Indicator: The school's Leadership Team regularly looks at school performance data (disaggregated by subgroups) and aggregated classroom observation data and uses that data to make decisions about school improvement and professional development needs. (3061)

Explanation:
Student performance data is typically disaggregated by sub-groups; for example race, ethnicity, gender, income, special education, bilingual/ELL, Section 504 plans, Homeless/McKinney Vento Act, migrant.

Evidence Review:

Marzano (2003) points out that leadership should not reside with one individual; a team approach to planning and decision making allows for distributive leadership. Planning and decision making within the restructured school require *teams*, *time*, and *access to timely information*. That is, decision-making groups must be organized and given time to plan and monitor the parts of the system for which they are responsible. This is an immense challenge in most schools, where teachers are available for very little time beyond the hours for which they are responsible for teaching and supervising students. Finding time for a group of teachers to meet is not easy, but essential. Different groups or teams of school personnel have different needs for the amount and distribution of time required for them to attend to their responsibilities. Additional time is needed for professional development; professional development should be directly tied to classroom observations and analysis of student learning data.

A basic structure for team planning, work, and decision making includes a Leadership Team, Instructional Teams, and a team focused on the family-school connection (such as a School Community Council). The Leadership Team is headed by the principal and includes teachers and other key staff. In order to facilitate communication and coordination among the grade levels and departments of the school, a typical Leadership Team is comprised of the principal and team leaders from the Instructional Teams (grade level or subject area teams). The Leadership Team may also function as the School Improvement Team, with parent members attending meetings scheduled for purposes of reviewing and amending the school improvement plan.
Source: Sam Redding, *Handbook on Restructuring and Substantial School Improvement*

Evidence Review:

All the schools in the case studies used data to set instructional goals.(Conzemius, 2000; Duke, n.d.; Duke et al., 2005; Johnson & Asera, 1999; Lachat & Smith, 2005; Picucci et al., 2002a, 2002b; Tung & Ouimette, 2007; Whiteside, 2006; Zargarpour, 2005). Data included school average student test scores, but went beyond that. In 3 of the 10 case studies, researchers note that the schools collected and analyzed a range of data in addition to achievement test results (Conzemius, 2000; Lachat & Smith, 2005; Zargarpour, 2005). In 1 study of an elementary school, the principal and teachers collected and analyzed data on the school's climate, its sense of community, and its curriculum and instruction (Conzemius, 2000).

In addition to looking at diverse types of data, turnaround schools considered data at three levels: at the school level to focus on areas that needed schoolwide improvement to meet adequate yearly progress, at the classroom level to focus on teachers' instructional strengths and weaknesses, and at the student level to focus on instructional needs of individual students.

At the school level, data were used to identify instructional areas that needed schoolwide improvement. The turnaround schools consistently used data on student achievement to identify gaps in student learning (Conzemius, 2000). In one study of 7 middle schools, every one of the schools used school performance data to determine areas of teaching and learning that needed improvement (Picucci et al., 2002a). The schools developed systems to help teachers understand and use the data to guide their teaching, disaggregating data to indicate specific areas of weakness in instruction. In addition, the schools developed processes for defining target areas for schoolwide change. In one case study of 10 schools, 8 realized that they did not have access to sufficient data on student achievement to guide their decision-making and so worked to obtain the necessary data (Duke et al., 2005).

At the classroom and program levels, data were used to determine areas of weakness for targeting improvement efforts. One study of turnaround efforts showed that five urban high schools collected a wide variety of data regularly over four years, disaggregating the data by student demographics and participation in school programs, such as special education and remediation classes (Lachat & Smith, 2005). They used this information to focus their improvement efforts on specific programs and classes. In addition to disaggregated test data, the schools used principal and peer observations to better understand what was happening in the classrooms and to identify instructional needs.

At the student level, data were used to plan instruction to meet individual needs. For example, most of the seven turnaround schools in one study disaggregated performance data by grade level, learning objectives, responses to individual items, and other factors. They then used the disaggregated data to identify individual students who needed help on specific skills (Picucci et al., 2002a). One principal described the process: “First, look at the data for trends to see what we’re doing as teachers. And then you look at individual kids and where they fit in…And they can refer to that [data] and see where kids have strengths and weaknesses in their classrooms” (Picucci et al., 2002a, p. 43). In another study, three elementary schools established Data Action Teams that gathered information from teachers on student performance and analyzed student work samples. They applied a set of standard templates and protocols specific to the different data sets to help teachers use the data to guide policies and practice (Zargarpour, 2005).

Source: IES National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, *Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools*

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