

## **Sustaining School Improvement**

**EDUO 9376 3 Semester Credits/Units**

Instructor – Janita Love

[jlove@dominicancaonline.com](mailto:jlove@dominicancaonline.com)

### **Course Syllabus**

#### **Course Overview:**

Reimagine the ever-evolving landscape of educational change through actions that drive continuous improvement and ensure the success of all students. Prioritize the knowledge, strategies, and tools necessary to lead sustained improvement efforts. Apply theories of school improvement using proven frameworks and innovative approaches for fostering positive change. Drawing upon research-based strategies and real-world examples, you will develop the skills and expertise to lead transformational improvement initiatives.

**Course Learning Objectives:** In this course, participants will have the opportunity:

- Identify and analyze factors contributing to school success, including leadership, teacher effectiveness, curriculum, and school culture.
- Implement systems for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting various data types, including academic, behavioral, and demographic data, to identify areas for improvement and monitor progress over time.
- Develop a shared vision and strategic plan for school improvement that includes ambitious goals, clear objectives, action steps, and timelines.
- Explain and operationalize high-impact instructional practices that lead to school improvement.
- Create a safe, inclusive, supportive school environment through positive behavior interventions and support so all stakeholders feel valued and respected.
- Identify elements of monitoring systems that track progress toward improvement goals.
- Identify strategies for scaling successful practices and sustaining improvement gains over time.

#### **Course Relation to CCS or other Professional Standards**

This course aligns with the following standards for the National Board for Professional Teaching:

- Teachers are committed to students and their learning.
- Teachers are responsible for managing and monitoring student learning.
- Teachers are members of learning communities.

## How to Submit Coursework

Each completed assignment in this course is submitted to the instructor for review. Follow directions at the end of each assignment on how to prepare and submit your assignments. Name each file submitted with your last name and assignment number (i.e. BrownAssignment3. Make sure you place your full name, course number and assignment number at the top of each document page. You will receive feedback from your instructor within 5 days indicating successful completion of the assignment or the need for revision. Assignment grades will be averaged for the final course grade.

**Submit completed work to the corresponding Module dropboxes in Moodle**

## Course Modules / Assignments

### Learning Modules / Assignments

Module # 1 Understanding School Improvement	
Objective	Participants will be able to analyze the factors contributing to school success, including leadership, teacher effectiveness, curriculum, and school culture.
Assignments	<p>1. <b>Engage</b> with the School Improvement <a href="#">Choice Board</a> (link). Explore <b>at least one resource from each category</b> (Read, Watch, View, Explore).</p> <p>2. <b>Reflect</b> on the following questions after engaging with your choices. <b>Respond to each question in the online journal provided</b>. Use specific references from the resources in your answers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Who:</b> Who are the essential personnel involved in school improvement efforts? What are each person's role/responsibilities?</li> <li>● <b>What:</b> What is school improvement? How would you define it for someone not involved in the field of education?</li> <li>● <b>When:</b> When are school improvement efforts successful? What are the conditions that allow for maximum impact?</li> <li>● <b>Why:</b> Why is school improvement a necessary equity tool? Why must we ensure a racial/cultural lens on school improvement efforts?</li> <li>● <b>How:</b> How does school improvement</li> <li>● <b>Do:</b> Do all schools need a school improvement plan? Why or why not?</li> </ul> <p><b>Online Journal Link: You will be asked to make your own copy upon opening the link.</b>  <a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-AQ2-oYaFvQylCqUGxWK5Pv-ce8VCo4BI5k15coP3Qg/copy">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-AQ2-oYaFvQylCqUGxWK5Pv-ce8VCo4BI5k15coP3Qg/copy</a></p> <p>3. <b>Going Deeper:</b> Choose one of the questions above to take deeper. To go deeper, choose a topic from the questions above. Then, use the choice board to dig deeper by exploring other resources. Create a <b>five slide/page presentation</b> (Google Slides, PowerPoint, etc.) outlining the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Introduction:</b> Why did you choose to go deeper on this specific topic?</li> <li>● <b>Connections:</b> What connections have you been able to make between the text and your own life or your other learning?</li> <li>● <b>Challenge:</b> What ideas presented in the resources about school improvement do you want to challenge or disagree with? Describe your rationale.</li> <li>● <b>Concepts:</b> What key concepts or ideas about school improvement are important and worth holding on to?</li> <li>● <b>Changes:</b> What changes can you make from your experience with the resources?</li> </ul> <p><b>Submit your presentation to the Module 1 Dropbox in Moodle.</b></p>
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to evaluate each assignment.

