebrate Experimentation and Support Risk** - *Supporting innovation and risk taking demonstrates respect for teachers as learners and as professionals whose judgment can be trusted* (Blasé & Blasé, 2001).



## How Can a Principal Build Trust ?

7. **Express value for dissenting views** - *Being able to express concerns and disagreement without fear of reprisal is essential to building trusting relationships . It also allows teachers to feel more secure in providing honest input and participating meaningfully in school decision making.* (Lien, Johnson, & Ragland, 1997).
8. **Reduce teachers' sense of vulnerability**- *A core element of this is demonstrating through both words and action that “teachers can and should be trusted to do what is best for students”. In environments in which teachers feel unsupported, mistrusted, or constantly on the verge of reprimand, trust between teachers and administrators is unlikely to improve.* (Bryk and Schneider, 2002)
9. **Ensure that teachers have basic resources** - *When teachers know that the principal can be depended upon to provide necessary books and supplies—and to do it in a timely fashion—trust in that person as a responsible leader grows* (Kratzer, 1997; Sebring & Bryk, 2000).
10. **Be prepared to replace ineffective teachers** – *A principal's unwillingness or inability to remove teachers who are widely regarded as incompetent is likely to undermine his or her trust with other staff members* (Bryk & Schneider, 2002).



*Blasé and Blasé (2001) advise principals to “welcome and embrace conflict as a way to build supportive human relationships that allows us to deal with our differences in win-win ways”.*

# ***TEACHER EVALUATION AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT***

The essential issue is that we have the *most effective teachers* possible  
Guiding the learning of our students. *And:*

*“Without High Quality Evaluation Systems,*

*We Cannot Know*

*If We Have High Quality Teachers”*

(Stronge & Tucker, 2003)

## **So why does teacher evaluation matter?**

Because regardless of how well a program is designed, it is only as effective as the people who implement it (Stronge, 1993). *Thus, a conceptually sound, well designed, and properly implemented evaluation system for teachers is an important – indeed, essential - component of an effective school.*

## ***What are the qualities of a Well designed Teacher Evaluation System?***

Fair

Effective

Performance Based

Designed to Improve Both the Teacher and the School

**A comprehensive teacher evaluation system should have two broad purposes:**

1. It should be *accountability-oriented*, contributing to the personal goals of the teacher and to the mission of the program, the school, and the total educational organization, and should provide a fair measure of accountability of performance (i.e., summative focus).
2. It should be *improvement-oriented*, contributing to the personal and professional development needs of the individual [teacher] as well as improvement within the school (i.e., formative focus).



## **The Charlotte Danielson Framework**

Danielson (1996) explained that “the components of professional practice are a comprehensive framework reflecting the many different aspects of teaching” (p.2). Danielson’s framework includes four domains: planning and preparation, the classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. This framework can be used to guide both novice and experienced teachers, to provide a structure for reform efforts, and to communicate expectations to the community (Danielson, 1996).

### **Effective Teacher Evaluations Include:**

- Pre-Observation Meetings with Teachers
- Self Assessments by Teachers
- Multiple Observations
- Post-Observation Meetings with Teacher
- Opportunity for Teacher Reflection
- Identification of Professional Development to Improve Teacher Effectiveness

### **How Can Self-Reflection and Feedback Improve Teaching?**

A teacher evaluation system that is designed for school improvement and teacher growth can improve teaching. The *value* in evaluation is improving performance

### **Teacher Evaluation Helps Teachers :**

- identify the need to improve
- serves as a catalyst for accomplishing those desired improvements.

### **Teachers Helping Themselves: Self-reflection**

- Reflection is a powerful force for improvement. A hallmark of expert teachers is their ability to learn from experience through observation and reflection (Tucker, Stronge, & Gareis, 2002).
- In fact, expert teachers engage in instructional self-assessment as a mechanism for continual improvement (Covino & Iwanicki, 1996).
- “experience without reflection does not improve instruction or teacher effectiveness. Rather, it is the combination of experience and thoughtful analysis that makes teachers more effective” (Tucker, Stronge, & Gareis, 2002, p. 79)



*"Every teacher has the responsibility to be involved in a career-long quest to improve practice." (Danielson, 2010)*

