REDMER MODEL

Teacher Evaluation for the K-12 Online Classroom

Framework Introduction

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Introduction

The Redmer Model for K-12 Online Teacher Evaluation

Teacher evaluation is a central topic in educational discourse, reflecting the value placed on education by communities, policymakers, and stakeholders nationwide. The perceived quality of education is often linked to student outcomes, which are directly influenced by teacher effectiveness. How teacher effectiveness is measured depends not only on the evaluation instrument itself but also on the partnership between school principals and teachers who utilize the instrument throughout the evaluation process.

With the rapid evolution of technology and its integration into daily life, there is an urgent need for instructional transformation in K-12 education. This transformation must extend to how teachers are evaluated and supported, especially within the online learning environment. Although teacher evaluation originated as a federal mandate, states have autonomy over the tools and methods employed. Over the years, federal policies such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Race to the Top, and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) have shaped evaluation practices (Close et al., 2019, 2020). Despite these reforms, a gap remains in how teacher evaluation addresses the distinct nature of K-12 online instruction. It is imperative to move forward with innovative approaches tailored to this setting.

Online learning itself is not new - however, formal teacher evaluation practices specifically designed for elementary and secondary online settings are largely absent. Existing evaluation mechanisms rely heavily on traditional classroom observation methods and instruments that neither reference nor guide quality online teaching practices (Redmer, 2023).

Grounded in current research and intellectual frameworks, two conceptual pillars emerge as essential to advancing K-12 online teacher evaluation: **Instructional Ingenuity** and **Nexus of Engagement**. These concepts represent sophisticated, interconnected approaches that provide a foundation for reimagining teacher evaluation in online contexts.

Instructional Ingenuity is defined as student-centered instructional design and interaction that prioritizes the individual needs, interests, and abilities of each learner. It encompasses creative teaching strategies that leverage technology in diverse, adaptable, and flexible ways to meet evolving educational contexts. This concept emphasizes fostering student agency and facilitating dynamic exchanges of ideas through collaborative knowledge construction driven by both personal and social choices.

Nexus of Engagement refers to the academic and social interactions occurring within multimodal learning spaces that may be non-traditional but are interdependent within an online learning community. It highlights the facilitation of a dynamic web of relationships that converge to create an integrated learning environment, fostering individual and collective growth as well as sustained engagement among community members.

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Development

Development Process of the Redmer Model

To create a teacher evaluation instrument specific to online instruction - filling a critical gap where few resources currently exist - a comprehensive alignment was conducted. This process involved reviewing widely used teacher evaluation instruments alongside K-12 online teaching standards to identify shared elements and gaps relative to the targeted concepts of Instructional Ingenuity and Nexus of Engagement. The primary frameworks analyzed are identified in Figure 1 and include:

- The Marzano Focused Teacher Evaluation Model (2017)
- Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument (2013)
- National Standards for Quality (NSQ) Online Teaching (2019)
- Community of Inquiry (2000)

