21st Century Principals: What They Must Know and Be Able to Do (continued)

- **Visioning** refers to the school leader's ability to clearly define and communicate a vision to others, to share the vision with others, which energizes them to share the task of creating an exemplary learning community (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, & Orr, 2007; Fullan, 2003;).
- **Data-driven** refers to the school leader's ability to collect appropriate data, use that data to improve student achievement, and communicate data-driven decisions to key stakeholders (Mendels, 2012; DuFour & Marzano, 2009).
- **Systems thinking** involves strategic thinking to initiate change needed to improve student achievement. This includes simultaneously examining multiple factors of the school operation to identify problem areas and strategically design changes that will improve operations resulting in increased student learning outcomes (Levine, 2005; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005).
- **Strategic planning** refers to the school leader's ability to take the communicated vision and initiate the development of an action plan to achieve measurable goals (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, et al., 2007; Kay & Greenhill, 2012).
- **Technology literacy** refers to the school leader's ability to model technology use and facilitate teacher and student integration of technology in the educational process (Henke, 2007; Kay & Greenhill, 2012).

A Call for Principal Training

Professional development for school principals should be focused upon the identified five areas of need. Such professional development experiences should include practicing the skills within a school setting, as well as coaching and mentoring. Essential training should include district- designed training, state department sponsored conferences and institutes, and principal association trainings.

Summary

We know the skill areas where principals need help, and we know what constitutes the needed training. It is now time to prepare school leaders so that they can be effective 21st century principals capable of leading school-wide efforts to increase student achievement.

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