

**Leading Student Achievement:  
Our Principal Purpose**

**Diriger la réussite des élèves :  
notre ligne directrice**

February 2008

**Karen Seashore Louis Presents  
Linking Professional Community and  
Real School Improvement**

**DVD & Facilitator's Guide**

*A partnership between  
the Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat and  
the Provincial Principals' Associations  
(ADFO, CPCO and OPC)*



**The Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat  
Le Secrétariat de la littératie et de la numératie**



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## Linking Professional Community and Real School Improvement DVD

### On this DVD you will find ...

- Segmented Video of Karen Seashore Louis's *Linking Professional Community and Real School Improvement* Presentation
- WMV Version of Karen Seashore Louis's *Linking Professional Community and Real School Improvement* Presentation
- PowerPoint Slides
- The Agassiz Elementary School case study and the case analysis worksheet
- "Orbiting the Giant Hairball"
- Professional Community and Shared Leadership Worksheet
- *Creating and Sustaining Professional Communities (Seashore Louis)*
- Facilitator's Guide Activity Chart Templates

This DVD is playable on a regular DVD player or in the DVD drive of your computer. The DVD will not work in the CD-ROM drive of your computer. Additional Resources need to be accessed from your computer and instructions for doing this, are located in Appendix 1. The video is also provided in a WMV format to enable you to use the video segments in other presentations. Instructions on how to insert a video segment into a PowerPoint presentation are included in this guide Appendix 2.

## Linking Professional Community and Real School Improvement – February 2008

**Karen Seashore Louis** is the Rodney Wallace Professor for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning in the Department of Educational Policy and Administration at the University of Minnesota. In December 2007, she received the Contribution to Staff Development Award from the National Staff Development Council.

In this presentation, Karen Seashore Louis explains how professional community is created and sustained. She also describes the strong impact school leaders have on student learning, and advocates for sharing instructional leadership with teachers. As well, she cautions that teachers may revert to one of five default school cultures unless the principal remains consistent in reinforcing the norms of shared leadership. She discusses ways of addressing these default cultures and stresses the importance of building relationships that are based on trust.

**Resources Available on the DVD:** The following resource materials can be accessed on the DVD or online at <http://www.curriculum.org/LSA/>:

1. The PowerPoint slides used by Seashore Louis during her presentation at the LSA February 2008 Symposium and are an integral part to her presentation.
2. The Agassiz Elementary School case study and the case analysis worksheet that were used at the LSA February 2008 Symposium.
3. "Orbiting the Giant Hairball" which Seashore Louis refers to during her presentation.
4. Professional Community and Shared Leadership Worksheet that was distributed at the LSA February 2008 Symposium.
5. *Creating and Sustaining Professional Communities*: A paper written by Seashore Louis that was included in the February 2008 Symposium package distributed to participants.
6. The templates for all the charts used in the activities throughout the facilitator's guide have been provided so that you can easily print copies for your group.

**Additional Resource:**

- Stoll, S. & Louis, K.S. (Eds.) (2007). *Professional Learning Communities: Divergence, Depth and Dilemmas*. New York: McGraw Hill (Open University Press).

**Contact:**

For additional information or clarification, contact Karen Seashore Louis at [klouis@umn.edu](mailto:klouis@umn.edu).

For additional copies of the DVDs and facilitator's guides, contact Curriculum Services Canada at 1-800-837-3048.

**Segments:**

- 1...Introduction
- 2...A Good School Culture
- 3...Professional Community
- 4...How School Leadership Affects Teachers, and, Therefore, Student Learning
- 5...How to Continue the Work of the Principal

**Note:** The PowerPoint slides are an integral part of the Seashore Louis presentation; therefore, each segment references the accompanying slides in the “Digging Deeper” sections.

## 1...Introduction

(Length: 13.5 minutes)

### **Synopsis:**

Seashore Louis introduces her presentation by pointing out that two major components of the current educational context are moral purpose and accountability. She outlines the topics she will cover and asks participants to reflect on the learning they have acquired thus far about creating professional communities.

### **Look for the following:**

- Moral purpose
- Accountability
- Participants' input regarding their learning

### **After viewing Segment 1:**

- Consider pausing the DVD at the point where Seashore Louis assigns the task of reflecting on one's learning, and at that point complete the reflective activity described below. Once you have completed the task, you can restart the DVD and compare your responses to those of the symposium participants.

