ACADEMICS

EdFuel's *Blueprint for Success* initiative aims to address a looming talent deficit in the education field, developing many more highly effective K-12 system leaders capable of managing complex and dynamic organizations. To support the field in strengthening talent pipelines, one element of this initiative is the development of competency maps that articulate the essential competencies (specific skills, knowledge, and relationships) for non-instructional roles in school district/network central offices. These maps will provide the foundation for an aligned, proactive approach to developing non-instructional school district/network leaders.

WHAT THIS MAP IS:

The *Blueprint for Success* includes seven functional competency maps (academics and instruction, advocacy, development, information and data, finance, operations, and talent) to show the knowledge, skills, and relationships necessary to manage school districts/networks. In addition to the functional competency maps, EdFuel's *Blueprint for Success* provides a separate *Leadership Map* that covers cross-functional leadership skills. The *Leadership Map* should be viewed alongside each functional map to cover the full set of leadership and function-specific skills required.

The *Academics Competency Map,* developed in collaboration with school district and network academics leaders and field experts, represents the functional abilities necessary for the breadth of academics roles typically within school districts or networks. This map is not prescriptive of an ideal set of roles within the academics function. It is designed to be modular and customizable so that organizations can reconfigure the competencies described according to their own roles, titles, and structures.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS MAP:

The *Academics and Instruction Map* is specifically designed to highlight the critical skills needed across departments. Competencies fall within these categories:

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC MODEL	MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS	PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF
Creating a comprehensive academic model for school district/network focused on achieving breakthrough student results and promoting a culture focused on excellent teaching and learning and equity for all students	Supporting school leadership teams to successfully deliver the academic model across school district/network	Ensuring school district/network becomes an "employer of choice" committed to developing and retaining highly effective school leaders and instructional staff

Each competency is described at four organizational levels. While organizational structures and titles will vary, the table below gives sample job titles and descriptions to illustrate the levels:

COMPETENCY MAP LEVEL	SAMPLE JOB TITLES	DESCRIPTION
Individual Contributor	Instructional Coach, Curriculum Specialist	• Responsible for content expertise in a specific academic area • Provides support to teachers and department leaders across a network, but is not responsible for managing staff • Requires significant experience and demonstrated success in teaching or school leadership
Manager	Special Education Director, After School Program Director, Director of Student and Family Services, Director of Counseling	• Responsible for managing a program across the network of schools • Oversees a budget and specific program goals • May manage school level staff responsible for program area
Senior Manager/ Director	Regional/Local Area Superintendent, Director of Teaching and Learning	• Responsible for directly managing school leaders, overseeing a group of schools, and ensuring student performance outcomes • Requires experience as a school leaders, with demonstrated ability to improve student performance outcomes and effective coaching of instructional staff
Executive/ Officer	Chief Academic Officer, Deputy Superintendent of Teaching and Learning	• Academics leader of the organization and core member of leadership team • Leads multiple departments or teams • Responsible for ensuring academic success across entire school network • Manages and coaches regional superintendents to ensure achievement of student performance outcomes, as well as all others who contribute to academic performance • Requires demonstrated success leading a network of schools, and excellence in developing and coaching instructional staff
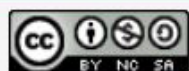
DESIGN PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDED DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMPETENCY MAPS:

- **ACTION-ORIENTED:** Competencies are described in action-oriented language to encourage the design of development experiences and training approaches that will support individuals' growth in these areas.
- **ADDITIVE:** To avoid repetition, the competency levels build on one another, meaning that there is an expectation that senior level skills are also inclusive of those that precede it.
- **ANCHORED IN THE ENVISIONED FUTURE STATE:** As articulated in EdFuel's *Map the Gap* report, the education field is changing and dynamic; the competencies reflect what will be required of leaders over the next decade to achieve greater impact in this constantly-evolving field.
- **BEST IN CLASS:** Competency descriptions incorporate leading examples from best in class organizations in education reform and the private sector, and reflect key findings from *Map the Gap.*
- **CUSTOMIZABLE TO DIFFERENT ORGANIZATIONS' VALUES:** The competencies are intended to be adaptable to each organization based on its own culture and values; therefore, the competency maps will not explicitly state a set of required values or elements of an organizational culture.
- **MODULAR:** The functions and levels within competency maps are not the same as job titles; organizations of various sizes and stages of maturity can group various competencies according to their unique organizational structures and roles.