Module # 2 Data-Informed Decision Making	
<b>Objective</b>	Participants will be able to implement systems for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting various data types, including academic, behavioral, and demographic data, to identify areas for improvement and monitor progress over time.
<b>Assignment(s)</b>	<p><b>Part I Collecting Data</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Engage</b> by <b>watching each of the following videos</b> on collecting data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">"Data-Driven is STUDENT-CENTERED": Collecting Meaningful Data</a></li> <li><a href="#">Using Data to Support Teacher and Student Growth</a></li> <li><a href="#">Data: It's Just Part of Good Teaching</a></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Reflect</b> in your <b>online journal</b> by answering the following questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How would you define data collection to a non-educator?</li> <li>Why is it essential to collect data to inform school improvement efforts?</li> <li>How could you collect data to inform your school's improvement efforts?</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Going Deeper</b> by using the resource <a href="#">Choosing Which Data to Collect</a> (link) to identify something you want to interrogate in your work. This can be a gap in achievement, behavior patterns, or even communication with caregivers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Complete the resource, <a href="#">Choosing Which Data to Collect</a> on your own.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ol> <p><b>Submit your completed document to the instructor via Google Drive using.....</b></p> <p><b>Part II Analyze and Interpret Data</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Engage:</b> This course will explore The Collaborative Learning Cycle as a data analysis structure. To learn more about this cycle, <b>engage in the following online module</b> on using the Collaborative Learning Cycle to analyze and interpret data. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://resources.misystemsUPPORT.com/CLCModule4/content/#/">https://resources.misystemsUPPORT.com/CLCModule4/content/#/</a></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Reflect</b> on your understanding by completing the <b>Knowledge Check quiz</b> within the module.</li> <li><b>Going Deeper:</b> Develop a <b>two-page essay</b> that describes the Collaborative Learning Cycle to your colleagues. You can either use this to convince or dissuade your colleagues. In your description, be sure to include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An overview of the phases of the cycle, including what is supposed to happen during this part of the process</li> <li>Examples of how each phase could be accomplished in your work. Consider what implementation of each phase would look like at your school.</li> <li>Identify the pros and cons of each phase.</li> <li>Summarize your opinion of the cycle as an instructional tool to convince or dissuade your colleagues.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><b>Submit your essay to the Module 2 Dropbox in Moodle.</b></p>
<b>Assessment</b>	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to evaluate each assignment.

**Module # 3 Strategic Planning and Goal Setting**

**Objective** Participants will be able to develop a shared vision and a strategic plan for school improvement that includes the critical elements of an improvement plan (root cause analysis, priorities statements, goals, identifying strategies, action planning, identifying professional learning needs, and communicating about the plan)

**Assignment(s)**

**Part I Developing a Shared Vision**

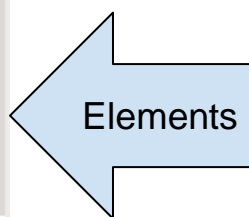
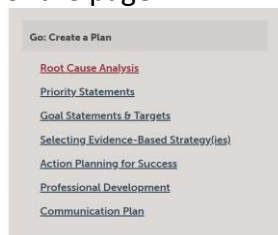
1. **Engage by reading the critical components of a shared vision** outlined below.
  - a. Inclusivity and Collaboration: A shared vision involves collaboration among all stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and the community. It requires open communication and active participation to consider everyone's perspectives and aspirations.
  - b. Clarity and Focus: The vision should be clear and focused, concisely stating the school's goals and priorities. It should serve as a guiding star that aligns the efforts of all stakeholders toward common objectives.
  - c. Inspirational and Aspirational: A shared vision should inspire stakeholders to strive for excellence and continuous improvement. It should articulate a compelling future that encourages commitment and enthusiasm.
  - d. Alignment with Values and Beliefs: The vision must align with the school community's core values and beliefs. It should reflect what the school stands for and aims to achieve, ensuring that all actions and decisions follow these principles.
  - e. Adaptability and Relevance: A shared vision should be adaptable to changing circumstances and educational landscapes. It must remain relevant over time, allowing for periodic review and revision to meet new challenges and opportunities.
  - f. Shared Ownership and Accountability: All stakeholders should feel a sense of ownership and accountability for the vision. This shared responsibility encourages collective action and ensures everyone contributes to its realization.
  