**Task:** With a partner or a small group, discuss what you have learned about developing professional communities and improvement cultures. Reflect on what has already worked and what has proved to be a real challenge or setback. Share these reflections with the larger group.

### **Digging Deeper:**

- PPT #1-3

## 2...A Good School Culture

(Length: 14.5 minutes)

### **Synopsis:**

Seashore Louis begins by defining “resilient culture” and points out conditions which lead to change. In addition, she emphasizes the importance of building relationships in a school in order to deal effectively with the complexity of school improvement.

### **Look for the following:**

- The definition of “resilient culture”
- Hollywood's image of schools
- The alternative to the Hollywood image
- The characteristics of a “wicked problem” and its application to school improvement

### **After viewing Segment 2:**

- Define “resilient culture” and note the two conditions which contribute to the development of such a culture within a school community.

- Hollywood presents one image of schools, but there is an alternative to this rather negative representation. What are some characteristics of this alternative image?
- List the three features of a “wicked problem” that have direct relevance to the issue of school improvement.

**Digging Deeper:**

- PPT #4-8

### **3...Professional Community**

(Length: 28.5 minutes)

**Synopsis:**

Seashore Louis describes professional community, explains how it can be created, and offers suggestions for how it can be sustained. Participants analyze one elementary school’s efforts to create a professional community.

**Look for the following:**

- The characteristics of a school-based professional community
- The structural and social conditions that support a school-based professional community
- The benefits of a school-based professional community
- The role of principals and teachers in creating and sustaining a school-based professional community

**After viewing Segment 3:**

- Consider pausing the DVD at the point where Seashore Louis assigns the task of analyzing the conditions at Agassiz Elementary School, and perform the same task at that point. Once you have completed the analysis, you can compare your reflections to those expressed by the symposium participants.

**Task:** Distribute the handouts “Agassiz Elementary School” and “Case Analysis: Professional Community.” Form groups of four, read the case study, and follow the instructions on the case analysis worksheet.

**Digging Deeper:**

- PPT #9-14

### **4...How School Leadership Affects Teachers, and, Therefore, Student Learning**

(Length: 37.5 minutes)

**Synopsis:**

In this segment, Seashore Louis focuses on the topic of leadership. After noting the limits of top-down leadership, she describes principals’ behaviours that have a positive impact on what happens in the classroom. From here, she discusses instructional leadership and shared leadership. Within the context of this discussion, she presents a list of behaviours that teachers may revert to when principals fail to be consistent in reinforcing the norms of shared leadership.

**Look for the following:**

- The limits of top-down leadership
- Leadership influences on student learning
- Two perspectives on instructional leadership
- Shared leadership
- Teachers' hesitation to take on school-wide roles
- The importance of trust
- Default cultures

**After viewing Segment 4:**

- What are the limits of top-down leadership?
- We have learned that principals have a strong impact on what happens in the classroom when they demonstrate three important characteristics. List these three critical behaviours.
- Seashore Louis advocates sharing instructional leadership with teachers, but also points out that teachers often lack confidence in taking on schoolwide roles. As a result, they sometimes revert to default cultures if the principal is not consistent in reinforcing the norms of professional community and shared leadership.

**Task:** Select *one* of the following activities.

1. Reflect on these cultural barriers and the extent to which they are a challenge within your school community by completing the “Professional Community and Shared Leadership Worksheet” and reading “Orbiting the Giant Hairball.”
2. Reflect on potentially damaging default cultures by working with a partner to complete the chart below. First, define the culture, and then, in your analysis, describe the evidence of its presence or potential presence and explain reasons for its development or potential development in your school context. Also, consider possible ways your behaviour may be contributing to its development.

Default Culture	Definition	Analysis of its presence or potential presence in my school
1. Culture of Isolation		
2. Crab Bucket Culture		
3. “Doing” Culture		

4. Hierarchical Assumptions		
5. The Giant Hairball		

**Digging Deeper:**

- PPT #15-31

**5...How to Continue the Work of the Principal**

(Length: 22 minutes)

**Synopsis:**

In this final segment, Seashore Louis presents specific ways to face the challenges of developing a professional community and a culture of shared leadership. She concludes with the three principles of instructional leadership developed by Marzano (2005).