POTENTIAL AUDIENCES AND USES OF THE COMPETENCY MAP:

The *Academics and Instruction Competency Map* is designed to support a wide variety of talent development efforts. The following is a non-comprehensive set of audiences and potential applications of this map:

- An individual—either within or outside the education field—can reference the map to understand the nature of the work and competencies required for academics roles, and as a guide to potential opportunities to better understand and develop such skills
- Departmental leaders could use the map as the basis for a competency-based evaluation system for their academics staff, and for an aligned set of development opportunities to bolster the department's performance
- Districts and charter school network leaders can reference the map to understand potential capacity or capability gaps within their academics departments
- Education nonprofit organizations—especially those focused on talent development—can use the maps to tailor their programming and professional development to the specific needs of individual functions, and to the specific needs of individuals as they grow within functions

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF ACADEMIC MODEL

- Academic model development and continuous improvement
- Advancement of a culture focused on academics and equity
- Student supports (academic, behavioral, social, emotional)
- Resource alignment

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

- School leader management and coaching
- Community engagement
- Effective talent allocation
- Measurement and improvement of teaching and learning

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

- Performance evaluation
- Professional development
- Career pathing and succession planning
- Advancement of a talent-focused culture

KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED TO EXECUTE SUCCESSFULLY ON THESE COMPETENCIES:

- Elements of effective academic models
- Content knowledge
- Federal and state K-12 curriculum and assessment standards
- Effective instructional practices
- Portfolio of student supports and interventions to achieve equitable educational outcomes
- Educational products and technologies landscape

- School/school network management and operations
- Community and political dynamics across school network

- Talent development approaches and tools

KEY RELATIONSHIPS TO DEVELOP AND MANAGE:

- Academics team
- School leaders and teachers
- Parents and students

- Management team
- School leaders
- Parents, students, and community members

- Academics team
- Information and data team
- Talent team
- School leaders and teachers

COMPETENCY	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR	MANAGER	SENIOR MANAGER/DIRECTOR	EXECUTIVE/OFFICER
ACADEMIC MODEL DEVELOPMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	• For area of focus, develops aligned curriculum, instructional practices, and assessments (formative, interim, and summative if relevant), ensuring adherence to federal, state, and college/career requirements • Assesses student performance data to drive continuous improvement of curriculum and aligned instructional and assessment tools, with school leader input and considering differing student population needs • Analyzes trends and evidence from innovative programs to understand and scale impact within school network • Elevates areas of potential conflict between academic model and specific curricular restrictions to academics team to adapt the model	• Develops program standards and supporting content aligned with federal, state, and college/career requirements • Assesses student performance data to drive continuous improvement of programs, with school leader input and considering differing student population needs • Strategically sources, pilots, and scales innovative models (e.g., blended learning) for specific area of focus • Elevates areas of potential conflict between academic model and specific programmatic restrictions to academics team to adapt the model	• Plays key role in developing academic model and recommending improvements over time, ensuring curriculum, instructional practices, and assessments are appropriately aligned • Uses insights from student performance data across school network to inform continuous improvement of curriculum, instruction, and assessments, incorporating input from school leaders • Recommends innovative programs and approaches to incorporate into academic model • Elevates challenges that arise with the academic model, and works with CAO to inform and improve model	• Creates strategic vision for district/network academic model, ensuring that it incorporates evidence-based best practices, aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessments, meets state, federal, and college/career requirements, and meets the needs of all students • Ensures continuous improvement of the academic model, informed by ongoing analysis of student performance data and input from school leaders • Decides on innovative approaches to incorporate into academic model • Anticipates challenges related to the academic model and proactively provides solutions to meet network needs • Ensures (and is ultimately responsible for) continuous improvement of student outcomes

