

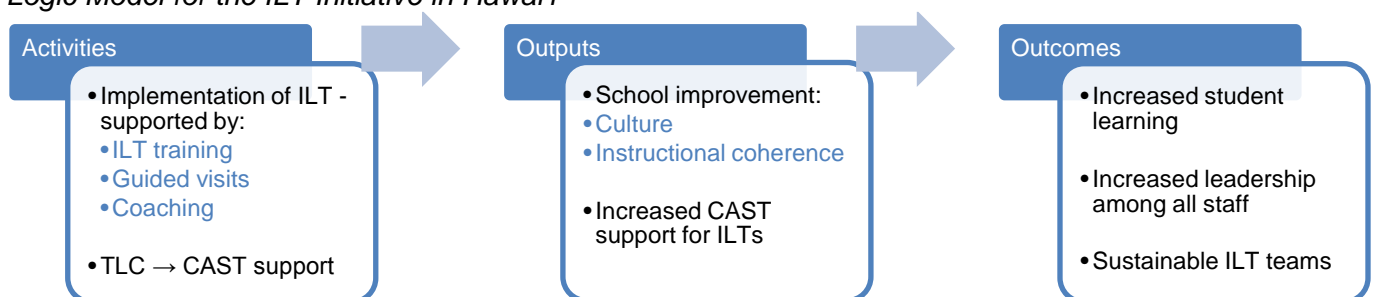
Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs) are Grounded in the Research Literature

Since the 1990s, education leaders and researchers have looked to distributed leadership as a way to improve schools (Hallinger, 2011; Tian, Risky, & Collin, 2015). Although definitions vary, distributed leadership typically involves teacher teams working to guide school decisions with a particular focus on classroom instruction. Theoretical and qualitative evidence of the effectiveness of distributed leadership has been strong enough that many have advocated for professional development and technical assistance that builds distributed leadership (Hargreaves & Fink, 2008; Harris, 2009; Waters, McNulty, & Marzano, 2005). While few rigorous studies of distributed leadership exist, a recent examination of longitudinal data for 198 schools found that changes in distributed leadership were related to changes in school capacity for improvement which was, in turn, related to changes in student achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 2010).

In Hawai'i, ILTs spring from this research literature about the importance of distributed leadership. In 2009, with funding support from the Castle Foundation, the Kailua-Kalaheo Complex Area in Hawai'i began implementing ILTs with guidance from Targeted Leadership Consulting (TLC). As of 2015, the initiative has spread to seven Complex Areas and 80 schools.

The development of ILTs in Hawai'i typically includes eight days of yearly ILT training—Complex Areawide, all-day training events for ILT teachers—followed by guided visits, during which ILT teams visit other schools within their Complex Area to observe instructional practices. Finally, principals participate in on-site coaching. In the first year, TLC leads these activities. In later years, TLC builds the capacity of the Complex Area Support Team (CAST) to lead this work. By the third year, the CAST leads the activities. All activities are designed first to improve schools and then to increase achievement and overall leadership capacity (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Logic Model for the ILT Initiative in Hawai'i



Source: Created at a meeting of Castle Foundation staff members and program founders

Leaders Wanted to Know More About ILTs in Hawai'i

While the research base supporting distributed leadership is strong, state leaders and the Castle Foundation wanted to know more specifically about the implementation of ILTs in Hawai'i. To gather this information, the Castle Foundation commissioned evaluation support from Education Northwest, a private nonprofit education research and technical assistance provider in Portland, Oregon. The purpose of Education Northwest's work was to provide state education leaders and the Castle Foundation with useful information about the initiative, so that they could make good decisions about the initiative in the future.

Education Northwest examined several aspects of ILTs identified in the logic model. The results are summarized in this overview memo as well as in individual data memos:

- Supports for ILTs, including guided visits, ILT training, coaching, and CAST supports (activities)—data memo 1
- ILT membership and activities within the school (activities)—data memo 2
- Changes in school culture and instruction related to the ILT (outputs)—data memo 3
- Coherence of instructional initiatives in ILT schools (outputs)—data memo 4
- Challenges and solutions for ILT implementation (activities)—data memo 5
- Outcomes in ILT and non-ILT schools based on publicly available data (outcomes)—data memo 6
- Sustainability of ILT in Hawai'i (outcomes)—data memo 7

The memos about implementation are based on data collected by Education Northwest in March and April 2015, including a survey of ILT members and principals (77% response rate, representing 78 of 80 schools), a survey of CASTs and Complex Area Superintendents (CASs) from the seven Complex Areas implementing ILTs (85% response rate), interviews with three CASs that had been implementing ILT for at least three years, focus groups with the CASTs working with these CASs, and focus groups with one elementary and one high school within each of six Complex Areas. The data memo about outcomes uses publicly available, school-level data, including reading and math proficiency rates and student demographics from 2009 to 2014, as well as data from the School Quality Survey administered in 2013 and 2014 by the Hawaii Department of Education.

Education Northwest analyzed the data across multiple data sources and Complex Areas to provide a full picture of ILT in Hawai'i and to encourage a collaborative response to future efforts. The data memos do not specifically identify individuals, schools, Complexes, or Complex Areas.

Additionally, Education Northwest compared results by early adopters of ILT (schools in Years 4 and 5) with late adopters (schools in Years 1 through 3), as well as comparing results from elementary schools with results from secondary schools, (i.e. intermediate and high schools). We found few notable differences in implementation by years in ILT. Therefore we report data

across all ILT years, except when reporting student outcomes in elementary schools, where we observed important differences.

Hawai'i Data Showed Both Success and Opportunities for Improvement

Data collected and analyzed by Education Northwest showed that all seven Complex Areas had ILTs in place and were working to increase distributed leadership in schools. Furthermore, appreciation for the ILT initiative among teachers, principals, CASTs, and CASs was widespread. These data indicate Complex Areas put the Castle Foundation's investment to good use.

Close analysis of the data, however, illuminated opportunities for improving ILT implementation. This overview memo: (1) summarizes the successes of ILTs in Hawai'i, (2) describes several ways leaders might want to improve ILTs, and (3) offers suggestions for sustaining the ILT work in the future.

Evidence of Implementation and Positive Changes in Culture and Practice

Evaluation data indicated that all Complex Areas had ILT teams in place and staff members assigned to support these ILTs. School and Complex Area educators involved in ILTs generally appreciated the key components of the initiative. More than 88 percent of ILT participants surveyed agreed with positive statements about ILT training. More than 86 percent agreed with positive statements about guided visits. Among those who participated in coaching, more than 83 percent agreed with positive statements about coaching. These positive views of ILT were echoed in ILT and CAST focus groups (data memos 1 and 2).

When other schools come, it heightens the importance of the observation activity. We get a little desensitized to going into our own classrooms. It heightens the activity and makes it more important. (ILT focus group participant)

Data about changes in culture and instructional practices also indicated the success of ILTs. In surveys, more than 80 percent of both ILT and CAST respondents agreed that ILTs contributed positively to changes in culture and practice. Focus groups and interviews confirmed that participants saw ILTs having a positive impact on schools culture, an important prerequisite to improved student achievement (data memo 3)

People are more willing to have strangers in [their] classrooms, and to have peers doing observations than they ever were before. (CAST focus group)

Promising Results for Elementary Reading Proficiency Based on Years in ILT

The data analysis showed that ILT schools had, on average, higher rates of free and reduced-price lunch—an indicator of poverty, which often makes reforms more difficult to implement (Kahlenberg, 2003). However, after controlling statistically for student demographics associated

with achievement, ILT schools showed similar changes in reading and math proficiency rates from 2009 to 2014 when compared to Hawai'i schools that did not participate in the ILT initiative. Similarly, scores on the SQS were not significantly different among ILT and non-ILT schools. It may be that our analysis was not powerful enough to detect differences in achievement between ILT and non-ILT schools, particularly since the analysis examined student achievement data at the school level (Ho & Reardon, 2012). In the future, a deeper look at student-level data could provide more conclusive information.

Our analysis of ILT schools by year of implementation added information about ILT and student achievement. This analysis showed that elementary reading proficiency rates were statistically significantly related to the number of years schools had been in ILT—the more years in ILT, the higher the elementary proficiency rates. On average, each year spent in ILT was associated with a 3.7 percentage point gain in reading proficiency in elementary schools. For intermediate and secondary schools, the analysis showed no statistically significant differences by year of implementation.

The analysis, however, must be interpreted cautiously because this was not an experimental study of ILT—factors associated with volunteering to start ILTs may be related to student outcomes in ways that make it difficult to determine how implementation of ILT impacts achievement. Furthermore, reading proficiency varied a great deal by Complex Area, and factors in these Complex Areas, that the analysis could not account for, likely influenced reading achievement. While these findings for elementary reading are promising, there is no guarantee that this growth will continue into the future. Much will depend on effective implementation of the ILT initiative. More information about the analysis of student achievement is included in data memo 6.

Opportunities to Increase Coherence

Data from both the school and Complex Area level indicated a need for greater coherence across the many school improvement initiatives in Hawai'i. One intended output of the ILT initiative is instructional coherence. This includes ensuring that instructional goals and practices are coordinated within the same grade and across grade levels. In addition, these goals and practices should fit into a larger strategy for school improvement across the school and Complex Areas.

The ILT survey showed that across all Complex Areas, 70 percent or fewer respondents agreed with six positive statements about coherence. Responses were similar for individual Complex Areas. For only one of the six items did a Complex Area have more than 80 percent agreement. Similarly, only about half of ILT survey respondents agreed that their CAST had standard instructional approaches. For individual Complex Areas, the highest percentage of respondents agreeing with this statement was just 61 percent. CAST focus group participants also identified instructional coherence as a challenge for the ILTs (data memo 4).

Bringing coherence to schools would address the two largest challenges to ILT work: lack of time and multiple initiatives. These were the most frequently reported challenges in the ILT survey. ILT and CAST focus group participants suggested solutions for these challenges, which included choosing specific and sustainable instructional goals, and leveraging existing meeting structures to get more work done (data memo 5).

In the future, ILTs might better serve schools by:

- **Unifying their school's instructional goals across multiple initiatives**
- **Magnifying the impact of the work by having all school teams work toward these unified goals**

Opportunities to Increase CAST Support, Especially for Coherent Instruction

Data showed that, over time, CASTs took on more responsibility for the ILT training, guided visits, and coaching. Therefore, CAST members should be congratulated on the positive reception of these ILT components at this point in the initiative.

Data also point to areas where CAST support for instruction could be strengthened. Of the key supports for ILTs, less than 74 percent of ILT survey respondents agreed with five positive statements about CAST support in general. This was a much smaller percentage than those who agreed with positive statements about ILT training, guided visits, and coaching. The response was similar across Complex Areas. For only one of the five items did a Complex Area have more than 80 percent agreement. Furthermore, just 59 percent of ILT survey participants agreed that CASTs monitored progress on SMARTe¹ goals (data memo 1).

While this focus on instructional goals may not have been the work of the CAST in the past, survey data indicated opportunities to expand CAST support in this area. Furthermore, both ILT and CAST focus group data suggested that choosing specific and sustainable instructional goals could make ILTs more efficient (data memo 5).

In the future, CASTs might better support ILT work by:

- **Assisting ILTs with selecting and implementing instructional goals**
- **Providing more resources to support effective instructional practices**
- **Monitoring school progress on goals and providing feedback**

In the future, CASs might better support ILT work by

- **Ensuring that CAST job descriptions clearly define the CAST role in supporting ILT**
- **Determining the amount of CAST time needed to support ILTs and making a commitment to dedicate staff to the ILT**

¹ A special type of ILT goal that is specific, measurable, reasonable, timely, and for everyone.