**Look for the following:**

- The importance of reflective dialogue
- Means of addressing default cultures
- Conversation that fosters shared leadership
- The way beliefs change
- The power of social trust
- Marzano’s principles of instructional leadership

**After viewing Segment 5:**

- Certain questions promote reflective dialogue which, in turn, fosters the development of shared leadership in a school environment. The chart below contains examples of such questions. Select a partner and take turns answering each question.

<b>Shared Leadership</b>
In your school, what are the top-priority student learning goals related to literacy and numeracy?

What learning and development work needs to be done to make or continue progress toward these goals?
How will teachers be involved in the learning required to make or continue progress?
In what ways might teacher leaders advance this learning work?

**Digging Deeper:**

- PPT #32-47

## Appendix 1 – Accessing the Additional Resources

### How to Access the Additional Resources on the DVD

**To access the multi-media resources in Windows...** insert the DVD into the DVD drive of your computer. An options box will open; select “Open folder to view files.” If a new window does not open, go to “My Computer” which can be accessed from the “Start” menu. Right click on the DVD drive, and select “Open.” Folders and files can be opened from the DVD or copied to your desktop and opened from there.

**To access the multi-media resources in Mac OS X...** insert the DVD into the DVD drive of your computer. Then exit from the DVD player (typically the player opens automatically when a DVD is inserted into the drive). Select the DVD icon. Folders and files can be opened from the DVD or copied to the desktop and opened from there.

For instructions on copying folders and files to your desktop, see Appendix 3.

**NOTE:** In order to watch the WMV version of the video material, use Windows Media Player. Most PCs will have Windows Media Player installed already. If you do not have Windows Media Player on your computer, it can be downloaded at:  
<http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/download/AllDownloads.aspx>

## Appendix 2 – Inserting Video into PowerPoint

### How to Insert a Video Segment into a PowerPoint Presentation

On this DVD you will find WMV versions of all segments of the webcast. To insert a video segment into a PowerPoint follow the directions below:

1. Open PowerPoint.
2. Create a new PowerPoint presentation.  
**OR**  
Open an existing PowerPoint presentation to which you wish to add video.
3. Insert a DVD into the DVD drive of your computer.
4. If a new window pops up and asks you how you would like to view the files on the disc, choose “Open folder to view files.”  
**OR**  
If a new window does not open, go to My Computer which can be accessed from the Start menu. Once the My Computer window has opened, double-click on the icon shaped like a disc, which will likely be labeled D or E.
5. Save the video segment that you would like to insert into a PowerPoint into the same folder that the PowerPoint presentation is saved in on your computer. Instructions on how to save video files on your computer are available in Appendix 3.

**NOTE:** Video files that have been saved onto your computer can be cropped and edited into smaller clips using Movie Maker (free on PCs) or iMovie (free on Macintosh).

6. While displaying the slide that you would like to insert the video, click on Insert in the PowerPoint menu bar.
7. Under Insert, select Movies and Sounds.
8. Click on Movie from File.
9. A window will pop up which will ask you to find the video file that you would like to add.
10. Find and select the video file that you saved earlier in step 5.
11. Once you choose the video file you need, another window will pop up and ask if you want your movie to play automatically when you enter the slide or to play when it is clicked. Choose your preference.
12. You will notice that the starting image of your movie is now displayed on the slide.

## Appendix 3 – How to Save Files to Your Computer

The PDF files and WMV video files can all be copied and saved to your computer using either of the following methods for copying and pasting files.

### **Method 1**

1. Right-click on the file and choose Copy.
2. Right-click within any folder that you would like to save it in, and choose Paste.

### **Method 2**

1. Left-click on the file you would like to save, so that the file is highlighted.
2. Simultaneously press Ctrl and C (for Macintosh users, Command + C) to copy the file.
3. Left-click within any folder that you would like to save the file in, and simultaneously press “Ctrl” and “V” (for Macintosh users “Command” and “V”) to paste the file there.

For Macintosh users, the “Command” key is the key with the following symbols:



**NOTE:** All video files you would like to insert into your PowerPoint presentation must be saved in the folder containing the PowerPoint file.

If you save a PowerPoint presentation to another location (i.e., a memory stick, CD, etc.) you must also save the video in the same location in order for the video to play. This means that if you transfer the presentation to another computer, you must transfer the video files with it. Otherwise the video will not link to the PowerPoint presentation.