

Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants



GEORGIA'S LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE
FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

**A Performance-based Learning Module
for Georgia's Educational Leaders**

Norms and Covenants

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Progress Tracker

**Before
Beginning this
Module**

Work with your Coach to determine the order in which you will complete the topics, and write in the appropriate numbers in the Order column. (If you decide together that order does not matter, leave the Order column blank.)

NOTE: The recommendation for this module is that you complete the topics in the order they appear – so, this information has already been filled in for you below.

**When You
Complete this
Module**

When you have “passed” your Final Assessment, you will have completed this module. Congratulations! Have your Coach sign off in the space provided below, then include this page in the evidence you submit to your Portfolio.

Order	Topic	Date Completed
1	Getting Started with Norms	
2	Getting Started with Covenants	
3	Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants	

Module Completed – Congratulations on Your Performance!	
Date of Final Assessment Performance:	
Performer's Name	Performer's Signature
Coach's Name	Coach's Signature

Module Objective

Module Objective

After working through this module and practicing the skills / behaviors it contains, you will be able to perform the objective below.

Given this...	Do This...	To Meet These Criteria...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A newly formed team, or an existing team, that has not yet developed norms and covenants together • An existing team that needs to re-visit their previously-developed norms and covenants • Laptop and projector • Charts, markers, sticky notes or dot stickers, and basic office supplies • Copies of the organization's mission, vision, values, and goals 	<p>Lead a team to develop norms and covenants that guide their processes for working together, and that reflect the mission, vision, core values, and goals of the organization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The detailed task performance criteria as listed on the Performance Checklists located in the Practice(s), Final Practice, and Final Assessment • GLISI's criteria for how to work effectively as a team leader/facilitator as listed on the Feedback Forms located in the Final Practice and Final Assessment

Module Overview

Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

This module will help you to develop the skills necessary to lead a team to develop **norms** – which are “ground rules” for discussion in a group setting – and **covenants** – which are the mutual commitments and obligations team members must make with each other in order to achieve the group’s goals. The norms and covenants your team develops should reflect, compliment and support the mission, vision, core values, and goals of the organization as a whole.

Why Is Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants Important?

Assisting groups in working effectively and creating a learning community that is dedicated and committed to a cause greater than individual desires are essential leadership skills. Norms and covenants can become effective replacements for imposed rules and procedures. Governance from within the organization, and within its teams, will be more effective in creating a culture of continuous improvement.

What’s In It For Me (WIIFM)?

The development of norms and covenants makes it possible for you to distribute the leadership in your organization and avoid the need for constant direct leadership.

What are the Results of This Task? (Tangible and Intangible)

When this task is performed, you can expect the following results.

Tangible Results:

- Documents that can guide the work of your team. These documents can also be shared throughout the organization, to be used every time a new team is formed or an existing group comes together with a new task.

Intangible Results:

- The culture of your school will be reflected as a professional learning community.
 - An emotionally safe environment is created for the discussion of difficult issues.
-

What is the Leader's Role?

The role of the leader is to become comfortable in leading groups to deal frankly with behaviors that inhibit effective problem solving and to distribute the power within the organization.

Does Educational Context Matter?

The work of most organizations is done best through teams. Teams need norms and covenants to maintain momentum and continuous improvement and so they can operate effectively and efficiently in all schools/systems regardless of the demographics of the student body or community.

How Will My Performance Be Assessed?

You will complete a Final Assessment to demonstrate your mastery of this module.

Prior to completing the Assessment, you will be given multiple opportunities to practice, get feedback, and gain confidence in your ability to meet the objective.

What Do I Do Next?

Turn the page to review the Final Assessment for this module.

Final Assessment

Beginning With the End in Mind

Research about effective assessment of performance, in schools and elsewhere, tells us that the learner always performs better when they are given the chance to “begin with the end in mind” – that is, when they know what they are expected to do, and what standards they are to meet. For that reason, GLISI performance-based modules always list the Final Assessment in the front of the module for your reference.

Please review the Final Assessment in its entirety in order to become familiar with what you will be expected to accomplish in order to complete this module.

Why Review the Final Assessment?

Reviewing the Final Assessment will ensure that you understand the knowledge, skills and behaviors that are being taught and tested in this module. It will help you gauge your current level of performance against what will be expected of you by the end of the module. This will help you know which areas to concentrate on as you work through the module.

If you feel that you are already proficient in the knowledge, skills and behaviors needed to pass the Final Assessment, you may perform the Final Assessment now. If your performance on the Final Assessment meets all the criteria, you can “test out” of this module.

Or, if you feel you need more learning and practice before trying the Final Assessment, continue working your way through the module.