Opportunities to Strengthen Secondary Schools

Past research suggests that improving secondary schools involves challenges that are unique and, at times, more difficult than the challenges faced by schools that serve other grade levels (Noguera, 2002; Wong, Anagnostopoulos, Rutledge, & Edwards, 2003). Data from this evaluation suggests that secondary schools in Hawai'i could strengthen their implementation of the ILT initiative, especially when compared to elementary schools. In several instances on the ILT survey, a significantly smaller percentage of secondary school respondents agreed with positive statements about instructional coherence. Although the sample size was too small for statistical testing within Complex Areas, these differences occurred multiple times in each Complex Area, indicating that instructional coherence may be an especially important challenge in secondary schools across the ILT initiative in Hawai'i (data memo 4).

Similarly, significantly smaller percentages of secondary school respondents than elementary school respondents agreed with positive statements about teacher trust. These differences were statistically significant, which suggests there are important differences between elementary and secondary schools. Again, the sample size was too small for statistical testing within Complex Areas, but these differences occurred at least once in each Complex Area, indicating that teacher trust may be an especially important challenge in secondary schools across the ILT initiative (data memo 3).

Data from secondary school ILT focus groups also suggested that secondary schools may need a slightly different ILT approach. For example, some participants suggested that guided visits and networking should group high school staff members together frequently so that they can focus on issues specific to secondary schools (data memo 1).

While this evaluation data did not pinpoint foolproof ways to adapt ILTs in secondary schools, several strategies might strengthen secondary ILTs. Leaders from TLC, Castle, Complex Areas, and schools might want to come together to consider some of the following options:

- **Meeting to reframe the key activities of the ILT initiative—ILT training, guided visits, and coaching—to ensure that these activities meet the needs of secondary schools**
- **Networking for secondary schools across Complex Areas to ensure that secondary schools in small Complex Areas have enough input from colleagues who are also secondary school staff members**
- **Investing in an outside expert on secondary school reform to participate in conversations about how ILTs would work best in secondary schools**

Complex Areas and Schools Will Shape the Future of ILTs in Hawai'i

Even when school improvement initiatives start strong, they face the challenge of sustainability (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). This evaluation shows that the ILT initiative is on the path to sustainability. About two thirds (67%) of the surveyed Complex Area leaders in Hawai'i said

they would be able to sustain the ILTs in their Complex Area in the future. However, sustainability remained a concern for other leaders. ILT and CAST focus groups, as well as CAS interviews offered suggestions for sustainability. Leaders from TLC, Castle, Complex Areas, and schools might want to consider these suggestions from the evaluation data to ensure ongoing sustainability:

- **Open communication may help ILTs and CASTs overcome sustainability challenges by ensuring that the challenges are heard early and addressed honestly.**
- **ILTs and CASTs may want to consider building in feedback loops through surveys and planned discussions in order to make sure that ILTs, and CAST supports for ILTs, are both implemented as intended, and flexible enough to adapt to changing school contexts.**

More details about these findings are included in seven related data memos. For more information about these data memos contact Dr. Caitlin Scott at Education Northwest, 503-275-9585, caitlin.scott@educationnorthwest.org

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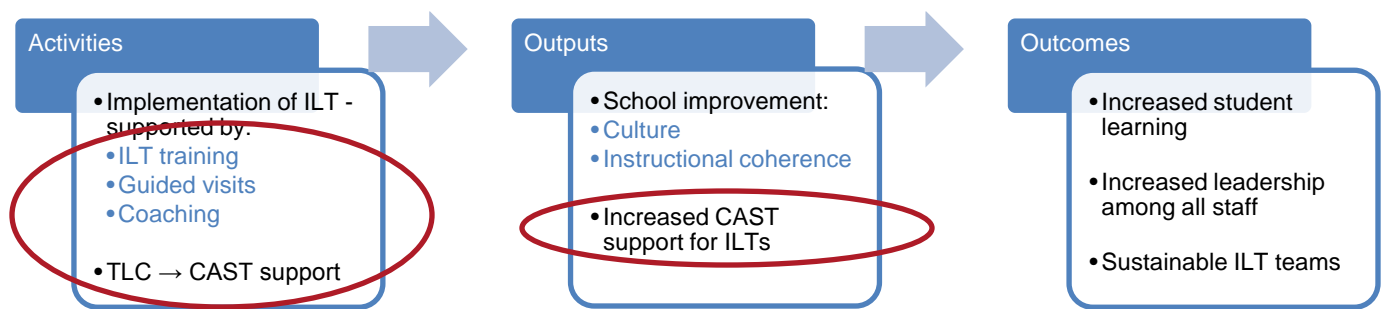
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Support for Implementation Instructional Leadership Teams in Hawai'i

Data memo 1 prepared for Castle Foundation
May 11, 2015

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i. The memo focuses on activities that support ILT implementation, including ILT training, guided visits, coaching and assistance from Complex Area Support Teams (CASTs)—all of which are described in more detail in this memo. Support for ILT implementation is a key activity of the ILT model (Figure 1).

*Figure 1
Logic Model for the ILT Initiative in Hawai'i*



Source: Created at a meeting of Castle Foundation staff members and program founders

More About the Instructional Leadership Team Model

The Targeted Leadership Consulting (TLC) model guides the work of the ILTs. This model includes eight days per year of Complex Area-wide all day training events for ILT teachers. These trainings are followed by guided visits, during which ILT teams conduct visits at other schools within their Complex Area to observe instructional practices that other ILT teams are developing. Finally, principals and/or other small groups of school leaders participate in on-site coaching.

In the first year of the program, TLC leads these activities. In the following years, TLC gradually builds capacity of the Complex Area Support Team (CAST) to lead this work. By the third year, the CAST leads the activities while TLC representatives attend and provide support as needed.

This memo explores the implementation of the ILT initiative in participating schools across Hawai'i and focuses on four specific supports: (1) guided visits, (2) coaching, (3) ILT training, and (4) CAST support.

Guided Visits

Among the many ILT survey respondents that participated in guided visits, most believed that the opportunities for sharing, learning, and networking contributed to their ILT experience in positive ways. Specifically, guided visits provided safe opportunities to learn about promising practices, network, and receive feedback on instruction. ILT focus group participants also discussed some of the benefits and challenges associated with guided visits.

Participating ILT Members Believed Guided Visits Were Safe Opportunities to Share Practices

Many participants indicated they appreciated the guided visits (Table 1). Almost all schools had ILT members participating in guided visits, indicating that the visits were taking place as expected. Almost all survey respondents (97%) participated in a guided visit at another school, and 86 percent hosted a guided visit at their own school during the 2014–2015 school year. As would be expected, ILT survey participants visited other schools more frequently than they hosted visits, because in the ILT model, staff members from multiple schools converge on a single school during each guided visit. Some ILT members, however, had not participated at all in guided visits by the time of the survey (<2%). It may be that this is because other staff members at the school visited in the place of the ILT member.

Table 1
Percentage of ILT Survey Respondents Agreeing with Statements About Guided Visits

	Percentage "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"
I welcome the opportunity for others to observe instruction in my school.	99%
The guided visits offer a safe environment in which to exchange ideas about instruction.	94%
Guided visits help me be more reflective about my school's instructional practices.	94%
Guided visits provide useful tools for improving my school.	90%
Guided visits helped our team work together more effectively.	87%

Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

Guided Visits Afford Opportunities for Learning, Networking, and Reflection

Data gathered through the focus groups further supports the positive opinions on the survey. Participants most frequently reflected positively about the ways in which guided visits helped ILT teams by modeling instructional practices, increasing communication between schools, and providing an external perspective.

A picture is worth a thousand words. We're in the practice and we need to see the practice happen... We understand the theory, but the practice is a different picture. (ILT focus group participant)

Guided visits are really useful. It's awesome to see what others do. It's useful because we are in a bubble here at our school, When went to go see the intermediate school, it's really neat to see a school with different age groups and to see how they approach things. (ILT focus group participant)

It's also nice to see other Complex schools because we don't have an opportunity to network with those other teachers. So that is what the ILT work gives us an opportunity to do. (ILT focus group participant)

Other ILT focus group participants talked about how hosting external visitors gave them a different and valuable perspective about their own practices.

When other schools come, it heightens the importance of the observation activity. We get a little desensitized to going into our own classrooms. It heightens the activity and makes it more important. (ILT focus group participant)

When people visit our schools, we get a lot of feedback. The teachers here [at our school] know our system, they know our protocol so to get feedback from others about what we are doing, gives us a different perspective. It sheds light on a problem or area of need that we weren't really aware of. (ILT focus group participant)

In one ILT focus group, however, participants said that over the years, the schools' needs for the guided visits have changed. Additionally, as high school staff members, they have fewer opportunities to visit schools at the same level, which doesn't allow them the chance to see as many practices that could be adopted for their school.

I think in the first year it was really helpful to get us move beyond the walls of our school to see other schools. I think in the third year, it's become more of an obstacle in terms of time [and] because the help is more for the receiving [visited] school than it is for the ILT members. There's only one other high school that we get to see. (ILT focus group participant)

In a couple instances, ILT focus group participants shared strategies for ensuring successful guided visit experiences. These included promoting the helpful focus of the guided visits and directing attention toward students during observations.

[Guided visits are] changing the attitudes. Observations are to help you, not to tell you what you are doing wrong. We have these traditional barriers where we don't go into other people's classes; we don't look. And I think that the protocols are a little bit less threatening. I'm not coming in to judge you per se. I'm coming in to collect data for you. (ILT focus group participant)

ILT Training

ILT survey respondents believed that ILT trainings gave them opportunities to reflect on practice, introduced tools to support their work, and helped teams work together. ILT Focus group participants discussed how ILT trainings provided structure for the ILT work and modeled effective practices. Additionally, CAST focus group and CAS interview participants explained how they have modified the ILT training over time to better meet the needs of their ILT teams.

Participants Believed ILT Visits Increased Reflection, Improved Team Functioning, and Provided Useful Tools

ILT survey respondents most frequently indicated that School Renewal Specialists and Resource Teachers participated in ILT trainings. Comparing responses from early adopters (those in Years 4 and 5 of implementation) and late adopters (those in Years 1 through 3) suggests that the TLC model of gradually reducing support is occurring as intended. Among late adopter respondents, 35 percent said that an external coach from outside DOE participated in the training, whereas only 12 percent of early adopter respondents indicated that an external coach was present.

ILT survey respondents also answered questions about the extent to which the ILT training impacted their school and work, and offered their perceptions of its usefulness. Many participants agreed that the ILT training generally helps them be more reflective, improves team functioning, and provides useful tools (Table 2).

Table 2
Percentage of ILT Survey Respondents Agreeing with Statements About ILT Trainings

<i>ILT Training...</i>	<i>Percentage "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"</i>
Helped me be more reflective about my school.	91%
Helped our team work together more effectively.	89%
Provided useful tools for improving my school.	89%

Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

However, fewer respondents (63%) “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that the most recent training was useful. It may be that respondents reflected positively on the overall experience, but were less satisfied directly after the fact. Small feedback forms after each event might be useful to gather comments and improve events throughout the course of the school year.

Focus Groups Indicated ILT Trainings Have Changed Over Time to Meet ILT Needs

Overall, focus group and interview participants did not make as many comments about ILT trainings as they did about guided visits. Comments indicated that some Complex Areas have modified the training as the supports from the TLC have diminished in order to have ILTs learn

more from one another. For example, one CAST solicits feedback from the ILT teachers about training strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and, “things [the CAST should] be aware of.” The CAST then uses that information to inform future meetings and differentiate topics according to varying ILT team needs. In another Complex Area, the ILT focus group participants explained that they found the trainings useful because the CAST’s mode of delivery for the training modeled techniques that teachers could later employ in their own classrooms.

