

## Re-Designing Learning Schools through the Added Value of the National ICT Program and Principals' Instructional Leadership (Poster)

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### Abstract

Accumulating evidence indicates that higher performing schools function as learning organizations (Kruse, 2003; Silins & Mulford, 2002). Organizational learning processes are led by school principals through organizational learning mechanisms. OLMs are institutionalized structural and procedural arrangements for collecting, disseminating, analyzing, storing, retrieving, and using information that is relevant to the performance of the organization and its members (Popper & Lipshitz, 1998, 2000; see also DiBella, Nevis, & Gould, 1996; Huber, 1991; Marquardt, 1996). OLMs focus on gathering and assimilating information from both internal (organizational) experiences and external (environmental) changes, which lead to better internal adaptations (e.g., changes in structure, procedures, strategies) (Ellis & Shpilberg, 2003; Lipshitz, Popper, & Friedman, 2002). In the absence of explicit intention and appropriate mechanisms, the potential for learning and change may be lost (Ghoshal, 1987).

School principals are instructional leaders who set high expectations and clear goals for student and teacher performance, monitor and provide feedback regarding the technical core (teaching and learning) of schools, provide and promote professional growth for all staff members, and help create and maintain a school climate of high academic press (Alig-Mielcarek, 2003). They are also powerful players who can greatly affect school improvement and bring about change through generating collective learning opportunities for all faculty and students. (Davis, Darling-Hammond, Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Schechter, 2005; Waters & Grubb, 2004).

In this context, the Israeli educational system has initiated a national ICT program "Adapting the Educational System to the 21st Century", with the goal of leading the implementation of innovative pedagogy in schools, while providing 21st century skills and assimilating ICT - Information and Communication Technology - in schools in elementary and lower secondary schools. This program will greatly affect the organizational learning processes and mechanisms in schools, which are led by the school principals in their role of instructional leaders. Understanding and implementing new ICT processes are likely to affect the flow of information between school staff, enhance work cooperation among staff, and help retain important data and make it accessible to school staff, improving teaching, learning, and evaluation processes in school.

Based on a theoretical review, this poster will outline a theoretical model and discuss the following questions:

- 1 - How can principals' instructional leadership and ICT promote schools as learning organizations through enhanced OLMs?
- 2 - What can ICT offer for strengthening teachers' learning mechanisms?

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