About the Final Assessment

There are three differences between this module's Practices and its Final Assessment:

1. In Practices, you will perform independently to learn the process. In the Final Practice and the Final Assessment, you will be leading a team through the process you have learned. The **Feedback Form** is used to evaluate your performance in the Final Practice and Final Assessment only; you will not find one in the Practice sections.
 2. In Practices, we have provided **Worksheets** that guide you in drawing or working through the process you are learning. However, no Worksheets are provided for the Final Assessment. Based on your knowledge of the process, you should create your own agendas, lists, notes, etc. using whatever media you wish; or you may copy or adapt the Worksheets you used in the Practices.
 3. In Practices, we have provided sample **Scenarios** (similar to word problems) for you to work through. For the Final Assessment, you should work with your Coach to obtain an opportunity to work with a real team in your school (grade level team, subject-matter team, or an ongoing committee), preferably one you will be leading in an improvement initiative.
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**How to
Complete
this Final
Assessment**

1. Gain permission from your supervisor or Coach to complete the Final Assessment in a school setting.
 2. Schedule the date, time and location of your session – one that works for you, your Coach, and the teachers / staff / leaders who will participate.
 3. Invite the participants (or, your Coach may prefer to invite them).
 4. Provide your Coach with a copy of the Final Assessment Performance Checklist and Final Assessment Feedback Form for this activity, as well as the Coach's Guide (if available).
 5. Prepare any other materials or information that you and your participants need to have with you on the day of the activity.
 6. Prepare to perform by reviewing the content, Step-Action Tables, Practice Worksheets, Performance Criteria and Feedback Forms for all of the topics in this module.
 7. When you are ready, perform the Final Assessment in the school setting and with your Coach observing.
 8. Obtain feedback from your Coach about your performance and your next steps.
-

Requirements

This assessment must be:

- Performed in an actual school or school district environment
- Performed with a team of teachers and staff (or other leaders)
- Observed by a Leadership Coach

In order to be entered into your Portfolio, your performance / evidence must:

- Meet the criteria listed on the Final Assessment Performance Checklist
 - Earn a rating of 3 or 4 on the Final Assessment Feedback Form
-

When Can I Add to My Portfolio?

If your Coach feels you need more practice, repeat the appropriate Topics and/or Practices in this module until you both are satisfied that you are ready to take the Final Assessment again.

When (1) your performance meets all the listed criteria, and (2) your Coach rates your performance as “3/Proficient” or higher, you may enter the following items into your Portfolio:

- Evidence of performance
- Final Assessment Performance Checklist
- Final Assessment Feedback Form
- Any additional artifacts you wish to include (video or audio tape, participant feedback, etc.)

You are encouraged to continue practicing and performing this task until you achieve a rating of “Distinguished” and then to update your Portfolio with those evidentiary items.

Once you have satisfied the requirements for this module, work with your Coach to update your portfolio and discuss the next steps in your learning path.

What Do I Do Next?

Turn the page to review the Final Assessment.

If you are ready, work through the Final Assessment.

Or, skip to the first Topic in this module.

Final Assessment Scenario

Work with your Coach to identify an opportunity for you to lead a Better-Seeking Team, so that you can work through this Assessment with a team you will actually be leading in an improvement initiative in your school or district. (Ideally, this will be the same team with which you conducted your Final Assessment for the module “Selecting and Recruiting Candidates for a Better-Seeking Team.”)

Schedule a team meeting in which you, as the team leader, will serve as facilitator. Using what you have learned in this module, plan and prepare for the meeting. During the meeting, facilitate the team through the steps to develop norms and covenants. Work to make sure that your performance meets the criteria listed on the Final Assessment Performance Checklist and the Final Assessment Feedback Form.

Keep copies of evidence (paper-based, or audio/video) from the meeting to share with your Coach during your feedback session.

Final Assessment Performance Checklist – Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

Performance Evidence	Present?	Meets Criteria?
1. Summary of the mission, vision, core values and goals are written	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational culture is summarized in four statements or less <input type="checkbox"/> A copy of the summary is provided to each participant
2. Team problems are listed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming and voting processes are used to identify problems to address <input type="checkbox"/> At least four to five problems are listed
3. A draft list of norms is created	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> There is at least one norm for each problem statement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional norms may also be listed
4. Alignment to problems and organizational culture is demonstrated	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants can articulate how each norm relates to the team problems listed <input type="checkbox"/> Participants can articulate how each norm relates to, complements and supports the organizational culture
5. Behavior that supports organizational culture is described	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming and grouping processes are used to identify desired behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviors listed support the organizational culture summarized above

(continued next page)

6. Commitments that support organizational culture are described
- Yes
 No
- At least one commitment statement is listed for each of the four categories:
- Educator's personal Conduct and Commitments
 - Educator-to-Educator Conduct and Commitments
 - Educator-to-Student Conduct and Commitments
 - Educator-to-Parent / Community Conduct and Commitments
- Commitments support the organizational culture summarized above
7. Final statement is created by the group
- Yes
 No
- Final statement includes behaviors and commitments for each of the categories above
- Final statement is agreed upon by all participants

If the evidence of your performance meets all of the listed criteria, congratulations, you have completed this module!. If not, continue studying, practicing and/or working with your Coach then try it again.