They [Complex Area] leaders giving the training] kind of tie it in, so if you are a classroom teacher too, you can use some of the structures they use for the training days in your own classroom with your kids too. (ILT focus group participant)

In the institute, we do what we call institute ignite sessions. Those sessions are short snippets of things that people are very passionate about, and we asked that schools come and bring something that they want to present that has something to do with either their targeted instructional area, or something that they’ve been practicing or doing that they would like to share with the other schools. (CAST focus group participant)

On-Site Coaching

Not all principals responding to the ILT survey participated in coaching, but most that *did* said that coaching helped them reflect on their practices and provided tools for school improvement. Data collected through the CAST focus groups and CAS interviews showed that coaching has been modified over time. Different Complex Areas have adopted different coaching models and delivered coaching through different means (including peer groups).

Coaches Were Knowledgeable Allies that Shared Resources and Helped Increase Reflection

For those surveyed principals who participated in on-site coaching, 34 percent reported engaging in coaching activities one or two times this year, and 45 percent reported participating in coaching three to five times. However, 20 percent of principals responding to the survey reported they had not participated in coaching activities this school year, as of the March survey administration¹.

Among principals who *did* participate in coaching, most indicated they appreciated their coach and the process (Table 3). For example, 91 percent of participating principals agreed that coaching helped them become more reflective about instructional practices. Fewer participants linked coaching with increased coherence of initiatives (86%) and improved ILT teams (84%).

¹ This figure was constant across early and late adopters.

Table 3
Percentage of ILT Principal Survey Respondents Agreeing with Statements About On-Site Coaching

	Percentage "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"
The coaching helped me become more reflective about instructional practices.	91%
The coaching provided useful tools for improving my school.	91%
Even when providing critical feedback, the coach was an ally in helping improve my school.	91%
The coach was a knowledgeable resource about instruction leadership research, and practices.	91%
The coach was a knowledgeable resource about shared leadership research and practices.	91%
The coaching helped increase the coherence of initiatives and programs across the school.	86%
The coaching helped our team work together more effectively.	84%

Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

Focus Groups and Interviews Show Coaching has Changed Over Time to Better Align With Complex Area Structures and Needs

Data from focus groups and interviews sheds additional light on the ways in which CASTs and ILT teams implemented coaching. Qualitative data suggests that as CASTs take control for implementing ILTs, they modify the model to meet needs of schools in their particular area. For example, some CASTs and CASs have introduced external coaching models to bring more structure to the conversations, while others have restructured the coaching delivery to make it more peer-oriented.

That principal coaching piece is really important. We strategically put them (principals) into triads or quads with each other and they are asked to focus on one school's issue or problem [using the Facing our Issues Protocol]." (CAST focus group participant)

We came up with a little bit different system this year where we are doing more peer coaching with principals. Principals are meeting in triads and coaching each other. They are doing visits to each other's schools, and we are setting it up in such a way that they can indicate what their focus is, and they can have a lot of input into what the others are looking for. (CAS interview participant)

Different CAST and CAS members offered various reasons they modified the delivery of coaching. In some cases, coaching was adapted to better meet needs of particular schools, while in others, coaching was modified because Resource Teachers did not have the same level of expertise that TLC staff had and could not provide the same type of services.

One of our biggest challenges is to make sure that the process is still relevant to our principals. It is hard to convince good schools that they need to get better. (CAST focus group participant)

The thing that has probably not been as successful is the reflective coaching that takes place initially between TLC and principals, and it has now been turned over to my team. But, I think, absent of any kind of real tool, they just become kind of... They are nice reflective conversations, but they have to be more than that, they have to be focused reflective conversations. (CAS interview participant)

I am an underling. I think SRSs have authority to go around and make suggestions to principals, whereas Resource Teachers, we're not anywhere near their equals so it feels like we don't have as much [authority]. (CAST focus group)

CAST Support of ILT Implementation

Support for ILT teams gradually shifts to each CAST within the first three years of the program. ILT survey respondents shared their opinions about the support they receive from their CAST. Data from the survey, focus groups, and interviews showed that CASTs have worked to differentiate their support to best meet the differing needs of ILTs in their area, but that there are opportunities for improvement in CAST support.

Some, But Not All, ILTs Say CAST Support Was Useful

Fewer ILT survey respondents agreed with positive statements about CASTs than agreed with positive statements about guided visits and training. In particular, less than two-thirds agreed with positive statements regarding assistance for school improvement and monitoring goals. Slightly more respondents "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with statements regarding the CAST's understanding of the schools and ability to provide feedback on school improvement (Table 4).

*Table 4
Percentage of ILT Survey Respondents Agreeing with Statements about CAST Support*

<i>Our Complex Area Support Team (CAST)...</i>	<i>Percentage "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"</i>
<i>Understands our school's strengths and challenges.</i>	<i>73%</i>
<i>Provides useful feedback on our school improvement efforts.</i>	<i>67%</i>
<i>Provides adequate assistance for our school's improvement.</i>	<i>65%</i>
<i>Monitors our progress on SMARTe goals.¹</i>	<i>59%</i>

¹ Goals that are specific, measurable, reachable, timely, and for everybody.

Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

The survey responses about assistance for school improvement differed significantly by elementary versus secondary schools. More respondents from elementary schools (70%), compared to respondents from secondary schools (56%), reported the CAST provided adequate assistance for school improvement.

CAST's Support May Be Strengthened by Differentiation and a Focus on Providing Useful Resources

In focus groups and interviews, the most frequently discussed effective strategy for CAST support was differentiation. The CAST focus group feedback and CAS interviews described CAST efforts to differentiate support in order to best meet the varying needs of schools across the Complex Area. Data from the ILT focus groups buttressed this claim. In a third of ILT focus groups, participants also commented about how the CAST seeks their input and tailors support to best meet their needs. Increasing differentiation of CAST support, based on ILT feedback, might be useful in the future.

At the end of last year, as a CAST team, we solicited some data from [ILT members]. We asked them to give us some feedback, and at the end of every ILT session, we would get feedback from them on what was working and what wasn't working. [We realized] there was a need for differentiation; not everybody was in the same place. There were some that were ready to just move, and there were others that maybe needed to learn from the other schools. (CAST focus group participant)

We said, 'you use that time however you feel the best need... we are paying for your subs that day—go where you want to go, do what you want to do, plan how you want to plan.' Everybody has loved this year—they so appreciated us listening to them and setting it up at the school level. They said, 'you really are differentiating now. You are making a difference.' (CAS interview participant)

They really look at our feedback and take that into consideration for our next networking. One of the things on the evaluation form [asks] 'what was valuable?' [We would always respond that it] is the time for the groups to meet, and so they make sure that every month they build that [time] in. (ILT focus group participant)

ILT focus group participants also discussed the importance of the CAST providing useful resources. For example, ILTs appreciated CASTs that provided structures and frameworks to facilitate the ILT work.

They [CAST support team] have kept us focused and have provided us the structure, like the cycles of inquiry, that we would have liked to have done, but didn't have the time or resources to do it. It was forced upon us, but then we saw its worth. (ILT focus group participant)

We see [the CAST team] more as a resource. When we make decisions they are a resource that helps us implement changes. (ILT focus group participant)

CAS interviewees supported the idea of having strong leadership at the Complex Area level.

You have to have a district team that is committed and has that expertise to know what to do and when to do it with schools. (CAS interview participant)

***This data memo** is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i which is funded, in part, by the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation. The Castle Foundation commissioned the evaluation from Education Northwest, a private nonprofit education research and technical assistance provider in Portland, Oregon. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide state education leaders and the Castle Foundation with useful information about how the ILT initiative is implemented, so that they can make good decisions about the initiative in the future. The memo draws on data from a survey of ILT members and principals in the 80 ILT schools, interviews with three of the seven CASs involved in ILT, focus groups with the CASTs working with these CASs, and focus groups with six schools (three elementary and three secondary) within the Complex Areas.*

Authors: Lisa Dillman and Caitlin Scott

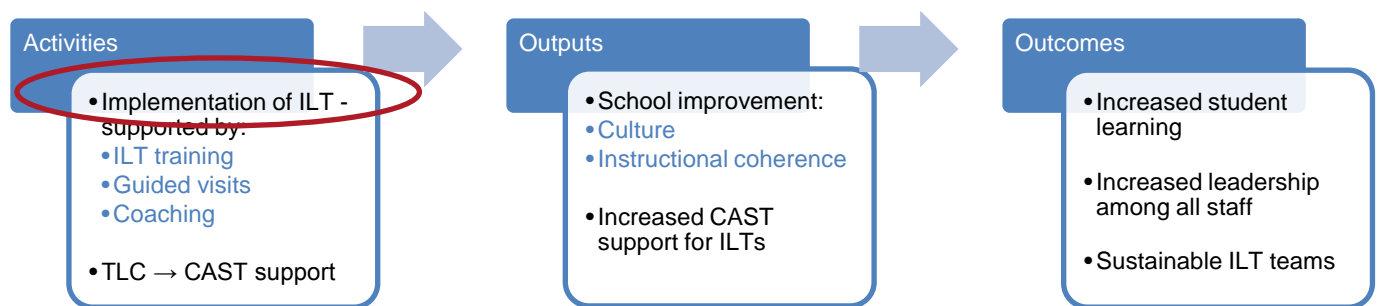
ILT Composition and Activities

Instructional Leadership Teams in Hawai'i

Data memo 2 prepared for the Castle Foundation
May 11, 2015

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i. The memo focuses on the school-level composition of ILT teams and the activities these teams engage in. The implementation of ILTs in schools is the key activity of the ILT model (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Logic Model for the ILT Initiative in Hawai'i



Source: Created at a meeting of Castle Foundation staff members and program founders

Different Grade Levels and Content Areas Were Well Represented on Most ILTs

A strong leadership team should regularly communicate key information to the rest of the school (Waters & McNulty, 2005). One way that ILT teams in Hawai'i work to communicate with the school is to make sure ILT members represent all grade levels (in elementary school) and all content areas (in secondary school). Survey data showed that many ILT teams included this representation—84 percent of the elementary schools had teachers from all grade levels. Similarly, at secondary schools, 87 percent had teachers from “most” or “all” content areas represented on their ILT. Elementary schools were significantly more likely to have one or more non-ILT teachers participating regularly in ILT meetings.¹ More work could be done to ensure all ILTs have fully diverse membership.

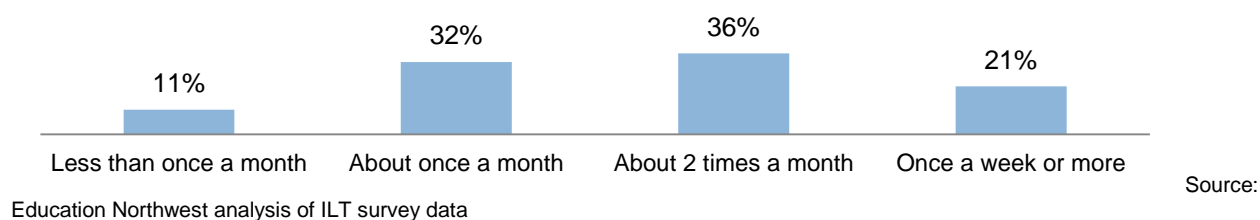
I think representation has been a recent challenge. So when we first started, we had a good representation of teachers. But because of schedules, they had to be taken out of class. And a lot of those teachers bowed out because it was too much for them to be gone that often. But now, with the new system, we want to get those teachers back. That is where the CAST helped us. They allowed us to do our planning time on our own. We could decide when we were going to meet, afterschool or on the weekends. That was really helpful. (ILT focus group)

¹ * $\chi^2(1, N=487) = 12.655, p = .002$

Most ILTs Met at Least Once Per Month

While the number of ILT meeting can vary by school, ideally most teams should meet monthly. Survey data showed that 32 percent of ILT teams met once a month and 57 percent meet twice per month or more. Others (11%) met less frequently.

