



# Teachers as American Idols

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The ultimate goal in school improvement is for the people associated with the school to drive its continuous improvement for the sake of their own children and students.

# Essentials for a Culture of Candor

- Establish productive Teams and Time for their work
  - District Leadership Team
  - School Leadership Team
  - Teacher Instructional Teams
  - School Community Council
- Establish processes for continuous improvement
- Provide access to resources on effective practice
- Support, coach, challenge, and recognize the work

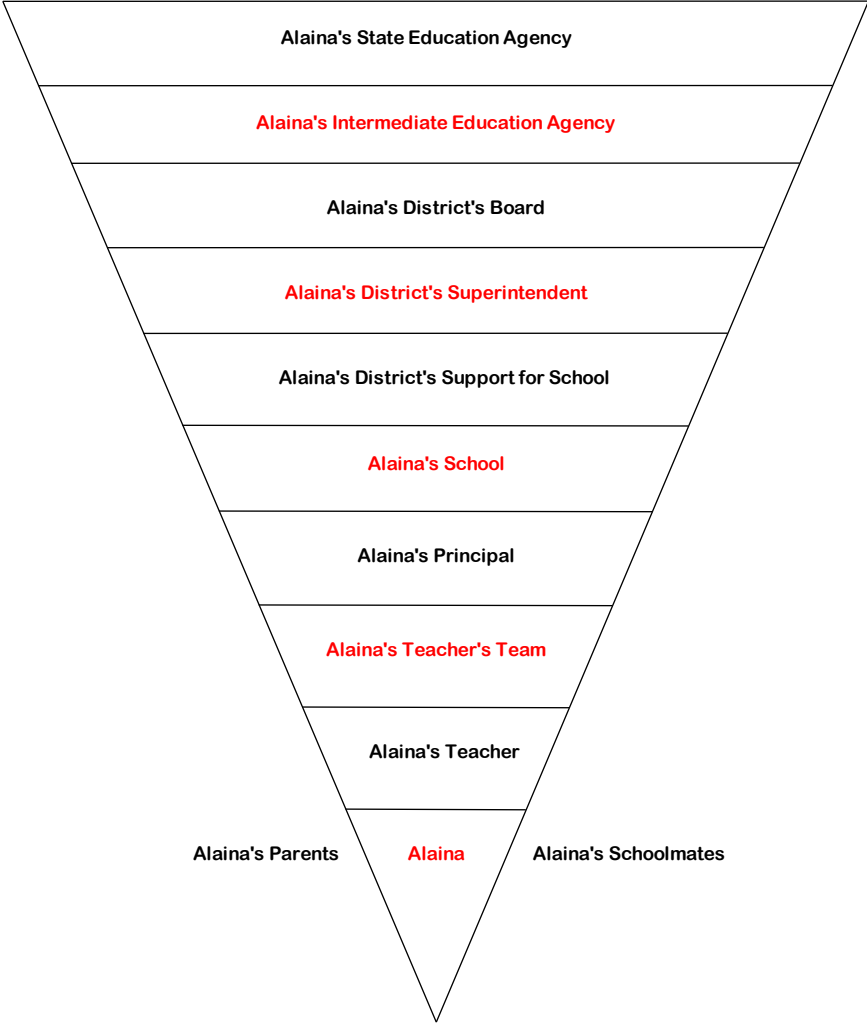
# The New Generation of Learners



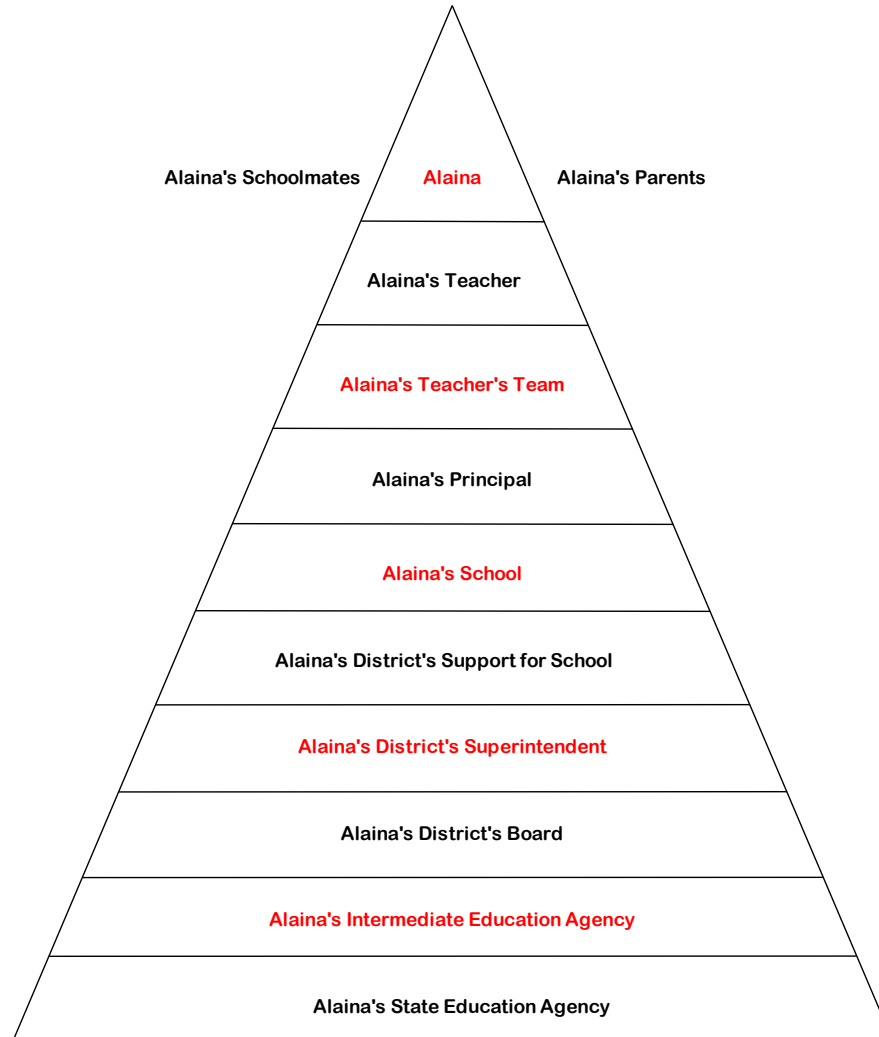
# One Little Learner



# Looking for Alaina From the Top Down



# Finding Alaina



# Effective Practices

1. Establish a team structure with specific duties and time for instructional planning.
2. Focus the principal's role on building leadership capacity, achieving learning goals, and improving instruction.
3. Align classroom observations with evaluation criteria and professional development.
4. Engage teachers in aligning instruction with standards and benchmarks.
5. Engage teachers in assessing and monitoring student mastery.
6. Engage teachers in differentiating and aligning learning activities.
7. Assess student learning frequently with standards-based assessments.
8. Expect and monitor sound instruction in a variety of modes, including teacher-directed, small group, independent, computer-based, and homework.
9. Expect and monitor sound instruction in a variety of modes that foster teacher-student interaction.
10. Expect and monitor sound homework practices and communication with parents.
11. Expect and monitor sound classroom management.

From *Restructuring and Substantial School Improvement*, CII, 007, and Rising Star

# Indicators of Effective Practice

**Effective Practice:** Establish a team structure with specific duties and time for instructional planning.

1. A team structure is officially incorporated into the school improvement plan and school governance policy.
2. All teams have written statements of purpose and by-laws for their operation.
3. All teams operate with work plans for the year and specific work products to produce.
4. All teams prepare agendas for their meetings.
5. All teams maintain official minutes of their meetings.
6. The principal maintains a file of the agendas, work products, and minutes of all teams.
7. A Leadership Team consisting of the principal, teachers who lead the Instructional Teams, and other key professional staff meets regularly (twice a month or more for an hour each meeting).
8. The Leadership Team serves as a conduit of communication to the faculty and staff.