COMPETENCY	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR	MANAGER	SENIOR MANAGER/DIRECTOR	EXECUTIVE/OFFICER
ADVANCEMENT OF A CULTURE FOCUSED ON ACADEMICS AND EQUITY	• Promotes strong academic culture throughout sphere of influence, focusing all activities on improving student outcomes in college, career, and civic readiness • Recommends curriculum and instructional practices that promote educational equity	• Promotes strong academic culture throughout sphere of influence, ensuring team focuses all activities on improving student outcomes in college, career, and civic readiness • Designs program offerings across schools to drive educational equity	• Promotes strong academic culture throughout academics team, ensuring team focuses all activities on improving student outcomes in college, career, and civic readiness • Determines approach to drive educational equity across the network, and allocates resources and programs accordingly	• Defines and promotes a strong academic culture centered on college, career, and civic readiness (aligned with the academic model) throughout the organization • Promotes educational equity as a guiding principle across school network, and ensures it is reflected in curriculum, instruction, and program offerings
STUDENT SUPPORTS (ACADEMIC, BEHAVIORAL, SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL)	• Implements tiered system of supports in area of focus to meet the needs of all students, including special populations (e.g., special education, credit deficient, ELL) • Incorporates practices that support students' behavioral, social, and emotional development	• Creates supports to meet the needs of students in specific area of focus and provides materials and instructional plan to serve special populations (e.g., special education, credit deficient, ELL) • Incorporates practices that support students' behavioral, social, and emotional development	• Coaches instructional leaders to manage a tiered system of supports to meet the needs of all students, including special populations (e.g., special education, credit deficient, ELL) • Advises how to incorporate practices into academic model that support students' behavioral, social, and emotional development	• Ensures that academic model includes an effective tiered system of supports to meet the needs of all students, including special populations (e.g., special education, credit deficient, ELL) • Defines how academics team incorporates practices and approaches that support students' social and emotional development • Advocates with local, state, and federal representatives for resources to support special populations
RESOURCE ALIGNMENT	• Supports academic model priorities and utilizes resources to deliver excellence in curriculum area	• Allocates resources throughout program to ensure program vision can be implemented in line with academic model	• Ensures resources are properly distributed across region and fit to local needs	• Distributes funding, staff, and tools to ensure that chief priorities of academic model are accomplished successfully

COMPETENCY	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR	MANAGER	SENIOR MANAGER/DIRECTOR	EXECUTIVE/OFFICER
PRINCIPAL MANAGEMENT AND COACHING	• Implements curriculum (for focus area) across school network • Coaches principals across network to ensure consistent delivery and implementation of curriculum	• Implements program in area of focus across school network • Coaches principals across network to ensure consistent delivery and implementation of program	• Plans and oversees management of schools to implement academic model with fidelity • Monitors effectiveness of model implementation across region and elevates challenges and recommends improvements • Coaches principals on managing the multitude of challenges that arise in school management, providing moral support and empowering them to improve school outcomes	• With input from Supt/CEO and management team, develops network strategy for implementation of the academic model and ensures it is implemented with fidelity to achieve desired student outcomes • Directs regional superintendents and school leaders on school management, including planning, staff, program, culture, curriculum and assessments, instruction, and continuous improvement • Acts as sounding board and advisor to regional superintendents and principals to support and coach them in moments of challenge, continuously providing both thought partnership and moral support
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	• Understands broader context affecting teaching and learning in schools and considers potential trade-offs before recommending adaptations to curriculum	• Makes program decisions, considering implications for students, teachers, administrators, parents, and broader community • Seeks input from academics team leaders, school leaders, and other key constituents in making effective decisions	• Advises principals and curriculum/program leaders in how to consider and weigh school, community, and broader field and political implications when making key decisions • Identifies priority stakeholder groups with whom to consult and partner to drive effective decision making	• Makes decisions considering contextual factors (e.g., local politics, community considerations, unions) that may arise, effectively considering trade-offs and their implications • Continually seeks input from key stakeholders in decision making