Figure 1
Frequency of ILT Meetings



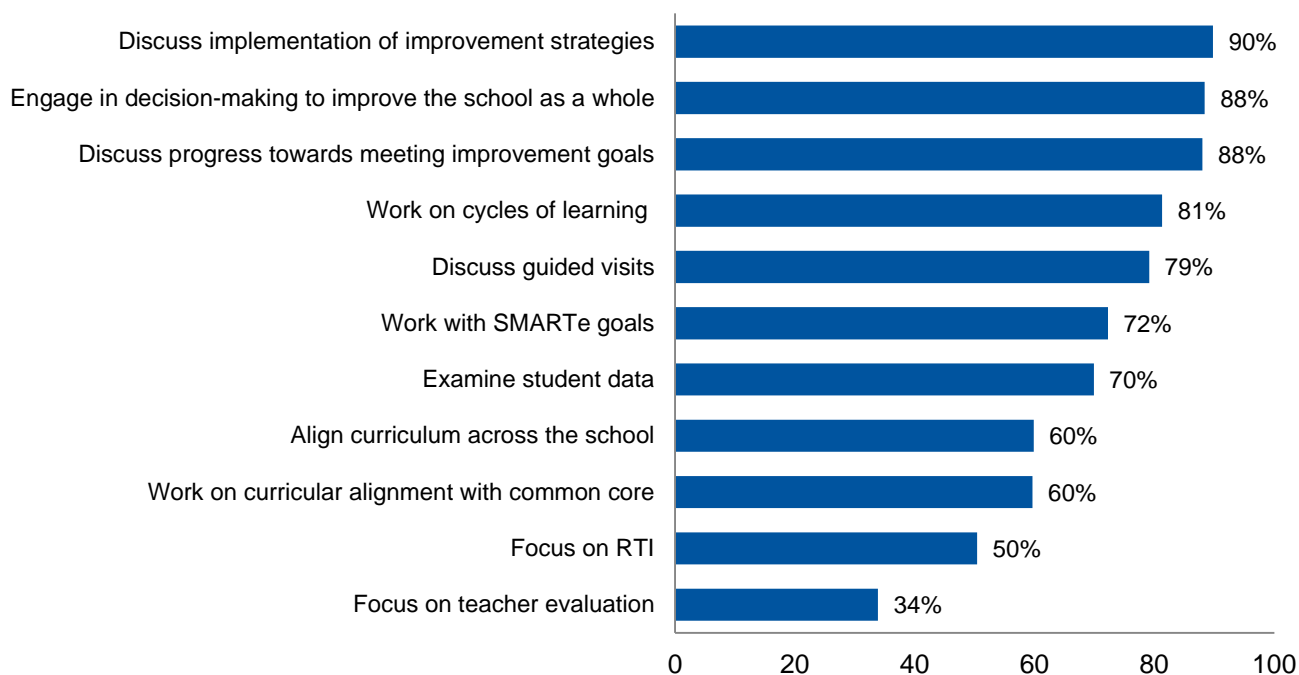
While most ILTs were meeting once a month as expected, finding time to meet was a challenge. This challenge is described in greater detail in data memo 5 about challenges. Several schools arranged their schedules to make dedicated time for the ILT to meet:

Prior to our new bell schedule, we would have to hire substitutes that would float from period to period to cover teachers....With our new bell schedule, it allowed us a prep time where we could come in on our own and do it without the extra help and substitute teacher to cover our time. It made people a lot happier and less worried. (ILT focus group)

ILT Meetings Focused More on School-Level Changes than Teacher-Level Evaluation and Curricula

As shown in Figure 3, more than 80 percent of ILT survey respondents said their ILTs focused on schoolwide activities related to improvement. In contrast, teacher evaluation was the least common activity reported by both elementary and secondary schools. During a focus group, for example, an elementary school staff member reported that although the school collected observation data for each teacher, it did not give individual feedback to each teacher; rather, it shared aggregate data with the school staff.

Figure 2
Percentage of Activities That ILTs Regularly Engage In During Meetings



Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

ILT focus group participants confirmed that ILTs were focused on schoolwide improvement issues. Some ILTs mentioned that during meetings, it was very helpful to maintain a clear vision about what the ILT should be doing and to draw clear boundaries in those areas:

We have gotten better about saying ‘this is or isn’t an ILT thing.’ (ILT focus group)

Others stressed the importance of combining the ILT’s efforts in different areas in order to respect everyone’s time and, as one teacher put it, “get more bang for the buck” with each ILT activity. The survey data shows, however, that focusing on instructional issues, such as aligning curricula and examining student data, may be areas in which many ILT’s might expand their work.

References

Waters, T., & McNulty, B.A. (2005). *School leadership that works*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i which is funded, in part, by the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation. The Castle Foundation commissioned the evaluation from Education Northwest, a private nonprofit education research and technical assistance provider in Portland, Oregon. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide state education leaders and the Castle Foundation with useful information about how the ILT initiative is implemented, so that they can make good decisions about the initiative in the future. The memo draws on data from a survey of ILT members and principals in the 80 ILT schools, interviews with three of the seven CASs involved in ILT, focus groups with the CASTs working with these CASs, and focus groups with six schools (three elementary and three secondary) within these Complex Areas.

Authors: Shannon Davidson and Caitlin Scott

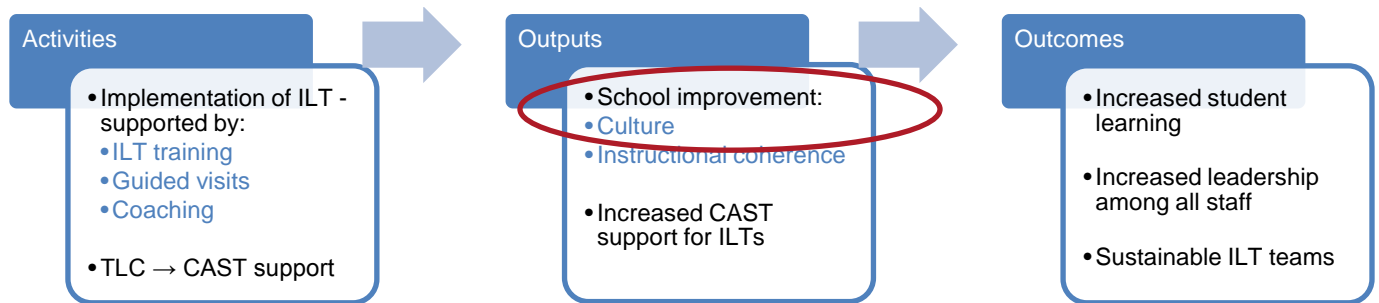
Culture and Practice

Instructional Leadership Teams in Hawai'i

Data memo 3 prepared for the Castle Foundation
May 11, 2015

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i. The memo focuses on ILT-promoted changes in school culture and related instructional practices that improve the school as a whole. Positive changes in culture are among the important outputs of the ILT model (Figure 1). The ILT initiative anticipates that improvements in school culture will lead to increases in student learning, improvement in leadership among all staff, and ultimately sustainable ILT teams.

Figure 1
Logic Model for the ILT Initiative in Hawai'i



Source: Created at a meeting of Castle Foundation staff members and program founders

Many Believed ILT Led to Changes in School Culture and Instructional Practice

Many Complex Area Support Teams (CASTs) and ILT members reported sensing changes in school and Complex Area culture and changes in instructional practice, and attributed these changes to the ILT work. Between 81 and 82 percent of ILT members “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with statements related to the relationship between engaging in ILT work and changes in school culture and practice. The view of CAST members revealed even more positive results. Between 85 and 96 percent of CAST members reported ILTs were beneficial in their Complex Area’s schools (Table 1).

*Table 1
Percentage of ILT and CAST Survey Respondents Agreeing with Statements About ILT Contributions to Changes in School Culture*

	Percentage "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"	
	ILT	CAST
ILT activities contribute to more shared leadership in my Complex Area's schools.	83%	96%
Working with the ILTs in my Complex Area is a good use of my time.	82%	88%
ILT activities contribute to a culture of collaboration in my Complex Area's schools.	81%	94%
ILT activities contribute to the use of data to drive decision making in my Complex Area's schools.	81%	85%

Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT and CAST survey data

Data from the Hawai'i-wide School Quality Survey (SQS) added information about school culture in ILT schools. The survey asked specifically about teamwork in schools. Unlike the ILT survey created for this evaluation, the SQS drew responses from all teachers in the schools across Hawai'i, not just ILT teachers; therefore, percentages responding positively might be expected to be lower since these teachers responding to SQS did not necessarily work on collaborative teams like the ILT. Among ILT schools, 78 percent rated teacher teamwork highly, a slightly lower percentage than the percentage of ILT survey respondents who said ILT activities contributed to shared leadership.

While Many Said ILT Helped, Teacher Trust Could be Improved—Especially in Secondary Schools

Past research in Chicago has shown that trust among teachers is strongly correlated with high student achievement (Bryk & Schneider, 2002) and that this relationship between trust and effective schools remains robust over time (Bryk, Sebring, Allensworth, Luppescu, & Easton, 2010). Furthermore, a recent research synthesis showed that schools with positive work climates have less teacher turnover, regardless of the student demographics at the school (Krasnoff, 2015). A series of seven items on the ILT and CAST surveys were modeled after the surveys used in the Chicago research. While the ILT and CAST surveys found that many teachers and administrators believed in a connection between ILT activities, shared leadership, and improved collaboration, the percentage agreeing with positive statements about trust (64 to 90%) leaves room for improvement.

Table 2
Differences in Perceptions of Change Across School Types

	Percentage "agree" or "strongly agree"		
	All schools	Elementary	Secondary
Teachers at this school respect those colleagues who are experts at their craft	88%	91%	84%
Teachers share and discuss student work with other teachers	87%	93%	78%
It's okay in this school to discuss feelings, worries, and frustrations with other teachers	82%	86%	77%
Teachers talk about instructional practices	80%	88%	71%
Teachers respect other teachers who take the lead in school improvement	79%	84%	71%
Teachers make a conscious effort to coordinate the content of their courses with that of other teachers	79%	88%	66%
Teachers in this school trust each other	77%	85%	65%

Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

In general, respondents working in elementary schools reported higher levels of teacher trust than those in secondary schools. In all of the seven survey items (Table 2, above), the difference was particularly dramatic and statistically significant.¹ These differences suggest that secondary schools may experience unique challenges in changing the school environment that other schools may not experience, particularly when it comes to a trusting school climate. More supports that address the particular needs of school and Complex Area staff members at the secondary school level may be needed.

ILTs May Increase Teachers' Willingness to Be Observed and Share Instructional Practice

Data gathered through focus groups with ILT and CAST members supported findings from the surveys—that participation in ILT fosters collaboration. Every ILT team that participated in a focus group reported the ILT process helped teachers in their schools become far more comfortable having their classrooms observed and sharing instructional practices. Whereas, before, teachers saw observations as a distraction at best, many now looked forward to sharing their practices with colleagues, and openly welcomed constructive feedback.

The biggest change is that teachers are no longer closed off to people visiting their classrooms. When we first started the protocol, the comments we receive were, 'I don't want anyone in my classroom; it's going to disrupt my class.' But now our teachers are a lot more open to people coming in and out of their room. Now they get mad if no one visits their classroom... they are now looking forward to people giving them that feedback. So that's a big cultural shift. (ILT focus group)

¹ In these analyses, χ^2 ranged from 5.0 to 31.6 with p values ranging from less than .0009 to .025.