Final Assessment Feedback Form (page 1 of 2)

Performer's Name: _____

Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

Performance Levels			
1	2	3	4
Emerging Needs Study and Practice <i>Few or none of the desired behaviors were adequately displayed.</i>	Developing Needs Practice <i>Some but not all of the desired behaviors were adequately displayed.</i>	Proficient Meets Criteria and Expectations <i>All desired behaviors were displayed and performed correctly.</i>	Distinguished Could be Used as a Model to Teach Others
		Eligible for Portfolio	

How effective was the performer in:	Rating				
1. Facilitating group interaction and managing participation?	1	2	3	4	NA
2. Assisting the group to meet the criteria for the task(s) at hand?	1	2	3	4	NA
3. Modeling appropriate leadership behaviors?	1	2	3	4	NA
4. Teaching others how to perform the task(s) at hand?	1	2	3	4	NA
5. Presenting information clearly, concisely, and professionally?	1	2	3	4	NA
6. Leveraging / integrating technology to increase effectiveness?	1	2	3	4	NA
7. Motivating / encouraging others to achieve success?	1	2	3	4	NA
8. Using group processes to achieve desired session results?	1	2	3	4	NA

Turn the page to provide additional written feedback (required).

Final Assessment Feedback Form (page 2 of 2)

Performer's Name:

Coach's Name:

Date of Performance:

If any element was rated less than 3, what needs to be done to score a 3? To score a 4?

What greatest strengths did the leader exhibit through this performance?

What could be done to improve this aspiring leader's performance? (Including any criteria on the Performance Checklist that were missed.) Be specific.

Were there any significant leadership issues that must be rectified (by additional practice and assessment) before entering this evidence into the Portfolio?

Topic #1: Getting Started with Norms

Getting Started with Norms

Norms are shared expectations within a group that establish behavior that is appropriate and acceptable. All groups have norms (whether they are made explicit or not). But work teams have especially high need for explicit, productive norms in order to work effectively and successfully to meet their goals / missions

Why Is Getting Started With Norms Important?

Establishing explicit norms that all group members can accept is closely related to working as a community. When participants are actively involved in setting the standards of behavior within the group, they are much more likely to adhere to those standards. This makes it more likely that the group will accomplish its goals.

Examples of Group Norms

Think of norms as “ground rules” that will address the typical problems school-based groups have when working on tasks or making decisions. Examples of norms are:

- Listen more than talk
- Accept that conflict is natural and necessary for group problem solving
- Exhibit respect for the ideas of others
- Piggy back your comments on the comments of others using transition statements like, “I agree with Jennie that.....”
- Be willing to consider ideas that are different than your usual views
- Be succinct and crisp in your comments
- Do not share sensitive or confidential information that is discussed in the group discussion

Norms are an important tool in creating a professional learning community. Mission, vision, and goals are the foundation of the professional learning community. Therefore, alignment between these variables is crucial to the effective decision making and problem solving within that community.

When Should Teams Develop Norms?

Norms should be created with the formation of any new decision making or problem solving group. You can also lead an existing team to develop norms if they have not already done so, or if they encounter a need to re-visit / revise their previous norms.

In addition, norms should be reviewed at the beginning of every meeting, with the team re-iterating their commitment to abide by the norms.

Why Must Norms Align With Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals?

Norms are an important tool in creating a professional learning community. Mission, vision, values and goals are the foundation of the professional learning community, therefore, alignment between these variables is crucial to the effective decision-making and problem-solving capacity of the organization.

Tip(s)

Norms that are developed by individual teams can be shared with the whole organization. Over time, you may find that many teams within the organization share a common set of norms. However, teams should still feel welcome to develop additional norms that are specific to their unique team identity and purpose.

How Do I Do It?

Use the Step Action Table (starting on the next page) to work through the process.

