1. Course Number: EDLD 6300  
   Course Title: Planning and Continuous Improvement  
   Credit Hours: 3 Semester Hours  
   Prerequisites: Admission to AESG Master’s Program  
   Corequisites: None


3. Texts/Required Resources:
   No Child Left Behind Act (2001)  
   2006 Interpretive Guide of the Alabama Accountability System – Alabama SDE  
   2006 Comprehensive Professional Development Plan – Alabama SDE  
   2006 School Improvement Plan – Alabama SDE  
   www.alsde.edu - School/District/State Accountability Reports and Test Data

   Supplemental Text/Resources:

4. Course Description: Development of frameworks for collection, analysis, and use of school data for the improvement of instruction, the learning environment and student achievement.

5. Course Objectives based upon standards of knowledge (K), and ability (A)  
   Alabama State Department of Education Instructional Leadership Standards (290-3-3-.48) (2)(a) through (2)(h).

   Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

   a. (K, A) demonstrate effective research skills, including library research, data collection, interpreting and analyzing data, and reporting data (2)(a-f); (2)(h)
   b. (K,A) demonstrate how to use data for school improvement (2)(a-f); (2)(h)
   c. (K, A) demonstrate understanding and use of action research for school improvement (2)(a-f); (2)(h)
   d. (K, A) distinguish among key terms, types of, and concepts about school data (2)(a)
   e. (K, A) link school and district-level data to student achievement, school improvement, state reforms and No Child Left Behind (2)(a-f); (2)(h)
   f. (K, A) collect existing data (e.g. student achievement) (2)(a-f); (2)(h)
   g. (K, A) utilize data collection (protocols) and analytical skills (disaggregate) in multiple project-based experiences (2)(a-f); (2)(h)
   h. (K, A) facilitate faculty discussion and analysis of school data (2)(a-f) (2)(h)
i. (K, A) develop data-driven improvement plans for the school improvement process (2)(a - f)2; (2)(h)2
j. (K, A) describe trends, issues, and barriers to school improvement and reform and strategically plan to remove those barriers (2)(a - f)2; (2)(h)2
k. (K, A) recognize with proper perspective, the need for school improvement and reform (2)(a - f)2; (2)(h)2
l. (K, A) value the involvement and engagement of key stakeholders as well as representatives of underserved populations in school improvement efforts (2)(a - f)2; (2)(h)2
m. (K, A) develop a personal vision of and commitment to school improvement and reform (2)(a - f)2 (2)(h)2
n. (K, A) interpret and communicate research results effectively to both professional and lay audiences to advocate for school improvement (2)(a - f)2(2)(h)2

6. Course Content and Schedule:

**Week 1** - Introduction to Planning and Continuous Improvement; Course Syllabus, class requirements and plan of action; assumptions of leadership in educational accountability

**Week 2** - The School Improvement Plan: Alabama’s School Improvement Process and No Child Left Behind (NCLB); using credible or evidence based information

**Week 3** - Events and Trends That Led to No Child Left Behind: Social, historical, political and economic

**Week 4** - Guest Speakers: No Child Left Behind: Accountability; Using knowledge (data) to build organizational capacity

**Week 5** - No Child Left Behind and You! Assignment and presentations

**Week 6** - Knowledge Management: Understanding formative assessment to drive school improvement efforts

**Week 7** - Knowledge Implementation: Using professional development, study groups, action research to further school improvement efforts

**Week 8** - Knowledge Implementation: Staff development and teacher leaders

**Week 9** - Types of data: Existing, future, internal and external and how to utilize for improvement efforts

**Week 10** - School Based Staff Development Projects: Analyzing student work (field experience)

**Week 11** - Expert Panel Debate: Is No Child Left Behind and the School Improvement Process increasing student achievement and promoting progress in our schools?
**Week 12-** Group Data Project: School improvement plan at partner school

**Week 13-** Educational Accountability: Changing expectations for leaders; managing by rules, leading by results, collaborating with stakeholders and sharing leadership

**Week 14-** Educational Accountability: Reporting, monitoring, and rewards and consequences for improvement efforts

**Week 15-** Presentation of Taking a Stand: Written format and Powerpoint presentation

**Course Requirements/Evaluation:**

**Assignment 1: NCLB and You!**
This short assignment asks each student to articulate their knowledge and experience with NCLB in general, and specifically, assessment accountability, in their professional settings.