9. The school's Leadership Team regularly looks at school performance data and aggregated classroom observation data and uses that data to make decisions about school improvement and professional development needs.
10. Teachers are organized into grade-level, grade-level cluster, or subject-area Instructional Teams.
11. Instructional Teams meet for blocks of time (4 to 6 hour blocks, once a month; whole days before and after the school year) sufficient to develop and refine units of instruction and review student learning data.

# Indicators of Effective Practice

**Effective Practice:** Focus the principal's role on building leadership capacity, achieving learning goals, and improving instruction.

1. The principal participates actively with the school's teams.
2. The principal keeps a focus on instructional improvement and student learning outcomes.
3. The principal monitors curriculum and classroom instruction regularly.
4. The principal spends at least 50% of his/her time working directly with teachers to improve instruction, including classroom observations.
5. The principal challenges, supports and monitors the correction of unsound teaching practices.
6. The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes.
7. The principal offers frequent opportunities for staff and parents to voice constructive critique of the school's progress and suggestions for improvement.

# Indicators of Effective Practice

**Effective Practice: Teachers provide sound instruction in a variety of modes.**

- **Mode: Teacher-Directed, Whole-Class and Small Group Instruction**

1. All teachers review the previous lesson.
2. All teachers clearly state the lesson's topic, theme, and objectives.
3. All teachers stimulate interest in the topics.
4. All teachers use modeling, demonstration, and graphics.
5. All teachers explain directly and thoroughly.
6. All teachers maintain eye contact.
7. All teachers speak with expression and use a variety of vocal tones.
8. All teachers use prompting/cueing.
9. All teachers re-teach when necessary.
10. All teachers review with drilling/class recitation.
11. All teachers review with questioning.
12. All teachers summarize key concepts.
13. All teachers re-teach following questioning.
14. All teachers encourage students to paraphrase, summarize, and relate.
15. All teachers encourage students to check their own comprehension.
16. All teachers verbally praise students.

# Little Things Matter for Great Teaching

- The Fallacy of Global Goals
- The Precision of the Surgeon
- In Defense of the Fox (versus the Hedgehog)
- The Problem with a Focus on Deficits
- High Expectations for . . . Ourselves
- The Data Equation
  - What We Do = What Students Learn

# Resources

[www.centerii.org](http://www.centerii.org)

[www.families-schools.org](http://www.families-schools.org)

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