Step-Action Table – Getting Started with Norms	
Step	Action
Before You Begin	You can use the steps in this process either working on your own, or with your team. It is recommended that leaders work through a new process at least once on their own, before attempting to facilitate a team through the steps. This will help you confirm that you thoroughly understand the process and know what outcome to expect.
Gather information about the organization's culture	Obtain copies of the organization's mission, vision, values and goals. Summarize the content of these organizational attributes in no more than four sentences.
Reflect on typical team problems	Think about teams that currently work together in your organization. What problems or challenges do they face? List four to five problems that occur on a consistent basis during team work in your organization.
Draft a set of norms	List at least one norm for each of the listed problems. You may also list additional norms that could help the team work more efficiently, productively, or harmoniously.
Check validity against problems	Write a statement that explains how the norms could mitigate the problems listed.
Check for consistency with organization's culture	Write one statement that explains how the norms reflect, compliment and support the organization's mission, vision, values and goals.
Check for agreement	If working with a team, conduct a final check to confirm that all members are in agreement with the new list of norms.

Practice #1: Getting Started with Norms

About this Practice

- Use the sample situation to practice developing Performance Objectives.
- Practice developing Performance Objectives (by completing this exercise) at least once.
- Then, if desired, you may ask a colleague or a group of peers to practice it with you one or more times before moving on to the next topic.

How To Complete the Practice

1. Feel free to refer back to the Step-Action Table as needed during this practice.
 2. Before you begin, review these items on the next few pages:
 - **How to Check Your Work** – this describes how you will know when you’ve completed the practice successfully and are ready to move on to the Assessment
 - **Practice Scenario** – this is a sample “case study” or word problem that provides the information you need to work through the practice
 - **Practice Worksheet** – this is where you will record your work
 - **Performance Checklist** – this lists the criteria used to evaluate your work
 3. When you are ready, perform the Practice activity and record your work on the Worksheet.
 4. When you have finished, read **How to Check Your Work** to evaluate your performance and decide what to do next.
-

How to Check Your Work

- Review your results against the Performance Checklist to make sure you have produced all the required evidence of performance, and that all evidence meets the criteria.

 - If your results did not meet all the criteria, you need more practice. Do one or more of the following:
 - Choose another type of school problem you have experienced in the past (or ask your Coach to suggest one), work through it again on your own, and check your work.

 - Assemble a group of peers to work through a scenario with you. Ask those who worked with you to help check your work and give you feedback on your performance.

 - Consult with your Coach for additional information, resources, feedback and suggestions, and practice ideas.

 - Once you have met all the Performance Criteria, work with your Coach to move on to the next topic.
-

**Practice
Scenario**

You have been appointed to serve as leader of the third-grade team, whose mission is to have 100% of their students pass the third grade “gateway” test.

The organization’s vision is to be a school in which students will love learning. It’s core values focus on being very professional at all times. One of the school’s major goals is to improve the literacy of the students in all groups.

In previous meetings, this team has had a hard time staying on topic, arriving on time, or really getting anything accomplished. In addition, two of the teachers have recently stopped attending the meetings. They have no official record of their discussions or accomplishments, and members often have difficulty finding the information they need to work on the tasks assigned to them.

Work independently to develop a list of at least five norms for this team. (If you need additional information, use what you know about your own school or district to make assumptions.) Record your work on the worksheet.

Practice Worksheet – Getting Started with Norms

Summarize in four sentences the mission, vision, values and goals of the organization.

List 4-5 problems this team seems to be facing.

Write 1 norm to address each problem, plus as many additional norms as desired.

Practice #1: Getting Started with Norms
Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

Write a statement that explains how the norms could mitigate the problems listed.

Write a statement that explains how the norms reflect, compliment and support the organization's mission, vision, values and goals.

Performance Checklist – Getting Started with Norms

Performance Evidence	Present?	Meets Criteria?
1. Summary of the mission, vision, values and goals are written	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational culture is summarized in four statements or less
2. Team problems are listed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Four to five problems are listed <input type="checkbox"/> Problems listed represent those often faced by teams in the organization
3. A draft list of norms is created	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> There is at least one norm for each problem statement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional norms may also be listed
4. Alignment to problems and organizational culture is demonstrated	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> One statement describes how the norms relate to the team problems listed <input type="checkbox"/> One statement describes how the norms relate to, complement and support the organizational culture

If the evidence of your performance meets all of the listed criteria, you are ready to move on to the next topic. If not, continue studying, practicing and/or working with your Coach then try it again.

Topic #2: Getting Started with Covenants

Getting Started with Covenants

Covenants are community statements of mutual responsibility and commitment and are similar to promise statements that a leader might make. Covenants have roots in religion as well as law, but can also play an important role in building a learning community.

Why Are Covenants Important?

Covenants can assist a group in recognizing their common vision and outline their mutual obligations and responsibilities to the community. Covenants empower a community to govern itself and can be a positive force for innovation and change.