**Assignment 2: Taking a Stand**
This essay asks students to take a stand on the current debate of the utility of student assessment data for instructional improvement and student achievement. A specific writing, analysis, and grading rubric will be provided for this assignment. Full credit will be based on the students’ ability to craft a clear, cogent essay that weaves in an analysis of the assessment accountability literature read and presented in class. Specifically, you will be asked to answer the overarching question, “Are the current assessment accountability efforts effective at improving instruction, and thus, student achievement?” Sub questions should include: “What factors facilitate and inhibit the effectiveness of assessments in schools?” and, “What is the evidence to support your claims?” There is a page limit of 12 pages.

**Assignment 3: Professional Development and Action Plan Framework**
The purpose of this assignment is to develop a written and visual depiction of how school data can be integrated into school practice (leadership, pedagogy, and learning). Utilizing elements of class readings and writings you are asked to develop a framework (visual model) and specific scope and sequence in order to deliver school data instruction at the school level. This work involves building organizational coherence and individual capacity. This framework must be supported by evidence of adult learning (on-going, collaborative professional development, reflections, etc.). This assignment has a maximum page limit of five pages.

**Assignment 4: Group Data Project**
Small groups will create and present to an audience of local educators the power and utility of student data. Groups will receive full credit for compiling, analyzing, and presenting a school-based dataset utilizing technology in every aspect of their work. Groups will be selected by the instructor and if possible, work in one school setting to develop a data-driven plan of action (a School Improvement Plan). This assignment
involves the collection, analysis, and plan-for-use of data in a school setting to include the eleven components of school reform.

**Field Experience**: Students will move to the next logical step in analyzing student data by engaging staff of the designated school(s) in incorporating into their professional learning community dialogue the analysis of student work. Students will facilitate staff development sessions by providing teachers with knowledge, understanding, and techniques to analyze student work through reflective inquiry and study group analysis (See Langer, Colton, and Goff).

**Evaluation Procedures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professionalism and Class Participation</th>
<th>10 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1: NCLB and You!</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: Taking a Stand</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 3: PDP and SIP</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 4: Group Data Project</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Experience</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
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**Grading Scale**:

- A = 90 – 100 points
- B = 89 – 80 points
- C = 79 – 70 points
- D = 69 – 60 points
- F = 59 points and below

8. **Class Policy Statements**:

A. **Class Attendance/Absences**: Class attendance and punctuality are expected and required. If assignments are missed, only University-approved excuses as outlined in the *Tiger Cub* will be allowed. Arrangement to make-up the work must be made in advance. If assignments are missed due to illness, a doctor’s statement for verification of sickness should be given to the instructor the day the student returns to class. Other unavoidable absences from campus and class must be documented and cleared with the instructor in advance.

B. Students are responsible for initiating arrangements for missed work due to excused absences.

C. Make-up exams will be given only for University-approved excuses as outlined in the *Tiger Cub*. Arrangements must be made up in advance. Unavoidable absences for class must be documented and cleared with the instructor in advance.

D. Accommodations: Students who need accommodations are asked to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternative time can be arranged. To set up this meeting, please contact me by e-mail.
Bring a copy of your Accommodation Memo and an Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Program for Students with Disabilities at 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

E. Honesty Code: All portions of the Auburn University Honesty Code and the Tiger Cub Rules and Regulations pertaining to Cheating will apply to this class.
F. Professionalism: As faculty, staff and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:

- Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices
- Contribute to collaborative learning communities
- Demonstrate a commitment to diversity
- Model and nurture intellectual vitality

9. Justification for Graduate Credit:

A school leader has the responsibility to guide his or her learning community through the improvement process and to communicate the school’s plan for improvement to its stakeholders. This course will prepare students to identify issues in relevant and current reports and policies as well as explore the knowledge base to determine the extent to which the initiatives are supported by research.