2. **Reflect** on developing a shared vision by **answering these questions in your online journal**.
  - Based on these critical components, how would you define shared visioning?
  - Why would school improvement benefit from shared visioning?
  
3. **Going Deeper:** As educational leaders, guiding teams to this shared vision is essential to your work.
  - i. Review this [resource](#).
  - ii. Watch this [video](#).
  - iii. In your online journal, **develop a multi-step process for leading a team in developing a shared vision**. Your process should include evidence of both the resource and video. For each step, describe what will occur, what potential challenges could surface, and how you would problem-solve those challenges.

## Part II Crafting a Strategic Plan for Improvement:

1. **Engage:** When moving from a shared vision to strategic planning, the essential question to be answered is, *how do we get from where we are now to where we want to be?* This question serves as a powerful catalyst in school improvement planning because it bridges the gap between the current state of the school and its aspirational goals. This question encourages a profound reflection on the present realities, identifying strengths and growth areas and envisioning a desired future that motivates stakeholders. Essential to the question is that it prompts the school community to engage in strategic thinking and collaborative problem-solving, fostering a collective commitment to change. By asking this question, educators and leaders can clarify their objectives, prioritize actions, and allocate resources effectively, ensuring that every step is purposeful and aligned with the school's shared vision. This inquiry drives the planning process and instills a sense of accountability and urgency, empowering all involved to take meaningful actions that propel the school toward its envisioned future.

The following are the essential components of strategic school improvement. Cycling through these will ensure you can answer the question, "*How do we get from where we are now to where we want to be?*"

- b. Root Cause Analysis
  - c. Priority Statements
  - d. Goal Statements & Targets
  - e. Selecting Evidence-Based Strategy(ies)
  - f. Action Planning for Success
  - g. Professional Development
  - h. Communication Plan
2. **Reflect:** **Explore this website** to learn about each of the essential components
    - i. <https://www.iu13.org/school-improvement/pa-continuous-improvement/go/root-cause-analysis/>
    - ii. The site will open on the first component, root cause analysis.
    - iii. To move to the following elements, use the menu along the right side of the page.



3. **Going Deeper:** Use the information you learned to **create a case study narrative** demonstrating your understanding of the process.
  - iv. Here is a step-by-step [overview](#) of what should be included in your case study. These are considerations that are recommended to be included in your case study narrative.
  - v. Here is an [example](#) of a case study narrative. **PLEASE NOTE:** This is a very general example meant to give you a basic idea.

**Submit your Case Study to the Module 3 Dropbox.**

Assessment

The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to evaluate each assignment.

Module #4 Building Instructional Capacity	
Objective	Participants will be able to explain and operationalize high-impact instructional practices that lead to school improvement.
Assignment(s)	<p>1. <b>Engage</b> by <b>reading the pages identified</b> in the resources below.</p> <p>a. <a href="#">EFFECTIVE PRACTICES: Research Briefs and Evidence Ratings</a></p> <p>i. Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction Planning p. 50 to 57</p> <p>ii. Classroom Instruction p. 61 to 80</p> <p>2. <b>Reflect: Choose three high-impact instructional practices</b> from the reading you did above. <b>Explain each</b> practice you chose in detail. In your explanation, include your impressions of how the practice can impact student learning. <b>This reflection should be three pages (one page per practice).</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Guiding Questions to Support Your Reflection:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Which practices resonate with you the most based on their potential to enhance student outcomes?</li> <li>● What specific evidence from the reading supports the effectiveness of each practice?</li> <li>● What is the primary goal or objective of each practice you chose?</li> <li>● How is each practice typically implemented in an educational setting?</li> <li>● What are the key elements or components that make each practice effective?</li> <li>● How does each practice contribute to deeper learning and understanding?</li> <li>● What specific outcomes or improvements in student performance can be expected from each practice?</li> <li>● What are your thoughts on the feasibility and applicability of each practice in your teaching context?</li> <li>● How might these practices be adapted to suit different student needs and learning styles?</li> <li>● What potential challenges or limitations do you foresee in implementing these practices?</li> </ul> <p><b>Submit your paper to the Module 4 Dropbox.</b></p> <p>3. <b>Going Deeper:</b> Develop a <b>plan for operationalizing these instructional practices</b> in a school setting. Consider the necessary steps, resources, and support for successful implementation. Ensure your plan identifies challenges and potential barriers to implementing these high-impact practices in a school environment. Suggest strategies to overcome these challenges. <b>Prepare a presentation</b> summarizing your findings and proposed operationalization plan. Use visuals and examples to illustrate key points.</p> <p><b>Submit your Presentation to the Module 4 Dropbox.</b></p>
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to evaluate each assignment.