People are more willing to have strangers in [their] classrooms, and to have peers doing observations than they ever were before. (CAST focus group)

ILT Work on instructional Targets May Assist With a Collaborative Culture

As part of their ILT work, schools develop common instructional targets for their collective improvement efforts. Teachers and administrators in focus groups reported that having an instructional target led to several positive changes in schools. They said the common focus made it easier for staff members across departments to work together, and alleviated feelings of isolation.

When [teachers] used to come together in the PLCs [Professional Learning Communities], they used to have a lot of issues with identifying their common assessments, or the one thing that they can all choose to teach together. But when the targeted instructional area came about, it gave them a common ground. (ILT focus group)

Having that same focus for the whole school [means] you are not alone. You are not doing your own thing. But before [ILT] you were doing your own thing, and no one knows what you are doing. Now we really learn from every single teacher. (ILT focus group)

School staff members also reported that the ILT work helped make instructional practices more consistent throughout their schools. Focus group participants described seeing the same instructional practices being used across grades and departments.

The neat thing is that, as a school, everyone has bought in to [our learning goal]. So you hear teachers talking within grade levels and across grade levels and sharing articles. We have a place and a time to do that, but it is also done outside of that structured formal time. So I think that says a lot about the school changing through this process. (ILT focus group)

ILT focus group participants also noted that students expected to see the same practices across their classes.

If I don't have my learning targets up, the students are like, 'Ms. X, what are learning targets today?' They're using the verbiage. That shows me that they're using this all across the board. The kids are seeing the linkage between all classes. (ILT focus group)

ILTs May Facilitate Improved Instruction and Student Learning

In the ILT survey, 83 percent of respondents agreed that ILT activities improved student learning. Similarly, ILT and CAST focus group participants reported observing changes in instructional practices and student academic performance resulting from schools' instructional improvement efforts. Teams provided several examples of students exhibiting academic skills that reflected progress towards the school's chosen learning goals.

[There has been a] big change in learning—it used to be very rote—how do you get the answer—but now it is much more collaborative between students and with one another.
(CAST Focus Group)

[There are] less and less F's every quarter for the last three years. (ILT focus group)

I noticed in my class, and the librarian has noticed, that the kids are borrowing more non-fiction books. So our last order of books for the school was all non-fiction texts.
(ILT focus group)

ILT focus group participants also noted that teachers were becoming more proficient and comfortable teaching in the instructional target areas.

This process has also helped our teachers develop their expertise with reading instruction for academic text. Early on in the process we realized that even our teacher weren't clear on how to effectively read academic texts. (ILT focus group)

We can even see the growth in the teachers in terms of their skills and knowledge and their ability to improve their instruction. So that helps students be able to learn more. And they feel good, and you feel good. It's a win-win for everybody. (ILT focus group)

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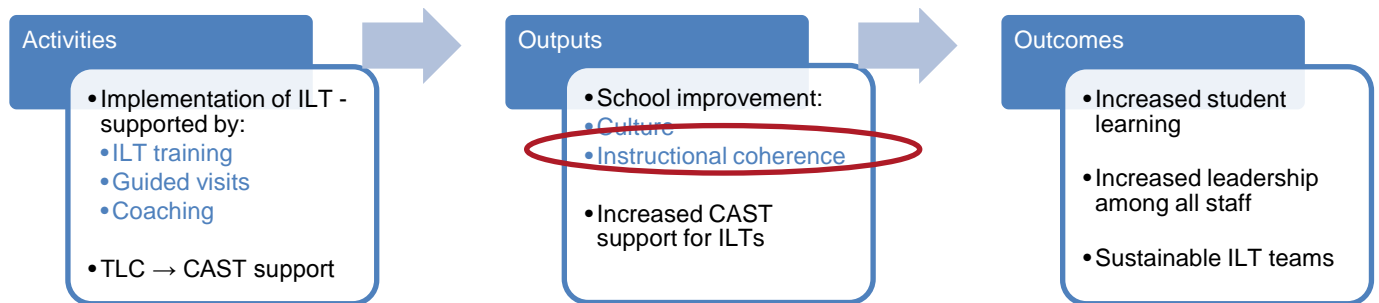
Authors: Rashea Hamilton, David Stevens, and Caitlin Scott

Coherent or *Kapakahi*? Instructional Leadership Teams in Hawai'i

Data memo 4 prepared for the Castle Foundation
May 11, 2015

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i. The memo focuses on the coherence of the instructional strategies promoted by ILT. Improved coherence of instruction is one of the anticipated outputs of the ILT model and is describe in more detail in this memo (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Logic Model for the ILT Initiative in Hawai'i



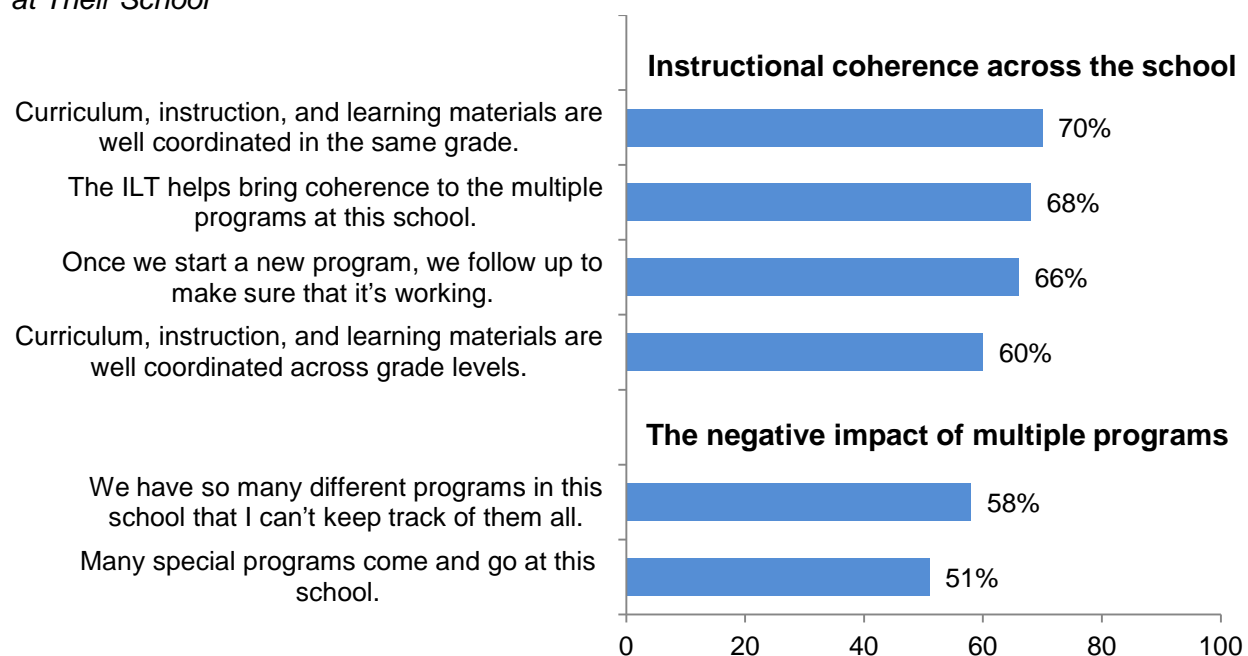
Source: Created at a meeting of Castle Foundation staff members and program founders

Some Believed ILT Brought Coherence; Others Said Initiatives Were *Kapakahi*¹

ILTs help schools carry out instructional initiatives and ensure these initiatives are as coherent as possible. This includes ensuring that instructional goals and practices are coordinated within the same grade and across grade levels. In addition, these goals and practices should fit into a larger strategy for schoolwide improvement which is led by the ILT. Only about two-thirds of ILT survey participants agreed with positive statements about coherence of instruction such as “The ILT helps bring coherence to the multiple programs in this school.” About half indicated that it was hard to keep track of the many programs in the school (Figure 2).

¹ Hawaiian word for “mixed-up”

Figure 2
Percentage of ILT Survey Participants Agreeing With Statements About Instructional Coherence at Their School



Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

At the School Level, Multiple Initiatives Made Bringing Coherence Challenging

While evaluators did not ask ILT focus groups directly about how their ILT work contributes to coherence across initiatives, several focus group participants noted that ensuring coherence was part of the purpose of the ILT. These individuals also almost always said that bringing coherence was challenging.

Our goals do not always mesh together. Everything is all kapakahi. (ILT focus group)

The challenge may have been exacerbated by the multiple reforms in Hawai'i during the last three to five years, due in part to the implementation of Race to the Top strategies that are required as part of Hawai'i's federal grant. In fact, 71 percent of ILT survey respondents said that too many other initiatives in general challenged implementation "a great deal" or "at least somewhat."

CASTs Recognized ILT Successes, but Confirmed the Challenge of Multiple Initiatives

Focus groups with Complex Area Support Teams (CASTs) echoed the views expressed in the ILT focus groups. CAST focus group participants reported increased instructional coherence in general; however, all also said coherence remained challenging. Across all focus groups with CASTs, participants said that ILTs led to more teacher involvement and collaboration around

curricular issues and programing, which led to better coherence across instructional strategies and school reforms.

One of our major efforts with ILT was having big meetings and making connections [across reform initiatives], so that it's not seven different things, it is really one thing. (CAST focus group)

The state is trying to get rid of the silos, and the ILT helps. (CAST focus group)

Similarly, 71 percent of respondents to the CAST survey reported that the ILT process was well aligned with the other programs at schools in their complex areas.

In contrast, several CAST respondents indicated that their ILTs had difficulty ensuring coherence between instructional initiatives, simply because there were too many changes in the past few years. These many changes made the ILT's work challenging.

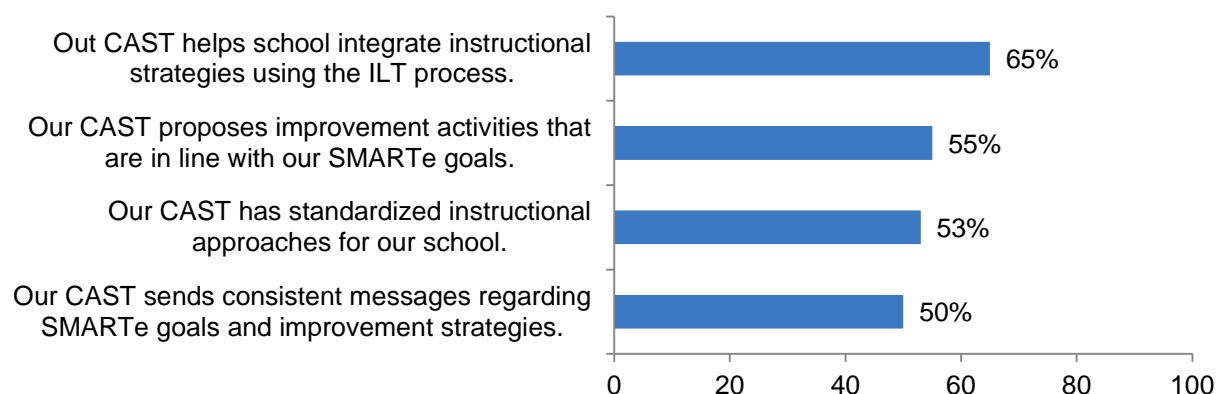
The state-recommended curriculum coming down was a distracter from what we were trying to do. (CAST focus group)

Last year was our full year of Educator Effectiveness System (EES) implementation and that threw everyone off balance. We made our attempts to connect the instructional work of the ILTs to the instructional piece of the EES system, the student learning objectives, which is the instructional component. (CAST focus group)

CASTs Supported Coherence, but ILTs Indicated more Focus on Coherence is Needed

CASTs working with ILTs are charged with assisting the ILTs in bringing instructional coherence to the school. Fewer than two-thirds of the ILT members and principals reported the CAST provided this assistance (Figure 3).