Types of Covenants for Educators

A covenant for a learning community can be organized around standards or commitments for:

- Educator's Personal Conduct and Commitments
- Educator-to-Educator Conduct and Commitments
- Educator-to-Student Conduct and Commitments
- Educator-to-Parent/Community Conduct and Commitments

NOTE: In this module, the term "Educator" refers to teachers, administrators, and other faculty/staff in schools and districts.

What Do Covenants Look Like?

Turn the page to view some sample covenant statements, which were provided by Lindsey Elementary School in Houston County, GA.

**Sample
Covenant
Statements**

Educator's Personal Conduct and Commitments

- *We will insure that we are punctual and prepared at all times.*
- *In order to maintain the continuity of education for our children, we will be present every day that we are able.*
- *We will exceed the minimum requirements of teaching with a positive attitude, enthusiasm, and love of teaching.*
- *We will strive to exhibit maturity, self-awareness, cooperation, flexibility, and an ability to cope with personal problems.*

Educator-to-Educator Conduct and Commitments

- *We will strive to model and exhibit mutual respect among our peers and students.*
- *We will promote a sense of community through punctuality, teamwork, preparedness and manners.*
- *We will consistently endeavor to keep an open mind as we share new ideas and strategies for teaching.*

Educator-to-Student Conduct and Commitments

- *We pledge to put children first.*
- *We will communicate that our children are worthy and our belief that all students can succeed.*
- *We will have high expectations for our children. We will assist them to achieve success and to accept responsibility for their behavior.*
- *We will strive to form a positive relationship with each child.*
- *We will stimulate student learning, utilizing effective management strategies and close supervision of the children.*

Educator-to-Parent / Community Conduct and Commitments

- *We pledge to work closely with the parents of our children.*
- *We will be available to parents, willing to listen, and to promote regular, positive communication.*
- *We will be involved in activities that include parents thereby modeling the teamwork that we know is crucial to the education of our children.*

How Do I Do It? Use the Step-Action Table to work through the process.

Step-Action Table – Getting Started with Covenants	
Step	Action
Before You Begin	You can use the steps in this process either working on your own, or with you team. It is recommended that leaders work through a new process at least once on their own, before attempting to facilitate a team through the steps. This will help you confirm that you thoroughly understand the process and know what outcome to expect.
Gather information about the organization’s culture	Obtain copies of the organization’s mission, vision, values and goals. Summarize the content of these organizational attributes in no more than four sentences.
Reflect on behavior that supports organizational culture	Write a short paragraph that describes three to five personal behaviors that would be consistent with the vision and core values. <i>For example, if your vision is to become a community of learners and your core values consist of making a decision on what is best for children, then personal behaviors consistent with that might include “be present and on time at all professional learning opportunities” and “demonstrate willingness to go beyond the work day to provide students extra instruction”.</i>
Reflect on commitments necessary to accomplish the mission and goals	Write a short paragraph that describes three to five mutual commitments that would be necessary to accomplish the vision and core values. <i>For example, “teachers will work out conflicts with one another directly and avoid gossip”.</i>

Topic #2: Getting Started with Covenants
Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

Check your work	Check to be sure that your list of covenants identifies and documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educator’s Personal Conduct and Commitment• Educator-to-Educator Conduct and Commitment• Educator-to-Student Conduct and Commitment• Educator-to-Parent/Community Conduct and Commitment
Check for agreement	If working with a team, conduct a final check to confirm that all members are in agreement with the new list of norms.

Practice #2: Getting Started with Covenants

About this Practice

- This is a “partial practice” that helps you build just one (or a few) of the skills that you will ultimately put together when you perform the Module Objective in the Final Practice and Assessment.
 - Work through this activity at least once on your own.
 - Then, if desired, you may ask some colleagues to work through it with you as many additional times as you wish.
-

How To Complete the Practice

1. Feel free to refer back to the Step-Action Table as needed during this practice.
 2. Before you begin, review these items on the next few pages:
 - **How to Check Your Work** – this describes how you will know when you’ve completed the practice successfully and are ready to move on to the Assessment
 - **Practice Scenario** – this is a sample “case study” or word problem that provides the information you need to work through the practice
 - **Practice Worksheet** – this is where you will record your work
 - **Performance Checklist** – this lists the criteria used to evaluate your work
 3. When you are ready, perform the Practice activity and record your work on the Worksheet.
 4. When you have finished, read **How to Check Your Work** to evaluate your performance and decide what to do next.
-

How to Check Your Work

- Review your results against the Performance Checklist to make sure you have produced all the required evidence of performance, and that all evidence meets the criteria.
 - If your results did not meet all the criteria, you need more practice. Do one or more of the following:
 - Choose another type of school problem you have experienced in the past (or ask your Coach to suggest one), work through it again on your own, and check your work.
 - Assemble a group of peers to work through a scenario with you. Ask those who worked with you to help check your work and give you feedback on your performance.
 - Consult with your Coach for additional information, resources, feedback and suggestions, and practice ideas.
 - Once you have met all the Performance Criteria, work with your Coach to move on to the next topic.
-

What Do I Do Next?