COMPETENCY	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR	MANAGER	SENIOR MANAGER/DIRECTOR	EXECUTIVE/OFFICER
EFFECTIVE TALENT ALLOCATION	• N/A	• Places effective program leaders in high-need positions • Encourages top quality leaders to seek out and rise to overcome challenging placements	• Places high-potential school leaders in priority positions across region • Encourages top quality school leaders to seek out and rise to overcome challenging placements	• Creates a culture within organization that encourages top talent to seek out challenging roles, builds relationships with these leaders, and works to support and retain them
MEASUREMENT AND IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING	• Defines and monitors key metrics in focus area to measure effectiveness of instructional practices • Benchmarks student performance in focus area against peer organizations • Improves curriculum and instructional coaching	• Defines and monitors key metrics to measure program effectiveness • Benchmarks program performance against peer organizations • Improves curriculum and instructional coaching	• Monitors key metrics to determine success of region • Benchmarks regional performance against other network schools • Coaches principals in refined approach • Promotes data-driven decision making across region	• Defines and monitors key metrics to determine success of school network • Benchmarks school network performance against peer organizations • Continually improves academic model and professional development systems to drive improvement across school network • Creates data-driven culture throughout academics team and network of schools • Actively contributes to and seeks out best practices in teaching and learning to K-12 field

COMPETENCY	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR	MANAGER	SENIOR MANAGER/DIRECTOR	EXECUTIVE/OFFICER
PERFORMANCE EVALUATION	• Recommends performance standards for staff (in focus area)	• Determines performance standards for program staff • Supports implementation of performance evaluation system across team, ensuring key competencies for effective instructional delivery are appropriately assessed In area of focus	• Develops and refines performance evaluation system and standards for instructional staff • Oversees performance evaluation of principals and instructional staff • Determines improvements to performance evaluation system and drives adoption across the system	• Sets organizational standards for instructional performance consistent with relevant labor contracts • Aligns standards for instructional and non-instructional staff • Ensures high quality performance evaluation system for principals and instructional staff, including clear performance framework, timely evaluations, and accessible data • Ensures evaluations provide actionable feedback linked with professional development opportunities, resulting in improved outcomes
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	• Structures, sequences, and delivers curriculum-specific professional development to ensure effective implementation of curriculum and instruction • Identifies trends in student performance data in area of focus to inform continuous improvement of professional development	• Structures, sequences, and delivers program-specific professional development to ensure effective program implementation • Identifies trends in student performance data in program to inform continuous improvement of professional development • Delivers feedback and hard conversations with program staff	• Structures, sequences, and delivers professional development to school leaders • Ensures that school leaders are able to coach and mentor instructional staff to improve student outcomes • Assesses impact of professional development and continuously improves based on performance data and knowledge of promising field practices • Develops school leader capacity to deliver feedback and manage hard conversations	• Sets vision for instructional staff professional development program • Ensures professional development for instructional staff supports implementation of academic model and drives improvement of student outcomes • Projects future academic performance trends and needs, and uses data to inform continuous improvement of professional development • Maintains up-to-date knowledge of approaches to and external partners in professional development and leads implementation of new methods as appropriate • Guides academics team to deliver feedback and manage hard conversations

