



# Describing Instructional Leadership

When the Reform Support Network (RSN) describes a State's capacity to improve education, it describes a context bigger than a State education agency (SEA) itself. Rather, RSN refers to the capacity of the entire State—SEA; school districts; higher education institutions; and community, union, professional and advocacy organizations that comprise a much more abundant and flexible resource. This is especially true when these entities work together to create alignment and synergy across a decentralized and too often siloed system.

RSN describes instructional leadership at the school, district or State level similarly. If one thinks of the instructional leader as the principal or administrators at a school, that is a highly limited resource. Understood this way, the temptation is to think of a heroic leader that in rare cases exists, but is impossible to replicate at scale. RSN describes instructional leadership as the work of setting direction; motivating and supporting staff towards goals; assessing progress; and driving continuous, collaborative organizational improvement that results in strong classroom practice and student achievement. Instructional leaders can be principals, assistant principals, teacher leaders, coaches or central office staff who supervise and support school leaders and teachers.

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