Turn the page to review the Practice Scenario.

Then, work through the Practice.

When you are finished, review **How To Check Your Work**.

Practice Scenario

Using the same Scenario that was provided for Practice #1, write a set of covenants for the team.

Practice Worksheet – Getting Started with Covenants

Practice #2: Getting Started with Covenants
Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

Summarize, in four sentences or less, the mission, vision, values and goals of the organization.

Write a short paragraph that describes three to five personal behaviors that would be consistent with the organizational culture and goals as summarized above.

Write a short paragraph that describes three to five mutual commitments that would be necessary to accomplish the organizational culture and goals summarized above.

Practice #2: Getting Started with Covenants
Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

Check your list of covenants to ensure that it identifies and documents the four types of conduct and commitments in schools. If not, re-write or add until your covenants statement is complete.

- Educator's Personal Conduct and Commitment
- Educator-to-Educator Conduct and Commitment
- Educator-to-Student Conduct and Commitment
- Educator-to-Parent/Community Conduct and Commitment

Performance Checklist – Getting Started with Covenants

Performance Evidence	Present?	Meets Criteria?
1. Summary of the mission, vision, core values, and goals is written	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational culture is summarized in four statements or less
2. Behavior that supports organizational culture is described	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Statement includes three to five behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviors listed would support the organizational culture summarized above
3. Commitments that support organizational culture are described	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Statement includes three to five commitments <input type="checkbox"/> Commitments would support the organizational culture summarized above
4. Final statement addresses all four types of educational covenants	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Final statement includes behaviors and commitments for each of these: <input type="checkbox"/> Educator's personal Conduct and Commitments <input type="checkbox"/> Educator-to-Educator Conduct and Commitments <input type="checkbox"/> Educator-to-Student Conduct and Commitments <input type="checkbox"/> Educator-to-Parent/Community Conduct and Commitments

If the evidence of your performance meets all of the listed criteria, you are ready to move on to the next topic. If not, continue studying, practicing and/or working with your Coach then try it again.

Topic #3: Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

After you have mastered the process of writing norms and covenants and you have checked to ensure they align with the mission, vision, values, and goals, you are ready to engage others in the process.

Why is Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants Important?

By definition, norms and covenants are statements that apply to groups rather than individuals – because they define how groups will interact with each other. In order for norms and covenants to be upheld over time, it is important that each individual in the group feels “ownership” of the statements. It is therefore important that the team be actively involved in the process of developing its norms and covenants, rather than having “a list of rules” imposed on it by the team leader.

Engaging others in developing norms and covenants provides a positive force that governs group work and empowers the learning community to develop action plans necessary to accomplish the goals of the organization. Norms and covenants become a powerful replacement for imposed rules and regulations.

Processes for Group Discussion and Decision Making

The Step-Action Table for this task describes methods for how the leader can use structured processes to manage group discussions and decision-making tasks.

The methods in this module are variations on processes called Brainstorming, Multi-Voting and Affinity Diagrams. While it is not necessary for you to know these processes in order to work through this task, you may wish to read about them in these GLISI modules:

- Analyzing Root Causes to Improve Student Achievement and Organizational Effectiveness
 - Leading Teams Through Group Decision-Making Processes
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How Do I Do It? Use the Step-Action Table starting on the next page to work through the process.

Step-Action Table – Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants	
Step	Action
Prepare for the Meeting	<p>Schedule a meeting and invite the participants.</p> <p>Gather the organization’s mission, vision, values, and goals. Summarize the culture in four statements or less. Make enough copies of the documents for each team member.</p> <p>If you have not already done so, work through the process of developing norms and covenants on your own prior to the meeting. This will make sure you are familiar enough with the process to lead others through it. It will also inform you of the norms and covenants you think are important, which you can use to inform (although not dominate or dictate) the team’s work.</p> <p>Gather the other materials you will need for the meeting: flip charts or whiteboard and markers; sticky notes or dot stickers, and other general office supplies as desired.</p>
Open the meeting	<p>Open the meeting by covering the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank the participants for their time and participation • Explain the purpose of the meeting. • Define norms and covenants, • Describe the importance of developing them as a team • Describe the importance of developing norms and covenants that support the organization’s culture (distribute the summary document) • Provide a brief overview of today’s agenda

Topic #3: Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants
 Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