COMPETENCY	INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTOR	MANAGER	SENIOR MANAGER/DIRECTOR	EXECUTIVE/OFFICER
CAREER PATHING AND SUCCESSION PLANNING	• Acts as mentor and sounding board to teachers regarding professional growth opportunities and potential career paths	• Invests in developing team members to grow into future department leaders, providing stretch opportunities and chances for professional growth • Encourages high performers to seek out growth opportunities within the organization • Monitors and assists with development and implementation of individual career development plans	• Mentors school leaders and program leaders to grow within current roles and to seek stretch opportunities to rise up within network • Leads development and refinement of career paths • Collaborates with management and leadership teams to develop succession plans for priority positions • Encourages high-performing school leaders to seek out leadership roles within the organization • Informs design of appropriate rewards, incentives, and compensation for school leaders and teachers • Makes external professional development opportunities readily accessible (e.g., conferences, working groups)	• Mentors and coaches direct reports (e.g., regional superintendents, instructional coaches, program specialists) to capitalize on individual strengths and address areas for potential growth with real-time feedback • Ensures development of clear career paths in schools and for the academics team to drive retention and growth of high-performing staff • Leads succession planning for current and future school leadership roles • Ensures high-performing school leaders and teachers are supported and encouraged to rise up within organization if they desire • Recommends compensation, rewards, and incentives for school leaders and teachers to management team (e.g., in partnership with talent team) to ensure retention of high-performers • Ensures external professional development opportunities are readily accessible
ADVANCEMENT OF A TALENT-FOCUSED CULTURE	• Promotes talent as key driver of mission advancement • Contributes to team/department review of employee feedback data and surfaces potential areas for strength and improvement	• Seeks input from team to understand current pulse on culture, how it may vary from school to school, and on how to make improvements • Supports talent-focused culture in team management	• Studies trends in employee feedback data to determine key areas of strength and improvement for region and recommends improvements to CAO • Determines key metrics to evaluate talent culture • Shapes and drives continuous improvement of talent-focused culture	• Sets organization culture around areas of strength and fosters culture improvement to ultimately improve student outcomes • Ensures that organization is positioned as an "employer of choice" for effective school leaders and teachers, and is able to attract, develop and retain talent

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

ACADEMIC MODEL- An aligned plan/system of curriculum, instructional methods, supports, and assessments, fit to meet state and federal requirements for learning standards and graduation. This model should be inclusive of needs for students across grade and skill levels and address/satisfy the variety of needs of students from special populations.

ASSESSMENTS- Series of tests created to monitor and evaluate student academic performance, created in concert with curriculum and instruction. Data from assessments should inform continuous improvement across the school network (e.g., for instruction and curriculum), the professional development of staff that results in improved student performance outcomes, and for the overall academic model.

CURRICULUM- The knowledge and skills students are expected to learn as applied to a specific content area (e.g., English, math, history, biology). This includes the learning standards students are expected to meet; the units and lessons that teachers teach; the books, materials, videos, presentations, and readings used in a course; and the assessments and other methods used to evaluate learning. As applied to this competency map, curriculum for each subject area across the network of schools is chiefly owned by the Individual Contributors (e.g., Curriculum Specialists, Instructional Coaches).

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT- The training and instruction delivered to staff to support professional growth and improvement.

PROGRAMS- The series of additional offerings for students and the community to provide enrichment opportunities in line with graduation, college access, socio-emotional support, and behavior development (e.g., college counseling, after school programs, athletics, psychological services, behavioral health, adult education, health education and services, mental health services, summer programs, social services).

SCHOOL LEADERS- Individuals who act as instructional or supervisory leaders of school sites, including department chairs, vice/assistant principals, principals, curriculum and program specialists, and regional superintendents.

SCHOOL NETWORK- The group of schools that is managed and operated by a school district or charter school management organization.

SPECIAL POPULATIONS- groups of students requiring differentiated instruction.
- **English Language Learners (ELL)-** students learning English as a second language
- **Special Education (SPED)-** students qualifying under federal/state definitions due to physical or learning challenges
- **Students with Disabilities (SWD)-** students who "require special education because of: autism; communication disorders; deaf/blindness; emotional disturbances; hearing impairments, including deafness; intellectual disability; orthopedic impairments; other health impairments; specific learning disabilities; traumatic brain injuries; or visual impairments, including blindness."[1]
- **Talented and Gifted (TAG)-** students with outstanding talent, who perform or shows the potential for performing at remarkably high levels of accomplishment when compared with others of their age, experience, or environment.[2]

[1] *Oregon Department of Education, Definition of Children with Disabilities. http://www.ode.state.or.us/search/page/?id=3719*
[2] *US Dept. of Ed Definition of "Gifted and Talented," 1993. http://www.nsgt.org/giftedness-defined/*