*If we want teacher evaluation systems that teachers find meaningful and from which they can learn, we must use processes that not only are rigorous, valid, and reliable, but also engage teachers in those activities that promote learning—namely **self assessment, reflection on practice, and professional conversation.***

### **An Evaluation Process that Promotes Teacher Learning**

1. The administrator goes to the classroom, watches a lesson, and takes notes on all aspects of the lesson: what the teacher says and does, what the students say and do, the appearance of the classroom, and so on.
2. The administrator gives a copy of his or her notes to the teacher.
3. The administrator analyzes the notes against the evaluative criteria and levels of performance.
4. The teacher **reflects** on the lesson using the observer's notes and assesses the lesson against the evaluative criteria and levels of performance. The teacher will probably, as result of this reflection, identify aspects of his or her teaching to strengthen, and that teacher will reach these conclusions without prompting from the principal. Of course, the principal can always point things out, but when the teacher reflects on a lesson before the post-observation conference, he or she will frequently be as critical as the principal would have been.
5. The teacher and the administrator discuss the lesson. The teacher puts the lesson into context for the administrator, and together they decide on the teacher's strengths and areas for growth. Naturally, the administrator wasn't in the classroom the previous day and can't be familiar with all the issues that the teacher must address. So the teacher might describe a particular student's learning challenges, and the principal might suggest a different approach. But they conduct the conversation in light of their shared understanding of what constitutes good teaching.

### **A Thoughtful Approach**

Abundant evidence from both informal observation and formal investigation indicates that a thoughtful approach to teacher evaluation—*one that engages teachers in reflection and self-assessment*—yields benefits far beyond the important goal of quality assurance. *Such an approach provides the vehicle for teacher growth and development by providing opportunities for professional conversation around agreed-on standards of practice.* (Danielson, 2010)

# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO INCREASE TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS AND PROMOTE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

*A commitment to professional learning is important, not because teaching is of poor quality and must be "fixed," but rather because teaching is so hard that we can always improve it. No matter how good a lesson is, we can always make it better. (Danielson, 2010)*

All educators face one particular obstacle when applying a “cure-all” system—**no singular professional development system can cure it all.** Not only are there many teachers with individual needs, but those teachers each have classrooms full of students with their own unique needs.

***The solution, then, is to provide differentiated professional development opportunities that accommodate all learning types for all learners.***

***DETERMINE THE PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS OF YOUR STAFF THROUGH THE USE OF A NEEDS ASSESSMENT WHICH WILL:***

- Provide direction for professional development programs, projects, and activities
- Allow staff to determine priorities and allocate limited resources to activities that will have the greatest impact
- Create cohesion through the alignment of goals, strategies, professional development, and desired outcomes
- Enable benchmarking and monitoring of implementation and impact
- **Assist with continuous improvement activities** by helping staff identify change, as well as ,which instructional and other practices are working, and the strategies associated with the greatest success. (WestEd, 2008)



# Dimensions of a Comprehensive Needs Assessment

*Some common or suggested components or characteristics of a needs assessment:*

- Considers a range of needs or issues
- Includes information gathered from a variety of sources
- Employs the use of valid and reliable data to the maximum extent possible
- Meaningfully involves many individuals representing a range of knowledge, skills and expertise
- Results in the development of goals and action plans
- Used as the basis for resource allocation
- Includes regular follow up and evaluation of plans and strategies.

## ***WHEN IDENTIFYING NEEDS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONSIDER:***

- Professional Development Offerings
- Professional Development Ratings
- Alignment of Professional Development with the  
*School Improvement Goals*

Teacher Surveys are the most common way to identify perceived needs for professional development.

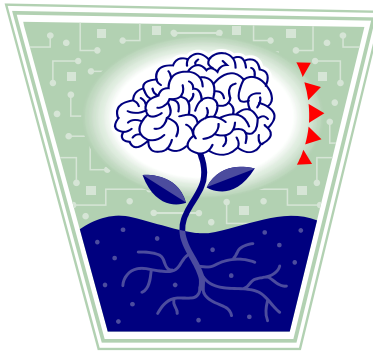
An effective teacher evaluation process can also identify need for professional development.