Figure 3
Percentage of ILT Survey Participants Agreeing That the CAST Supported Instructional Coherence at Their School



Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

Complex Area Superintendents (CASs) were more positive than survey respondents about how ILTs helped ensure instructional coherence. All of the CASs that we interviewed reported that ILTs improved coherence of educational strategies within their Complex Area.

The ILT and implementation has been pretty seamless. When we talk about those competing priorities and all the compliance pieces that people are responsible for, I have not heard one teacher or one principal say that this is extra work. (CAS interview)

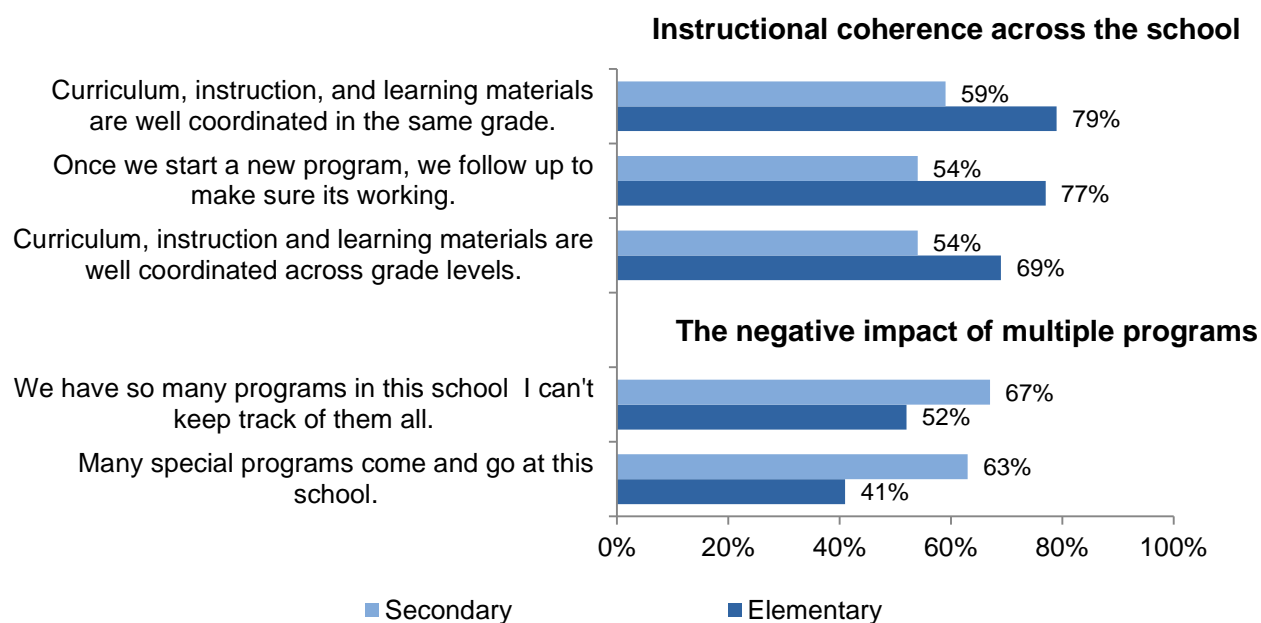
It may simply be that while the CAST did work on coherence with ILTs, more work on coherence is needed. This may be due to the large number of competing initiatives.

Elementary Schools Reported More Coherence

In general, evaluation data indicated that coherence may be easier to achieve through ILTs in elementary schools than in secondary schools, (i.e., intermediate and high schools). ILT members and principals in elementary schools rated survey items about coherence more positively as a whole. In five of the six survey items, the difference was particularly dramatic and statistically significant (Figure 4).²

² In these analyses, χ^2 ranged from 9.4 to 25.3 with p values ranging from less than .0009 to .002.

Figure 4
Comparison of Percentage of Elementary and Secondary ILT Survey Participants Agreeing With Statements About Instructional Coherence at Their School



Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

At the Complex Area level, leaders may be less aware of these differences between elementary schools and high schools. Neither CAS interviews nor CAST focus groups contained discussion of the challenge of instructional coherence for secondary schools in particular. More explanation of the challenges at the secondary level and more tailoring of the ILT initiative in high schools may be needed.

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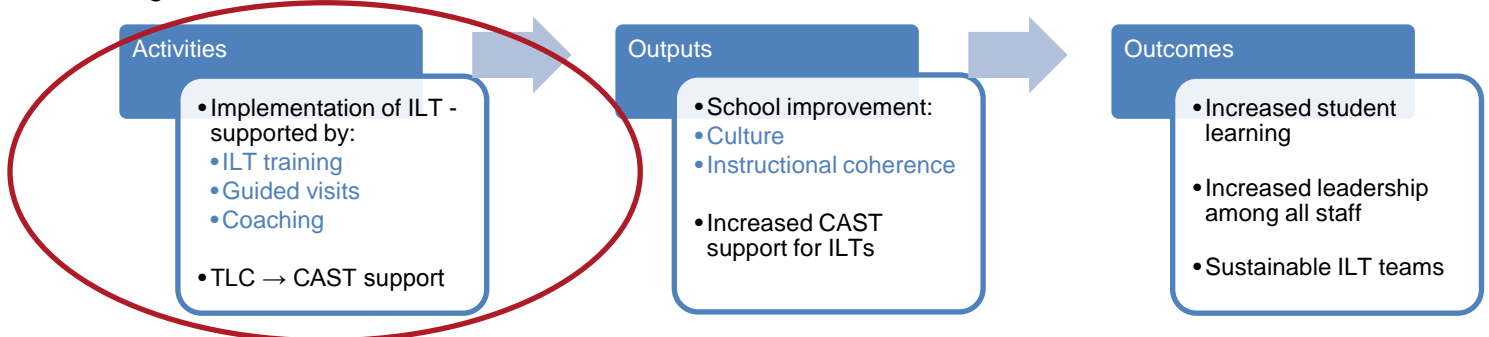
Author: Caitlin Scott

Challenges: Lots of Work and Little Time Instructional Leadership Teams in Hawai'i

Data memo 5 prepared for the Castle Foundation
May 11, 2015

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i. The memo focuses on the challenges to implementing ILT and suggests ways to overcome these challenges. The challenges and solutions were related to several ILT activities (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Logic Model for the ILT Initiative in Hawai'i



Source: Created at a meeting of Castle Foundation staff members and program founders

Challenges to ILT Include Multiple Competing Initiatives and Lack of Time

ILT principals and team members reported experiencing challenges to ILT implementation. The main challenges were too little time and too many concurrent initiatives. Far fewer participants reported challenges due to lack of school staff engagement or funding. Other challenges related to staff turnover, staff capacity, and poor project planning were reported by very few participants and are not shown on Table 1.

Table 1
Percentage of ILT Survey Participants Agreeing With Statements About Challenges

	Percentage "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"
Challenges reported by more than two-thirds of ILT survey participants	
Too many other initiatives in general	74%
Inadequate school staff time	72%
Challenges reported by fewer ILT survey participants	
Lack of school staff engagement/ownership	39%
Lack of funding	29%
Lack of ILT staff engagement/ownership	29%

Source: Education Northwest analysis of ILT survey data

Focus Groups Reiterated the Difficulties of Finding Time for the ILT

Interviews and focus groups with ILT and CAST members confirmed the survey results regarding challenges. School teams noted that conducting inquiry cycles, sharing new instructional practices, and engaging in other ILT activities requires sustained attention and substantial blocks of time to organize. During focus groups with ILT members, participants discussed how time constraints can limit their work. Teams described struggling to meet day-to-day classroom responsibilities while devoting the necessary hours for ILT work.

We never have time. If we could buy time, we'd be in good shape. It's amazing the amount of time everything takes. To be able to do it with integrity and to be able to feel good about what you've done and to feel like you've completed a cycle. I really honestly feel like we go from cycle to cycle without even knowing where we're at. We really need to process it, and we don't have the time to do all of that. We're just pushed, pushed, pushed. Time is serious as far as I'm concerned. (ILT focus group)

If [the time teachers] were out was just once a month for ILT, that would not disrupt the continuity. But when they're out because of multiple forces, that's when it becomes [difficult]. They may be out because of ILT once a month. There's department training, then there's the culmination, and [sometimes they can be out for personal reasons too]. (ILT focus group)

ILT Focus Group Participants Also Struggled to Stay Focused When Faced With Multiple External Initiatives

Administrators and teachers participating in focus groups and interviews confirmed the survey findings—that external improvement priorities from Complex Areas and the state limited ILTs' ability to stay focused on local school improvement targets, often taking resources and energy away from ILT activities.

The whole idea behind the ILT is to pick one particular thing to focus on—which we love. But I think it's in the DOE mission statement that if you can do three things well, they are going to make sure you have to do 10 things. So we have new standards, new assessments, a new evaluation system. And somebody thought it would be a great idea for all elementary schools to get accredited. This has nothing to do with the ILT. We have no interest in the school to get accredited, but we are still spending a fourth of our meeting time doing that instead of the other things that we think are important. (ILT focus group)

ILT converged on us at the same time as Common Core, at the same time as the Educator Effectiveness System. If I were to say anything negative about the climate and culture, it's the feeling of feeling overwhelmed because of all the different things that have come at the same time. (ILT focus group)

ILTs and Complex Area Leaders Suggest Way to Mitigate Challenges

Throughout the focus groups, ILT members, principals, and CASTs discussed potential solutions to the challenges faced by ILTs. These solutions may or may not work in all settings. However, discussion of these possible remedies may help some ILTs overcome difficulties.

Scheduling Could Be a Solution to the Time Crunch

Despite the obstacles related to lack of time, ILT members described creative ways to make it easier for staff members to engage in ILT work. One school used a change in their bell schedule to create a prep period for teachers, making it easier to conduct classroom observations and other ILT activities.

The new bell schedule allowed us to have a walkthrough without having to pay for it. Prior to our new bell schedule, we would have to hire substitutes that would float from period to period to cover teachers who were participating in the walkthroughs. With our new bell schedule, it allowed them a prep time where they could come in on their own and do it without the extra help and substitute teacher to cover their time. It made people a lot happier and less worried. (ILT focus group)

One school, with the flexibility provided from their CAST, decided to have planning meetings after school and on the weekend so as not to take away from class time.

That is where the CAST helped us. They allowed us to do our planning time on our own. We could decide when we were going to meet, afterschool or on the weekends. That was really helpful. (ILT focus group)

So we decided that instead of taking time out of class for our ILT meetings, we elected to move that planning time to after school and on the weekends. I think that has made our meetings more successful; they don't drag out. (ILT focus group)

Using Existing Meeting Structures May Help Get More Work Done

Teachers and administrators reported that having and utilizing established data teams and professional learning communities within grade teams or departments was an important mechanism for expanding ILT work throughout a school and getting more done. Existing PLCs provided a time and space for ILT members to share their work with other teachers in their building, facilitating staff buy-in, the adoption of common instructional practices, and the relaying of ideas and suggestions back to ILT members.

It is helpful to have time in PLCs to talk about how this went and how that went and to help build all those resources that are so important, so that it does happen during

instruction. If you don't have those things, then you're not able to see the ILT get translated into instruction. (CAST focus group)

The PLC played a huge part as vehicle to implement the ILT. Having the PLCs really facilitated things. We had them since 2008. (ILT focus group)

Several people commented that their ILT would not have been as successful without building on these existing structures.