Module #5 Cultivating a Positive School Culture	
Objective	Participants will be able to create safe, inclusive, supportive school environments so all stakeholders feel valued and respected.
Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Engage:</b> Use the resources below to <b>develop your understanding</b> of how a school's culture influences feelings of safety, inclusion, value, and respect. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Watch</a></li> <li><a href="#">Read</a></li> <li><a href="#">Read #2</a></li> <li><a href="#">Explore</a></li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Reflect:</b> Use this website to <b>create a mindmap</b> of your new knowledge about school culture. <b>Be sure to save your mindmap so you can turn it in.</b> This mindmap will be a building block for reflection writing in the next step. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="https://www.mindmup.com/">https://www.mindmup.com/</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Submit your mind map to the Module 5 Dropbox in Moodle.</b></p> </li> <li><b>Going Deeper:</b> Use what you have learned, including the connections you made in the mindmap activity, to <b>generate a response to the following question in your online journal:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How would you define school culture and its role in improving a school?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to evaluate each assignment.

Module #6 Engaging Stakeholders	
Objective	Participants will be able to communicate transparently and collaborate effectively with students, parents, staff, and community members to build trust and maintain accountability for improvement initiatives.
Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Engage:</b> <b>Read</b> the following research brief <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Understanding the Connection Between Family-School Engagement and Education System Transformation</a></li> </ol> </li> <li><b>Reflect:</b> <b>In your online journal, define family-school engagement and explain its significance</b> in the context of education system transformation. Reference the definition provided in the text, and use other information to support your answer.</li> <li><b>Going Deeper:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go to <a href="http://www.padlet.com">www.padlet.com</a>. Use the Blank Board option to <b>produce a Padlet that:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifies and discusses at least three barriers to effective family-school engagement, as highlighted in the document from the Engage section above. For each barrier, propose strategies to overcome the identified barriers. In your proposed strategies, discuss how each strategy takes advantage of a strength-based view of families.</li> </ol> </li> <li>You can be creative in your presentation as long as I can identify your demonstration of the content.</li> </ol> <p><b>Submit your Padlet link to Module 6 Dropbox.</b></p> </li> </ol>
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to evaluate each assignment.



Module #7 Monitoring and Evaluation		3 hours
Objective	Participants will be able to identify elements of monitoring systems that track progress toward improvement goals.	
Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials	<p>1. <b>Engage: Read</b> the document (linked at the end of this paragraph) from the Houston Independent School District. This document provides a clear framework for effective goal monitoring, emphasizing the importance of understanding the alignment between community goals and student performance. It outlines specific qualities to assess in monitoring reports, such as the clarity of goals and data presentation, which can guide teachers in evaluating their progress and strategies. Additionally, the document encourages open dialogue and preparation to foster a culture of reflection and improvement that teachers can emulate in their practices. Although the content is specific to the relationship between the Board of Education and the Superintendent, there is valuable information for all school leaders and teachers. <a href="#">Effective Goal Monitoring</a></p> <p>2. <b>Reflect: In your online journal, reflect on the three questions below.</b> This can be a bulleted reflection. I am not looking for an essay-like response but more of a personal reflection highlighting your thoughts as educational leaders. You should include connections to the text, however.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How can understanding the difference between current and future performance questions, as outlined on Page 3, help schools monitor progress toward improvement?</li> <li>● In what ways do you think the qualities of effective monitoring reports, mentioned on Page 2, influence perceptions of academic performance and the strategies used to improve?</li> <li>● Reflect on the importance of clear communication and preparation in goal monitoring, as discussed on Page 1, and how these elements can impact the approach to setting and achieving goals.</li> </ul> <p>3. <b>Going Deeper: Find three resources</b> that would support a school in establishing a system for monitoring progress toward its improvement goals.</p> <p><b>Submit your resource in the Module 7 Dropbox.</b></p>	
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to evaluate each assignment.	