*"Both professional development and school improvement should have as their primary purpose the improvement of teaching and learning." (Gordon, 1998)*

## DOES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHANGE TEACHING PRACTICE?

### *Eisenhower Professional Development Program*

- Professional development focused on specific, higher-order teaching strategies increases teachers' use of those strategies in the classroom.
- This effect is even stronger when the professional development activity is a reform type (e.g., teacher network or study group) rather than a traditional workshop or conference; provides opportunities for active learning; is coherent or consistent with teachers' goals and other activities
- Professional development involves the participation of teachers from the same subject, grade, or school



### Effective Professional Development should:

- Support the Continuing Development of Professional Learning Communities
- Be Ongoing and Job-Embedded (*e.g. peer coaching, mentoring, classroom walk-through, teacher collaboration*)
- Focus on Standards-Based Instruction
- Make On-Going Reflection on School/Student Data as Part of Professional Learning, so that Local and School Professional Development Committee Members can Determine Progress Toward Meeting the School Goals.

# *Staff Meetings, Team Meetings & Communications From the Principal Should Focus on School Improvement*

## **Regularly Scheduled Time with Staff:**

- *Identify on a monthly calendar time, work that will be completed during staff, team, and department meeting times to examine student work and monitor data*
- *Plan staff meeting agendas that focus on evidence of learning and student achievement*
- *Structure team meetings to focus on examination of student work*
- *Carefully monitor the percent of meeting time you spend on student achievement versus other topics*
- *Find other forums for delivering “administriva” (administrative trivia)*

## **Using Written and Oral Communications:**

- *Include in your staff newsletters progress updates on your school improvement goals*
- *Use back-to-school paperwork, end-of-year paperwork, and other correspondence to staff and parents to focus on school improvement goals and progress*
- *Ensure that expectations and priorities given orally to staff are also given to them in written format for later reference*
- *Monitor your PA announcements to ensure they promote school achievement priorities*

## **Using Physical Environment:**

- *Use Bulletin Boards to communicate progress toward school improvement goals*
- *Make sure that entry way signs reflect your priorities*

