

The principal as instructional leader

Recent research has supported the idea that there should be more involvement by principals in the instructional process, although in some circumstances this may need to be delegated to an assistant principal or a department chairperson (as in a large school) or to a principal-teacher or head teacher (as in small schools or rural districts having a number of small, dispersed schools). Under this system, the task force recognized the following:

1. There is a designated instructional leader — preferably the principal — for each level of organization. A variety of approaches is available for situations where either the current principal does not possess the skills and expertise to provide instructional leadership or where the school is not of sufficient size to justify a full time principal. (Levels of organization may include K-6, 7-12; K-8, 9-12; K-6, 7-8, 9-12; K-12; or other combinations.)

a. In a large elementary or secondary school, responsibility for instructional leadership may be delegated to an assistant principal, provided that the principal effectively communicates to his/her staff support for the designated instructional leader.

b. Grade level or departmental chairpersons may be delegated responsibility for instructional leadership, provided that released time from regular instructional duties is made available.

c. In small schools, a principal-teacher or head teacher may be designated as instructional leader, provided that released time from regular instructional duties is made available.

d. In rural areas having several small schools with principal-teachers or head teachers, an area