<p>Lead the group to identify team problems</p>	<p>Review the definition and purpose of norms.</p> <p>Ask the participants to brainstorm all the possible problems they have seen when their team works on a task together. (The team should generate at least 10 – 15 items.)</p> <p>Write them on flipchart paper.</p> <p>Give each participant three dot stickers.</p> <p>Ask participants to identify the most significant problems by using the dots to mark their “top three” problems.</p>
<p>Lead the group to identify norms for each problem</p>	<p>Circle the most significant problems identified by the group (at least 5).</p> <p>For each problem, ask the participants to write a norm that addresses the problem.</p>
<p>Lead the team to check their work</p>	<p>List the resulting norms on flip chart paper.</p> <p>For each norm provided, ask the participants to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the norm would solve the listed problem(s) • Describe how the norm relates to, compliments, and supports the statements of organizational culture and goals
<p>Lead the team to identify desired behaviors</p>	<p>Review the definition and purpose of covenants.</p> <p>Give the participants sticky notes and ask them to list appropriate, desired group behaviors on the notes, one behavior to a note. Remind participants that these are behaviors that should support the organizational culture and goals. (The team should generate at least 10 – 15 items total.)</p>

Topic #3: Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants
 Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

<p>Lead the team to categorize the behaviors</p>	<p>Post four charts around the room with the these headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal • Educator-to-Educator • Educator-to-Student • Educator-to-Parent/Community <p>Ask participants to place their behavior notes on the appropriate charts.</p>
<p>Lead the team to draft covenants</p>	<p>Divide into smaller groups assigned to each category. Have each group write a promise statement for each category.</p>
<p>Gain agreement</p>	<p>Combine the statements on a big piece of construction paper and recite the resulting statement together. Make adjustments until the product is a consensus of the group.</p>
<p>Close the meeting</p>	<p>Congratulate the team on working effectively together on this project.</p> <p>Explain that the team will use these norms and covenants in all their work together going forward. Each member of the team is expected to hold others in the group accountable for upholding these agreements. The statements will be read at the opening of each team meeting.</p> <p>Advise the team what happens next (next meeting, assignments, communications to follow). End the meeting.</p>

Final Practice

What is Final Practice?

In the previous topics, you practiced “foundational skills” – sub-sets of skills related to this objective. In Final Practice, you will “put it all together” by practicing all the skills, just as you will use them when you complete your Final Assessment.

About this Practice

- Complete the Final Practice at least once, and as many additional times as necessary until you are confident you are prepared for the Final Assessment. Work with your Coach to get feedback about your performance and your readiness for Final Practice.
 - If you feel ready to take the Final Assessment without doing the Final Practice first, talk to your Coach to make arrangements to do so.
 - The Final Practice is designed to be completed with a team of participants. When assembling your team, it is suggested that you ask peers, friends or classmates as participants, rather than real school-setting participants. This approach honors the time of professional educators who may be asked to help during the Final Assessment.
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**How To
Complete the
Practice**

1. Feel free to refer back to the Step-Action Table as needed during this practice.
 2. Before you begin, review these items on the next few pages:
 - **How to Check Your Work** – this describes how you will know when you’ve completed the practice successfully and are ready to move on to the Assessment
 - **Practice Scenario** – this is a sample “case study” or word problem that provides the information you need to work through the practice
 - **Practice Worksheet** – this is where you will record your work
 - **Performance Checklist** – this lists the criteria used to evaluate your work
 - **Feedback Form** – this lists the leadership- and people-skills you will be expected to demonstrate while leading a team through the Final Practice
 3. When you are ready, perform the Final Practice and record your work on the Worksheet.
 4. When you have finished, return to **How to Check Your Work** to evaluate your performance and decide what to do next.
-

How to Check Your Work

- Review your results against the Performance Checklist to make sure you have produced all of the required evidence of performance, and that all evidence meets the criteria.

 - If your results did not meet all the criteria, you need more practice. Do one or more of the following:
 - Choose another type of school problem you have experienced in the past (or ask your Coach to suggest one), work through it again on your own, and check your work.

 - Assemble a group of peers to work through a scenario with you, and to help check your work and give you feedback on your performance.

 - Consult with your Coach for additional information, resources, feedback and suggestions, and practice ideas.

 - Once your results meet all of the Performance Criteria, work with your Coach to schedule your Final Assessment.
-

**Final Practice
Scenario**

Recruit some colleagues to help you role-play this Final Practice activity. Your role will be to serve as the facilitator of the team meeting. Your volunteers will play the role of members of your Better-Seeking Team. They should “play themselves” using what they know about their current job and organization to contribute to the conversation during the meeting.