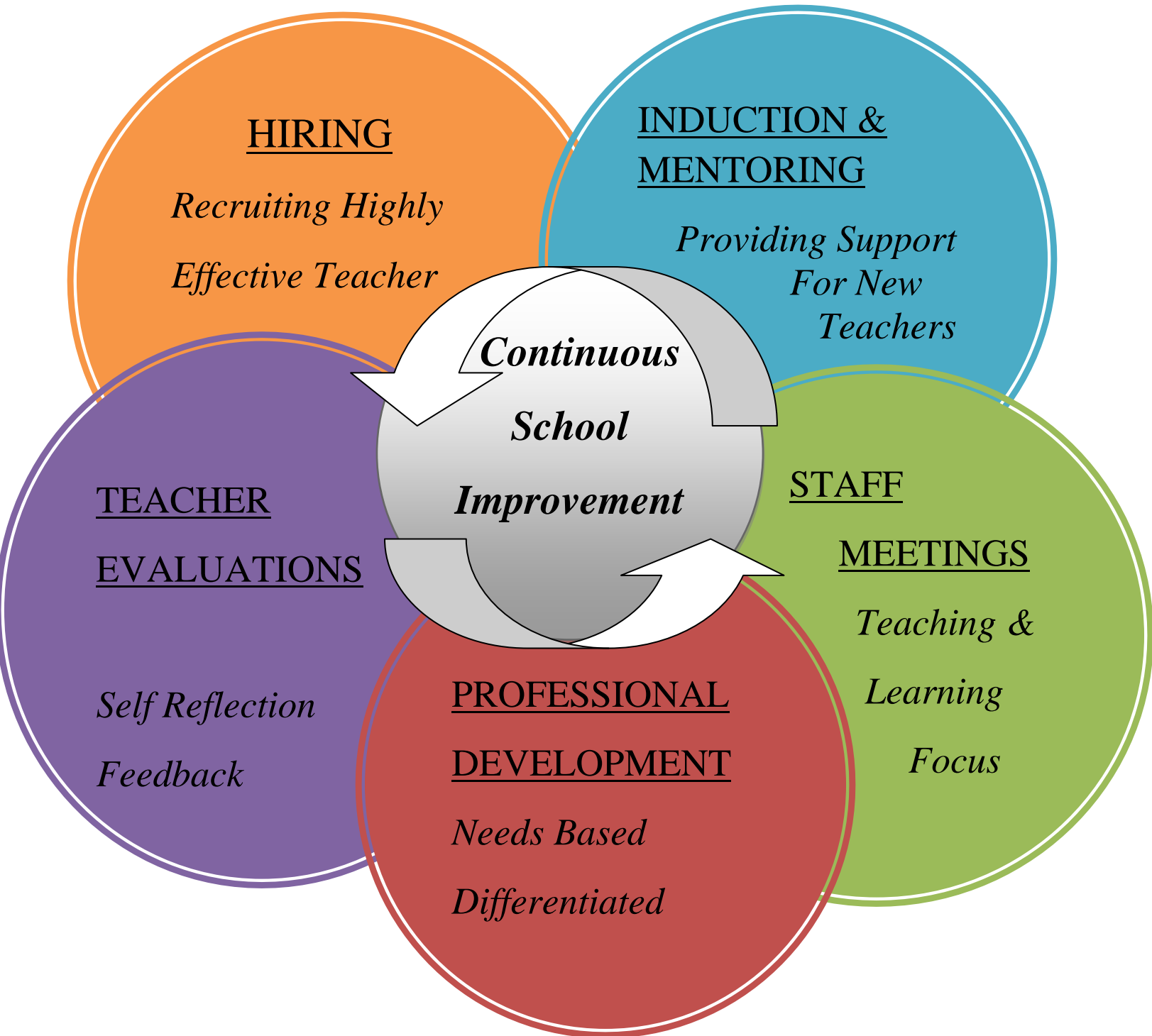
## **Using Recognition Activities:**

- *Identify strategies to recognize those activities and staff that support school improvement goals*
- *Showcase at staff meetings promising practices in using data to monitor individual student progress or to inform instruction*
- *At staff meetings, ask teachers to discuss effective instructional strategies to increase Student achievement*

(School Improvement In Maryland,  
[http://mdk12.org/process/student\\_achievement/Keep\\_the\\_Focus\\_c.html](http://mdk12.org/process/student_achievement/Keep_the_Focus_c.html))



This Learning System is meant to Guide Principals in the Harmonious and Orderly Interaction of Hiring, Induction/Mentoring, Evaluation, Professional Development and Staff Meetings/Communications with the ultimate goal of **Continuous School Improvement**.



# RESOURCES

- Atwell, N. (2006). *Teacher Recruitment and Retention*.
- Barlow, V. (2011). *Trust and the Principalship*.
- Black, S. (1997). Creating Community. *American School Board Journal* .
- Blasek, J. B. (2001). *Empowering Teachers: What Successful Principals Do*.
- Bryk, A. &. (2002). *Trust In Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement*.
- Bryk, A. &. (2003). *Trust in Schools: A Core Resource For Reform*.
- Clement, M. C. (2010). *Strategies to Improve Teacher Hiring*.
- Danielson, C. (1996). *Enhancing professional practice: A framework for teaching*.
- DuFour, R. B. (1995). *The Principal as Staff Developer*.
- Fullen, M. (1993). *The complexity of the change process*. In *Change forces: Probing the depth of educational reform*.
- Gordon, S. (1998). *Professional Development for School Improvement, Empowering Learning Communities*.
- Johnson, L. &. (2006). *The Extent of Late-Hiring and its Relationship with Teacher Turnover: Evidence from Michigan*.
- Lein, L. J. (1997). *Successful Texas Schoolwide Programs - Research Study Results, School Profiles, Voices of Practitioners and Parents*.
- Liu, E. &. (2006). *New teachers' experiences of hiring: Late, rushed, and*.
- Program, E. (1999). *designing Effective Professional Development: Lessons From the Eisenhower Program* .
- Schalock, H. (1988). *Teacher selection: A problem of admission*.
- Sebring, P. &. (2000). School Leadership and the Bottom Line in Chicago. *Phi Delta Kappan* .
- Stronge, J. &. (2003). *Handbook on teacher evaluation: Assessing and improving performance*. .
- (2001). *Supporting Beginning Teachers: How Administrators, Teachers, and Policymakers Can Help New Teachers Succeed*. Northwest Regional Educational Library.
- Tucker, P. S. (2002). *The use of portfolios in teacher evaluation*.
- WestED. (2008). *A Guide for Comprehensive Needs Assessment*,.