Some people don't buy-in [to ILTs] because they really don't know what to do. You only have so much time at a faculty meeting to ask questions. But the fact that we have PLCs and people on the ILT are in your grade level, you can always get support and help. So it's easier for that buy-in to occur because it makes more sense. So everybody has understood better, they have people to turn to when they have questions. (ILT focus group)

Choosing Specific and Sustainable Instructional Goals Could Make ILTs More Efficient

Both ILT and CAST members noted the importance of having a goal that was specific enough to provide guidance and structure. The goal also needed to be broad enough to allow teams to individualize the goal to the particular needs of teachers in the school, but not so broad that the ILT work got diffused and off track. Specific, but appropriately broad, goals allowed teams to work steadily toward the goal without needing to continually reassess their direction.

One of the best things we did was pick a goal in the beginning that was very far reaching. If we had picked a goal that didn't have a lot of meaning we would have probably gotten stuck and wouldn't know what to do from there. We would probably need more help. So because our goal was crafted well, we have taken it many places and we continue to take it to many places. (ILT focus group)

When Powerful Instructional Practices are not carefully selected, it is challenging. There was a range in how successful ILT teams were in setting focus areas and determining the Powerful Instructional Practices. Other schools were successful in setting the focus, but they may have left the powerful practice a little too early, or they may have selected a powerful practice that is way too broad to try to cover in a couple of months. (CAST focus group)

***This data memo** is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i which is funded, in part, by the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation. The Castle Foundation commissioned the evaluation from Education Northwest, a private nonprofit education research and technical assistance provider in Portland, Oregon. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide state education leaders and the Castle Foundation with useful information about how the ILT initiative is implemented, so that they can make good decisions about the initiative in the future. The memo draws on data from a survey of ILT members and principals in the 80 ILT schools, interviews with three of the seven CASs involved in ILT, focus groups with the CASTs working with these CASs, and focus groups with six schools (three elementary and three secondary) within the Complex Areas.*

Authors: Rashea Hamilton, David Stevens, and Caitlin Scott

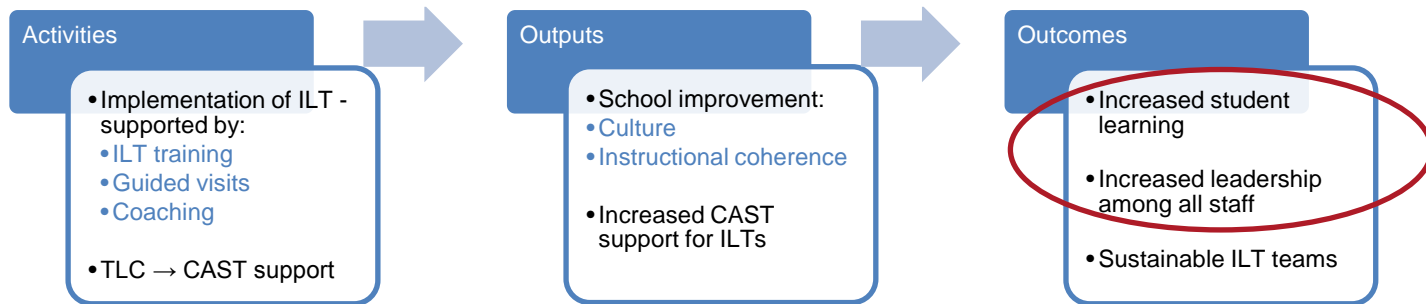
Outcomes in ILT Schools

Instructional Leadership Teams in Hawai'i

Data memo 6 prepared for the Castle Foundation
May 11, 2015

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i. The memo focuses on anticipated outcomes of ILT, including increased student learning and increased leadership among staff (Figure 1). These outcomes were measured using publicly available data that was common across all Hawai'i schools, so that the evaluators could compare ILT and non-ILT schools. The memo is not, however, a final statement on the effectiveness of ILT, for several reasons. First, some ILT schools were in just the first years of implementing the initiative, so these schools would not be expected to have increased student learning and leadership yet. Second, the publicly available data were limited to what the state already collects about schools and, therefore, give an incomplete picture of ILT.

Figure 1
Logic Model for the ILT Initiative in Hawai'i



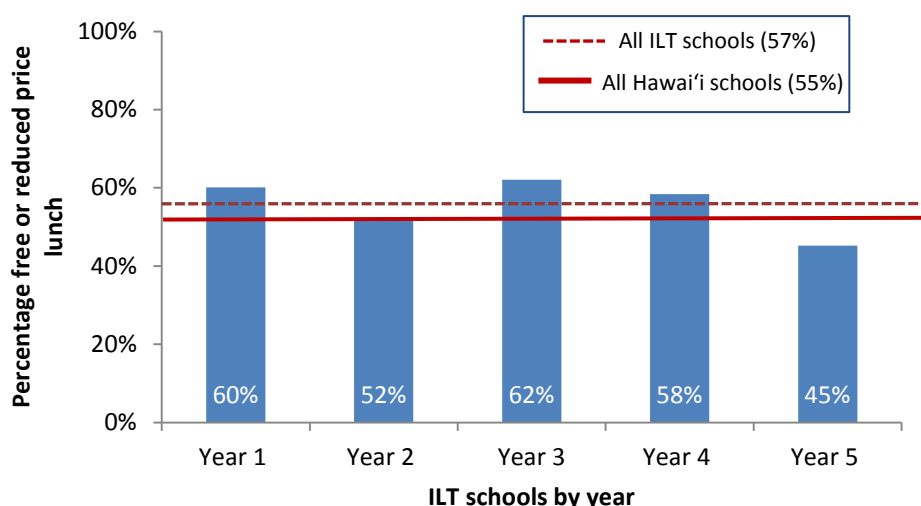
Source: Created at a meeting of Castle Foundation staff members and program founders

Some ILT Schools Had More Challenges Than Other Hawai'i Schools

Improved student achievement and staff teamwork are both anticipated long-term outcomes of Hawai'i's ILT initiative. This memo uses publicly available data to compare these outcomes in Hawai'i's schools with and without ILT teams, and examines these outcomes within the ILT schools over time.

To compare schools with and without ILT teams, Education Northwest first examined differences in student demographic characteristics which are frequently associated with lower student achievement (Kahlenberg, 2005). We did this to determine whether we would need to adjust our analysis to account for differences in student demographics. We found that ILT schools as a whole have slightly higher percentages of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch (57%) compared to the state (55%). These differences were particularly pronounced in Years 1, 3 and 4, while schools in Year 5 had lower rates (Figure 2).

Figure 2
Percentages of Those Eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch In 2013–2014, by Participation In ILT



Source: Education Northwest analysis of publicly available data for the 2013-14 school year.

Differences in percentages of special education students were minor in 2013–2014: 10 percent for the state as a whole and 11 percent for ILT schools. Differences in the percentages of English language learners (ELLs) were larger, but fewer students were identified as English language learners: 9 percent for the state as a whole and just 6 percent for ILT schools. While both special education status and ELL status were important, free and reduced-price lunch status impacted more students. Ultimately, to ensure that we made as precise a comparison as possible between ILT and non-ILT schools, Education Northwest conducted our analysis including variables to account (or control) for these student demographic variables associated with challenges to student achievement.

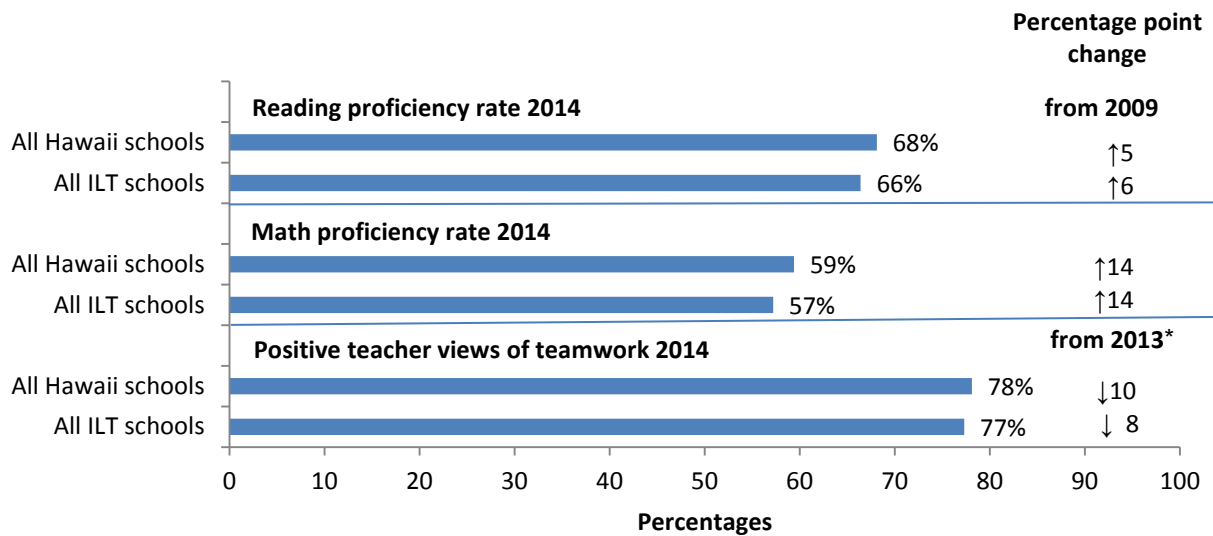
Compared to All Hawai'i Schools, Most ILT Schools Had Similar Changes in Achievement and Teamwork

ILT schools typically started with slightly lower achievement than Hawai'i schools in 2009, and then kept pace with the other schools through 2014 (Figure 3). This evaluation also examined one scale on the School Quality Survey (SQS) that measured effective teamwork of teachers—one of the goals of the ILT. Using a statistical technique called linear regression and controlling for student demographics and prior outcomes, Education Northwest found no statistically significant differences between schools with and without ILT teams. This finding means that differences between the two types of schools may have occurred by chance.

Our analyses must be interpreted cautiously, because this was not an experimental study of ILT. An experimental study would require schools to be randomly assigned to the “treatment” of ILT or to a comparison group that did not have ILT. This type of study would provide more

conclusive evidence about the impact of ILT. Furthermore, the analyses in this report are at the school level and are less precise than those at the student level (Ho & Reardon, 2012). In the future, if education leaders wish to have a more precise analysis, Education Northwest would recommend a student-level analysis and a more intentionally selected comparison group.

Figure 3
Proficiency Rates and Teamwork Ratings in 2014 in ILT Schools and All Hawai'i Schools



* For reading and math proficiency, the change was calculated from the approximate start of ILT in Hawai'i: 2009. For the teacher perceptions of teamwork, 2009 data were not comparable for all schools. Therefore, we used the first year of comparable data which was 2013.

