



THE MAKING OF A LEADER



SPOTLIGHT



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IT'S ALL ABOUT TEAMS

In 2014, the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC) recognized Ironton City Schools with the Outstanding District Award. The district continues to embrace the OLAC tools and resources and emphasize shared leadership.

In Ironton, all teachers create OLAC accounts and are introduced to the tools and resources as part of their growth and learning.



HOW I'M USING OLAC TOOLS

Ironton was first introduced to OLAC and the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) through its involvement as an original State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) school district. Since then, all of our teachers have created OLAC accounts and been introduced to the tools and resources. When I joined Ironton, the district leadership team (DLT) and teacher-based teams (TBT) were strong, they just needed someone to help guide them. Around that time, the 5-Step Process and forms became available from OLAC and they made a huge difference. Many of the video resources validated what we were already doing well, and identified where we could keep growing.

Over the past few years, we've spent a tremendous amount of time making sure all teachers know what the OIP is all about, and we've made professional learning more engaging. Sometimes it's as simple as recommending a video to include in the TBT, and other times we get more creative. One time, we had a scavenger hunt during one of our professional development days where teachers take photos of what they like in others' classrooms, then they go out and see relevant examples in the community, and then research information online. With our Local Professional Development Council's support, we also take full advantage of the [Credit Corner](#) on OLAC's site so teachers can renew their licenses through credit and contact hours.



MY FAVORITE OLAC TOOLS

For a beginning district, a good place to start is to [watch all of the videos](#) about how to set up your TBT, BLT, and DLT leadership meetings. The best meetings are the ones where we spend time talking about our students, and not about compliance. Our conversations are around how we get our students to stay in school and engaged in learning. We have relied heavily on the success of our TBTs. Because of our district's location, professional development through conferences and workshops isn't as accessible and it is expensive to travel. That's why we make sure our TBT meetings don't fail us. The OLAC resources we use provide the knowledge and development needed to continually improve our instructional practice.

Another valuable resource is OLAC's [Evaluation Crosswalk](#). We've used this tool for recruitment, evaluation, and retention. It is a great guide for professional growth no matter where you are at in your career.



OLAC'S IMPACT

We spend a lot of time talking to our principals and teachers about instruction, but we have found that it just as critical to create a student-based team (SBT). Our SBT supports the typical student council service, but our teachers nominate students based on diverse academic performance, and our students have become advocates of learning. When our school was struggling with fractions, our SBT helped us realize that all of our teachers teach fractions the very same way. Our teachers watched the OLAC videos and then shared the different approaches with our students. Students were then involved in the process and asked to vote on the approach they liked best. Everything we do is about teams—getting people to identify our challenges, and then work together to come up with the best solutions.

Your turn! We're excited to showcase voices from the field stories through our blog, e-newsletters, and social media. If you have experienced results using OLAC tools and would like to be featured, please contact Jim Gay at jimgay@basa-ohio.org.