You are a teacher leader in your school, and you have decided to lead a Better-Seeking Team to implement Georgia’s Performance Standards in your grade-level.

The mission of your school is to produce high-achieving students. The vision of your school is “to be a lighthouse showing the way for other schools to become 90-90-90 schools” (schools that beat the odds of high poverty and high minority populations with high student achievement). The core values of the organization consist of meeting the individual needs of all the learners in the building. The goals are related to improving literacy skills.

Since you will be leading the team through interactive activities, you will not have a Worksheet for this practice. Lead the team through the process of identifying norms and covenants, making sure your performance meets the criteria listed in the Final Practice Performance Checklist and the Final Practice Feedback Form. Keep the artifacts from your meeting to review with your Coach during your feedback session.

Final Practice Performance Checklist – Leading a Team to Develop Norms and Covenants

Performance Evidence	Present?	Meets Criteria?
1. Summary of the mission, vision, values and goals are written	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational culture is summarized in four statements or less <input type="checkbox"/> A copy of the summary is provided to each participant
2. Team problems are listed	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming and voting processes are used to identify problems to address <input type="checkbox"/> At least four to five problems are listed
3. A draft list of norms is created	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> There is at least one norm for each problem statement <input type="checkbox"/> Additional norms may also be listed
4. Alignment to problems and organizational culture is demonstrated	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Participants can articulate how each norm relates to the team problems listed <input type="checkbox"/> Participants can articulate how each norm relates to, complements and supports the organizational culture
5. Behavior that supports organizational culture is described	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Brainstorming and grouping processes are used to identify desired behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Behaviors listed support the organizational culture summarized above

6. Commitments that support organizational culture are described
- Yes
 - No
- At least one commitment statement is listed for each of the four categories:
- Educator's personal Conduct and Commitments
 - Educator-to-Educator Conduct and Commitments
 - Educator-to-Student Conduct and Commitments
 - Educator-to-Parent / Community Conduct and Commitments
- Commitments support the organizational culture summarized above
7. Final statement is created by the group
- Yes
 - No
- Final statement includes behaviors and commitments for each of the categories above
- Final statement is agreed upon by all participants

Final Practice Feedback Form (page 1 of 2)

Performer's Name: _____

Coach's Name: _____

Date of Performance: _____

Performance Levels			
1	2	3	4
Emerging Needs Study and Practice <i>Few or none of the desired behaviors were adequately displayed.</i>	Developing Needs Practice <i>Some but not all of the desired behaviors were adequately displayed.</i>	Proficient Meets Criteria and Expectations <i>All desired behaviors were displayed and performed correctly.</i>	Distinguished Could be Used as a Model to Teach Others
		Eligible for Portfolio	

How effective was the performer in:	Rating				
1. Facilitating group interaction and managing participation?	1	2	3	4	NA
2. Assisting the group to meet the criteria for the task(s) at hand?	1	2	3	4	NA
3. Modeling appropriate leadership behaviors?	1	2	3	4	NA
4. Teaching others how to perform the task(s) at hand?	1	2	3	4	NA
5. Presenting information clearly, concisely, and professionally?	1	2	3	4	NA
6. Leveraging / integrating technology to increase effectiveness?	1	2	3	4	NA
7. Motivating / encouraging others to achieve success?	1	2	3	4	NA
8. Using group processes to achieve desired session results?	1	2	3	4	NA

Turn the page to provide additional written feedback (required).

Final Practice Feedback Form (page 2 of 2)

Performer's Name:

Coach's Name:

Date of Performance:

If any element was rated less than 3, what needs to be done to score a 3? To score a 4?

What greatest strengths did the leader exhibit through this performance?

What could be done to improve this aspiring leader's performance? (Including any criteria on the Performance Checklist that were missed.) Be specific.

Were there any significant leadership issues that must be rectified (by additional practice and assessment) before entering this evidence into the Portfolio?

If the evidence of your performance meets all of the listed criteria, you are ready to move on to the Final Assessment. If not, continue studying, practicing and/or working with your Coach then try it again.

Recommended Reading & Resources

Eaker, R., DuFour, R. & DuFour, R. (2002). Getting Started: Reculturing Schools to Become Professional Learning Communities. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

Georgia's Leadership Institute for School Improvement. (2005). Leading Teams Through Group Decision-Making Processes. Atlanta, GA: GLISI.

Georgia's Leadership Institute for School Improvement. (2005). Analyzing Root Causes to Improve Student Achievement and Organizational Effectiveness. Atlanta, GA: GLISI.

Running Effective Meetings and Facilitating Groups. (July 2002). Lawrence, MA: Northeast SABES. Retrieved August 20, 2005 from <http://www.sabes.org/resources/facilitationguide.pdf>

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