Module #8 Sustainability and Scaling Up		3 hours
Objective	Participants will be able to identify strategies for scaling successful practices and sustaining improvement gains over time.	
Assignment(s) Include Activities and Needed Materials	<p>1. <b>Engage: Read</b> the definitions of scaling and sustaining below.</p> <div data-bbox="802 338 1091 753" style="background-color: #2c4e64; color: white; padding: 10px; border: 1px solid #2c4e64;"> <p><b>Box 1. Defining terms</b></p> <p><b>Scaling:</b> Replicating or expanding an improvement strategy to a greater number of people (e.g., staff implementing or clients receiving).</p> <p><b>Sustaining:</b> Maintaining the strategy as is, directed at the same group of staff or clients, for a longer period of time. Sustaining is not just about doing the same thing for longer but thinking about how to institutionalize a strategy to make it the standard way of doing business.</p> </div> <p>2. <b>Reflect: In your online journal, reflect on the drivers and barriers</b> of scaling and sustaining in-school improvement. Use your personal experiences as an educational leader to support your reflections.</p> <p>3. <b>Going Deeper: Read the following brief</b> (linked below this paragraph) about planning for scaling and sustaining improvement efforts. The acronym CQI appears throughout the document. CQI = Continuous Quality Improvement (the team responsible for implementing the improvement efforts). After reading the brief, <b>design a plan for scaling and sustaining improvement efforts</b> at your school/office. The plan should contain separate strategies for scaling and sustaining, as well as ways in which you will capitalize on the drivers and overcome the barriers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vMVGXk8mJQMGGDDVShZxXJSSQftgCQvAc/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1vMVGXk8mJQMGGDDVShZxXJSSQftgCQvAc/view?usp=sharing</a></li> </ul> <p><b>Submit your plan in the Dropbox for Module 8</b></p> <p><b>Also, share your completed journal with the instructor via Google at <a href="mailto:jlovedominicancourses@gmail.com">jlovedominicancourses@gmail.com</a></b></p>	
Assessment	The Course Assessment Rubric will be used to evaluate each assignment.	

**Course Assessment Rubric:**

<p><b>EXCELLENT</b></p> <p>Meets or Exceeds Course Objectives: <b>A to A-</b></p>	<p><b>ACCEPTABLE</b></p> <p>Majority of Work Meets Course Objectives; <b>B+ to B-</b></p>	<p><b>NOT ACCEPTABLE</b></p> <p>Needs Considerable Improvement: Resubmit Work Suggested: <b>C or below</b></p>
<p>All work submitted reflects in-depth understanding of course objectives.</p>	<p>Most work submitted reflects in-depth understanding of course objectives.</p>	<p>Work shows little or no in-depth understanding of course objectives.</p>
<p>Assignment responses show evidence of new knowledge evidenced by thoughtful, detailed and accurate assignment responses.</p>	<p>Most assignment responses show evidence of new knowledge evidenced by thoughtful, detailed and accurate assignment responses.</p>	<p>Responses show little to no evidence of new knowledge as evidenced by lack of thoughtful, detailed and accurate assignment responses.</p>
<p>Work submitted was organized and clearly articulated. The student carefully followed all assignment instructions. The instructor did not have to provide continual assignment clarification or request revisions.</p>	<p>Most work submitted was organized and clearly articulated. The student carefully followed all assignment instructions. The instructor had to provide continual assignment clarification or ask for revisions.</p>	<p>Work submitted was not organized or not clearly articulated. The instructor had to provide constant clarification and ask for continued revisions.</p>
<p>Assignment content and required projects were original.</p>	<p>Assignment content and required projects were original.</p>	<p>Evidence that not all assignment content and required projects were original.</p>
<p>Work is free of spelling and/or grammatical errors.</p>	<p>Work has few spelling and/or grammatical errors.</p>	<p>Work has numerous spelling and/or grammatical errors.</p>