Source: Education Northwest analysis of publicly available data

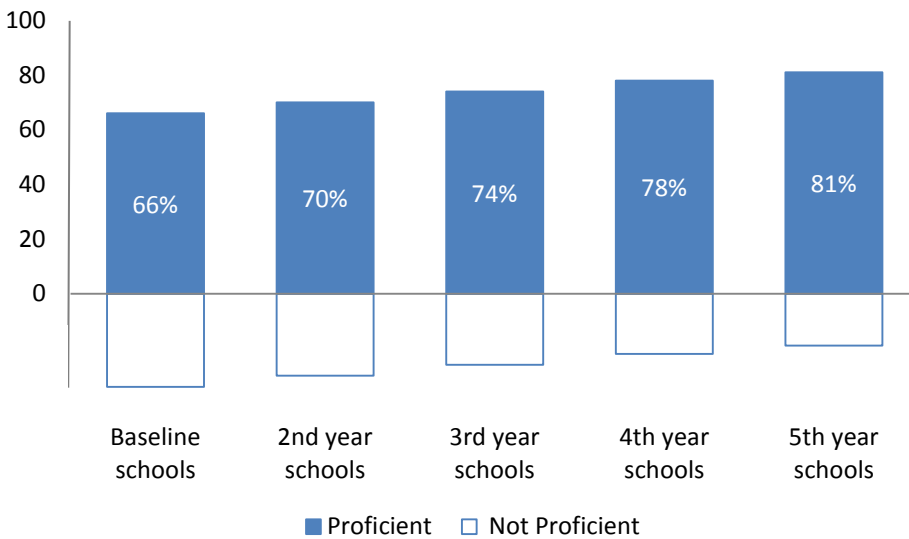
While proficiency rates were up across Hawai'i and in the ILT schools, teachers' positive views of teamwork declined. While our analyses cannot determine reasons for this change, it may be that the new initiatives around teacher evaluation and pressures from other reforms in 2014 made teachers more aware of the difficulties of teamwork.

More Years in ILT Related to Higher Achievement in Elementary Reading

One hope of the ILT initiative is that continual use of ILT teams will lead to greater student achievement and greater teamwork, as represented by the SQS. Based on regression analyses controlling for demographics and prior achievement, this hope appeared to be realized in elementary schools in reading, but not in math or on the SQS. For secondary grade levels (intermediate and high school), the analysis did not find statistically significant differences. It may be that continual use of ILT was not related to these gains or that our analysis was not strong enough to detect the differences—the analysis was limited by the smaller numbers of secondary schools participating in ILT.

In our analysis of elementary school reading proficiency, each year of participation in the ILT initiative was associated with a 3.7 percentage point increase in reading proficiency (Figure 4). This finding was statistically significant and, therefore, was unlikely to have occurred by chance. The analysis, however, must be interpreted cautiously because this was not an experimental study of ILT. Furthermore, reading proficiency varied a great deal by Complex Area, and factors in these Complex Areas, that the analysis could not account for, likely influenced reading achievement. While these findings for elementary reading are promising, there is no guarantee that this growth will continue into the future. Much will depend on effective implementation of the ILT initiative.

*Figure 4
Predicted Growth in Elementary School Reading Proficiency, Based on Regression Analysis*



Overall, ILT May Be Similar to Other Forms of Leadership

The Education Northwest analyses found that results for ILT schools were similar to results for non-ILT schools in general from 2009 to 2014. At the elementary level, however, reading outcomes were somewhat better for ILT schools that had implemented the initiative for a longer period of time compared to the outcomes of those implementing for shorter time periods. It may be that ILT and non-ILT schools truly have similar results, or it may be that our analyses did not have the power to detect differences. Furthermore, it may be that ILT schools simply needed more time to show statistically significant results.

References

Ho, A. D., & Reardon, S. F. (2012). Estimating achievement gaps from test scores reported in ordinal "proficiency" categories. *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics, 37*, 489-517.

Kahlenberg, R. D. (2003). *All together now: Creating middle-class schools through public school choice*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press.

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i which is funded, in part, by the Harold K.L. Castle Foundation. The Castle Foundation commissioned the evaluation from Education Northwest, a private nonprofit education research and technical assistance provider in Portland, Oregon. The purpose of the evaluation is to provide state education leaders and the Castle Foundation with useful information about how the ILT initiative is implemented, so that they can make good decisions about the initiative in the future. The memo draws on publicly available data from the Hawaii Department of Education website, including reading proficiency rates by school, math proficiency rates by school, and average teacher responses by school to the School Quality Survey—the scale on teacher teamwork which aligns with the ILT initiative's goal of increasing teacher teamwork and leadership within schools.

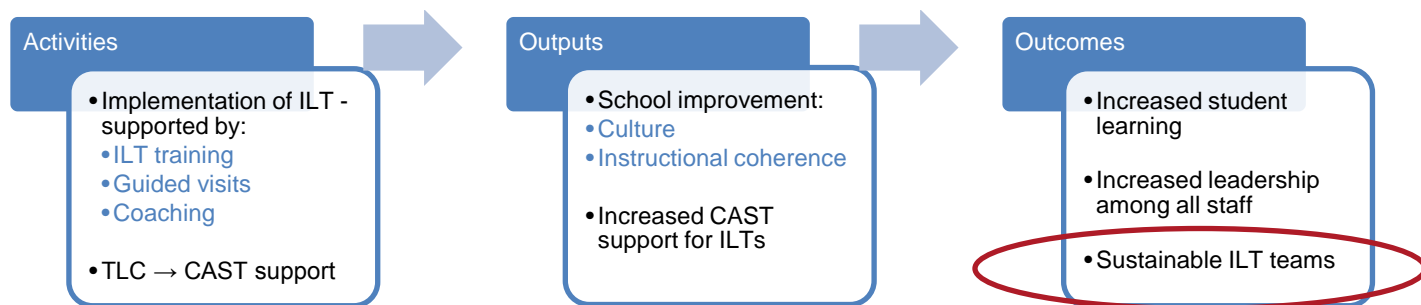
Authors: Caitlin Scott and Malkeet Singh, Education Northwest

Looking to the Future: Sustainability Instructional Leadership Teams in Hawai'i

Data memo 7 prepared for the Castle Foundation
May 11, 2015

This data memo is part of a larger external evaluation of the ILT initiative in Hawai'i. The memo focuses on the sustainability of ILTs, an anticipated outcome of the project (Figure 1). The memo also suggests ways to improve sustainability. It draws heavily on focus groups with ILTs and Complex Area Leaders in the later years of implementation.

Figure 1
Logic Model for the ILT Initiative in Hawai'i



Source: Created at a meeting of Castle Foundation staff members and program founders

Sustainability May Be Threatened by Time, Funding, and Support

Sustainability is a continual challenge in school improvement initiatives (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006). This evaluation shows that the ILT initiative is on the path to sustainability. About two thirds (67%) of the surveyed Complex Area leaders in Hawai'i said they would be able to sustain the ILTs in their Complex Area in the future without continued external help. However, sustainability remained a concern for other leaders.

Data from our interviews and focus groups with CAST and ILT members captured participants' concerns about sustaining ILT practices in the future. When discussing anticipated sustainability challenges, three particular challenges consistently emerged—time, funding, and support.

Time

Looking into the future, ILT teachers were unsure whether they would have time to continue the work of the ILT. In focus groups, many said that their time was constantly divided between too many initiatives, leaving them with insufficient time to concentrate on each one. Also, as one ILT focus group member said, "teachers are being pulled out of their classroom time" for ILT and had neither the time nor desire to leave their classrooms to deal with more

administrative work. Even if substitute teachers could be made available, teachers reported valuing their classroom time and not wanting it reduced. This was exacerbated in schools with fewer resources, where one teacher stressed that often longer-term initiatives take a back seat to dealing with what she called the “immediate needs” of struggling students.

There are so many mandates that teachers have to comply with that it is hard to fit ILT into that schedule. As much as we find it important, finding the time to have the hard conversations is difficult. (ILT member)

Funding

Both ILT and CAST members were concerned that without continued funding, they would not be able to afford to continue the ILT work. The primary financial drain came from providing substitute teachers to cover classroom time when teachers were working with the ILT.

We need substitute teachers to go into the classroom. That’s the bottom line. (CAST focus group)

One of most powerful things about this whole ILT journey is that we got classroom-level teachers to be intimately involved with this, not just fringe players; but they were right there in the mix. Without continued funding for substitutes covering their classrooms, that might be a challenge. (CAST focus group)

A full-day meeting would cost us about a \$1,000 if we weren’t getting support. So without any support, it can be a little tough if its \$1,000 dollars a pop for each time you do something like this. (ILT focus group)

Support

The ILT members, in general, spoke highly of the Targeted Leadership Consulting (TLC) coaches, and worried about what would happen when they would no longer have access to the coaches and their expertise. One school that had been in the program for five years had developed a close relationship with the coach over time, despite being, in many ways, more prepared to take on the challenges of running the ILT than schools in earlier stages. The school’s staff, along with other groups, were concerned about losing that highly personalized input and were unsure that the plan to have their CAST supply all this support was sufficient.

We’re doing a good job, but we still need that guidance. (CAST focus group)

Just because you’re doing well doesn’t mean you’re ready to go it alone. (ILT focus group)

For any given topic, who’s the guru? Send us to get training from the best people. (ILT focus group)

There is no one in the DOE right now that can give us the kind of feedback that we get from [the TLC coach]... We don't want people coming here saying what a good job we are doing and can we borrow your ideas...we want someone to come in and say, let's take it to the next level. (ILT focus group)

Sustainability May Be Bolstered by Communication and Ongoing Attention

The CAST and ILT members discussed helpful approaches to overcoming their sustainability challenges. In addition to securing continued funding, the most commonly mentioned approaches were honest communication and ongoing attention.

Communication

When discussing the deepest and most sustainable changes that have taken place at their schools, many ILT members talked about greater openness in their communication processes, and more sharing of teaching practices. These changes appeared to go beyond surface-level reform to permeate the culture of the school.

Things aren't isolated anymore. We are creating a system that is stronger and stronger. Our system is strong enough to withstand changes that might happen at the district level, and we keep working at perfecting it. (ILT focus group)

One thing that delights me is the conversations; they're more truthful. Conversations were very harmonious at the beginning but now there is the truth. When they look at the data, they want to know if they're accurate...more of push of 'don't tell us what you think we want to hear. Tell us what you see and what we need to work on.' (CAST focus group)

In the future, this open communication may help ILTs and CASTs overcome sustainability challenges by ensuring that the challenges are heard early and are honestly addressed.

Ongoing Attention

In the ILT, many individuals probably need to pay continual attention to the initiative to ensure sustainability. First, the CAS supervises the CAST and typically makes the financial decisions for the Complex Area. One CAS stressed that the ILT process needs continual monitoring, and that the CAS must always remain actively involved to assure the sustainability of the initiative.

You can never take your hands off as a CAS. (CAS interview)

Additionally, some ILT focus groups discussed the importance of group efforts and positive attitudes at the school level to keep the motivation and momentum going.

It comes down to attitudes to determine whether or not it will keep going. (ILT focus group)

Finally, ILTs will need to both keep doing things that work and adapt as schools change over time. In the data, a tension emerged between the desirability of consistent processes to ensure sustainable change, and the need for flexibility and differentiation in the ILT model to ensure relevance. For instance, some ILTs stated that the teams must function according to the norms and procedures.

If it is done properly from the very beginning, then it kind of withstands the test of time because no matter who is there, the capacity is built within that core group (ILT focus group)

On the other hand, the following excerpts demonstrate the perception that ILTs should be able to determine their own flexible and individual processes to make lasting changes.

As you include more schools and more people, different schools need different things. (ILT focus group)

Let us blossom and grow as we are. (ILT focus group)

Everything we do is something we carefully thought out and see great value in it. When you have your good idea over there and you force me to do your good idea over here, it is going to displace my thing, which was developed by us, for us. I would never presume to tell another school what to do. (ILT focus group)

ILTs and CASTs may want to consider building in feedback loops through surveys and planned discussions in order to make sure that ILTs, and CAST supports for ILTs, are both implemented as intended and flexible enough to adapt to changing school contexts.

References

Hargreaves, A. & Goodson, I. (2006). Educational change over time? The sustainability and nonsustainability of three decades of secondary school change and continuity. *The Journal of Leadership for Effective and Equitable Organizations*, 42(1), 3-41.

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