

Using the *Engelbart Organizational Learning Schema* to Frame Professional Learning for College Educators



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Introduction

In an ever-changing higher education climate, the need for improving instruction has never been as compelling or as challenging as it is today (DiBenedetto & Whitwell, 2019). The new trend of cross-institutional and globalized education continues to define higher education and impact the way quality teaching is conceptualized, facilitated, and evaluated (Saroyan & Trigwell, 2015). Simon and Pleschova (2013) identified a significant gap in literature on the impact of the outcomes of instructional development at the meso level. The meso level focuses on such things as the relationship between professional learning and institutional culture, institutional and department practices, and teaching teams (Simon & Pleschova, 2013). The question remains, how can we structure professional learning in order to implement sustained development and support that encourages the adoption of organizational instructional policies, procedures, and programs by college educators?

Engelbart Organizational Learning Schema

The Engelbart's Organizational Learning and Improvement Schema (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, & LeMahieu, 2015) provides a structure for implementing networked learning communities for continuous organizational improvement. Engelbart sought to find ways to increase human productivity by using the computer as a medium to enhance idea development, collaboration, and organizational communication, which he coined a networked improvement community (NIC) (Engelbart, 1992). Engelbart articulated this NIC as a model that could enhance human intelligence and the ability to solve complex problems by using technology and an interrelated tiered structure to facilitate social learning and organizational improvement. *Level-A* signifies individual learning process, *Level-B* is the peer-to-peer learning and *Level-C* learning happens when multiple *Level-B* learning communities connect as a network, using various technologies.

Purpose and Objectives

This case study of the Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) presents how the *Engelbart Organizational Learning Schema* was used to frame three types of professional learning for educators across three regions in order to facilitate a culture of continuous instructional improvement. Objectives guiding the professional learning were:

- 1) Deliver professional learning for the **implementation and sustainment of systemic priorities**;
- 2) Facilitate horizontal and vertical **networked improvement communities**; and
- 3) Build capacity for proven **innovative best practices** in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

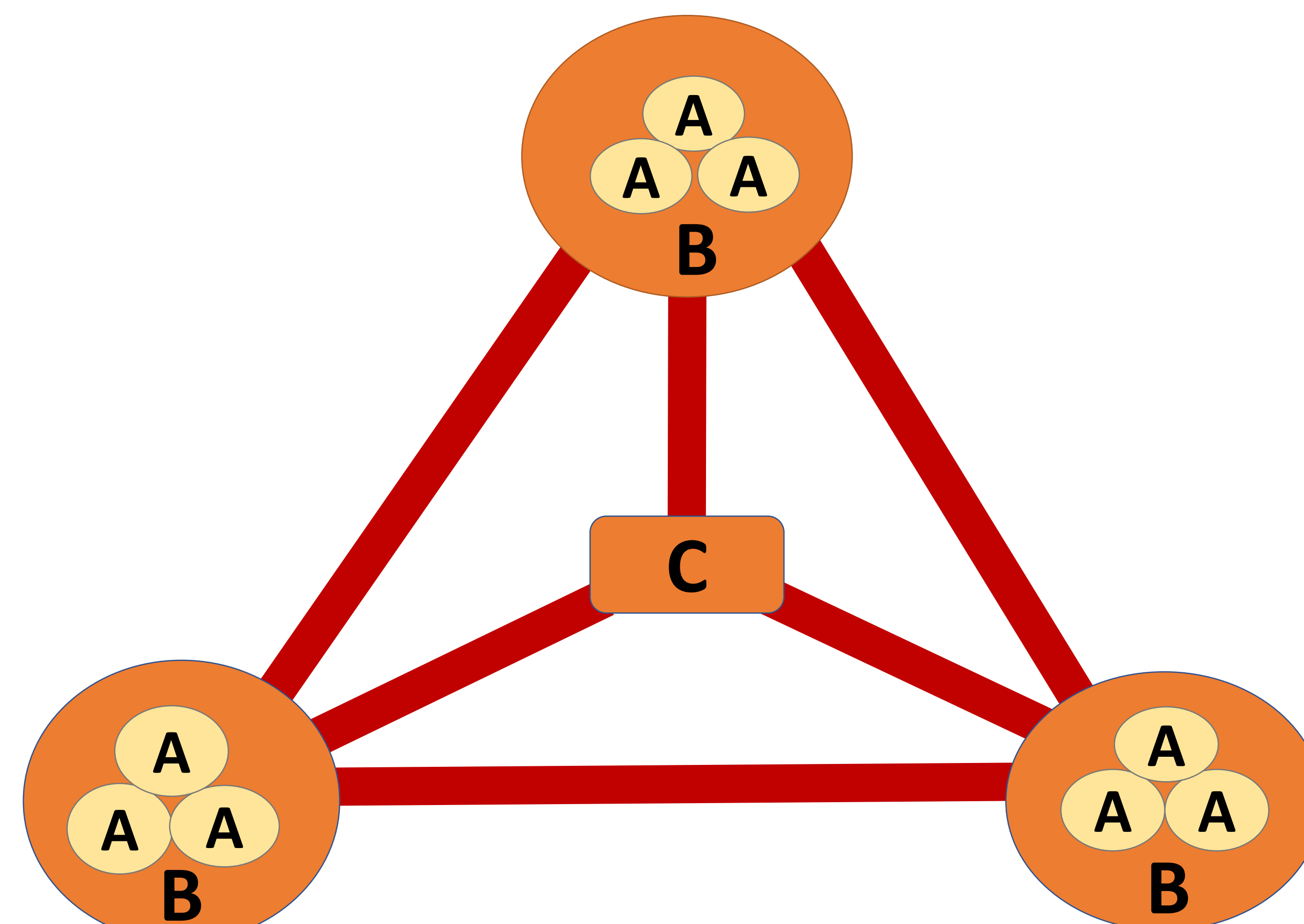


Figure 1. Engelbart Organizational Learning Schema using an educational leadership team to facilitate networked learning.

Evaluation Outcomes

Focus groups revealed:

- 1) Increased commitment to improving instruction;
- 2) A new structure for instructional coaching and support established; and
- 3) Trained educators aligned their instructional practices with the goals of the organization/institution.

Conclusion

Engelbart's Organizational Learning Schema is a flexible structure that promoted networked improvement communities and increased adoption of DoDEA's organizational policies and procedures for instruction.

- Colleges of agriculture seeking to incorporate systemic professional learning on instruction into their faculty development plans should consider adopting this networked learning model.

Methods

LEVEL A

Provided **Individual Learning Opportunities** using blended instructional model

- Developed Educator Capacities with Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
- Implemented the new DoDEA Coaching Model
- Facilitated Enhanced Professional Learning



LEVEL B

Operationalized **Peer-to-Peer Learning**

- Conducted follow-up regional visits
- Facilitated group meetings
- Implemented change with PLCs/ Focused Collaboration



LEVEL C

Conducted **Cross-Regional Meetings and Professional Learning Opportunities**

- Formed shared vision and purpose
 - Blueprint for Continuous Improvement
 - Adapted common vocabulary
- Adopted common shared tools
 - Instructional Learning Toolkit for CILs
 - Learning Walkthrough Tool
 - Participating in summits



EVALUATION

References

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