

# Time Inventory Protocol

The demands placed on school leaders often make them feel that they're spending their time reactively rather than proactively. Daily responsibilities, meetings, and crises keep leaders focused on task-oriented activities that make it challenging to find time to think about long-term strategic priorities for their schools. This protocol is designed to help leaders find more time in their schedules so that they are better able to align their time with their priorities and focus on high-leverage leadership actions that improve student outcomes.

## Step 1: Identify your priorities

- A. **Read this article** by Kim Marshall.
- B. Review the rubric on pages 20–21 of the article to get a sense how you're currently managing your time.
- C. Reflect on what your “big rocks” (i.e., priorities) are this year that will result in improved student outcomes.

## Step 2: Inventory your schedule

- A. Review your calendar over the last two weeks. Highlight all of the time that was aligned to your priorities for the year. For example, if you want to strengthen your observation and feedback structure, highlight all of the times that you were observing classrooms and providing feedback.
- B. Make a list of big time-wasters. Using your calendar as a reference, think back on the last two to three weeks. What were some meetings, actions, or tasks that took significant time away from your goals?
- C. Make a list of daily time-wasters (these are often smaller in scale). Think about your typical day. What are some of the little things (e.g., checking email) that distract you?
- D. Reflect on which of these time-wasters you can stop doing, delegate, postpone, or batch to do more efficiently?

## Step 3: Set a goal

- A. Think about your priorities. What are all of the planning activities, meetings, and tasks required to address these priorities well?
- B. Decide how much time a week you can realistically spend on each priority.
- C. Reflect on your current inventory from step 2. What is the gap between how much time you currently spend on each priority and how much time you want to spend?

## Step 4: Reschedule your time

- A. Calendar your priorities by putting all priority-aligned planning activities, meetings, and tasks into your weekly schedule. For example, if observation and feedback is your priority, calendar when you will be observing classrooms, when you will have feedback meetings, when you will support/train other observers, and when you will add observation and feedback notes into your tracker.
- B. Update your calendar with all of the other essential tasks in your week, such as meetings that you cannot miss or other key responsibilities.
- C. Consider your time-wasters and batch the tasks that can be completed together to maximize efficiency. For example, designate time to order supplies or to read and respond to all emails rather than doing these sporadically during the day.
- D. Analyze your calendar. Does it seem realistic? Is there some space to allow for inevitable emergencies or urgent situations? Make any adjustments so that your schedule reflects your priorities while realistically acknowledging the demands of the role.