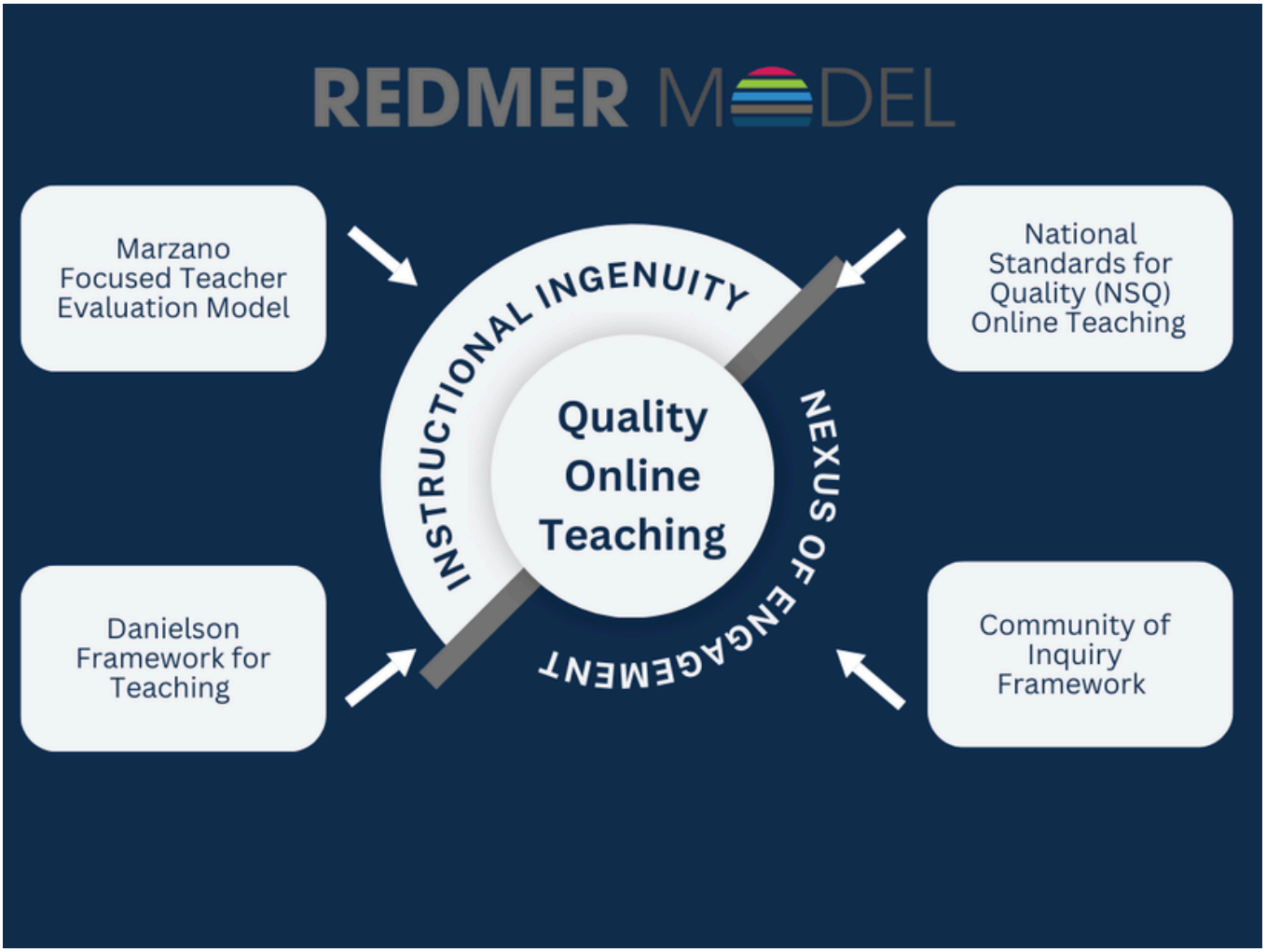

Figure 1

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Development

Development Process of the Redmer Model (cont.)

The development proceeded through these streamlined steps:

- **Comparative Review:** Conducted an in-depth analysis of Marzano, Danielson, and NSQ domains, elements, and standards to identify commonalities and differences relevant to online teaching.

- **Concept Integration:** Using deductive reasoning, key insights from Instructional Ingenuity, Nexus of Engagement, and the Community of Inquiry framework informed the examination of online teaching and learning alongside comparisons from existing frameworks. This step led to the identification of five overarching Focus Areas and an initial set of 30 Elements of Practice reflecting the behaviors and practices relevant to effective K-12 online instruction.

- **Crosswalk Creation:** Developed a crosswalk to examine alignment between the Focus Areas and the established frameworks and standards. This step informed the review of terminology, initial supporting examples, and rubric definitions. This crosswalk was refined through two iterations - condensing Elements of Practice from 30 to 15 and renaming components for clarity and coherence—thereby facilitating easier adoption by school leaders.

- **Validation Review:** A research and development team conducted multiple reviews of all frameworks and alignment documentation to ensure consistency, relevance, and practical utility within the context of K-12 online teaching environments.

- **Model Iteration:** Created successive versions of the evaluation model, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all five Focus Areas rather than treating them as isolated domains. This iterative process culminated in the Redmer Model - a dynamic framework designed to represent the complex interactions occurring within online classrooms.

- **Protocol Development:** Established a clear and actionable evaluation protocol to guide principals through the implementation process, including observation guidelines, evidence collection strategies, and feedback mechanisms tailored specifically to online teaching contexts. This ensures practical usability and promotes fidelity in applying the Redmer Model during evaluations.

- **Professional Development:** Designed and mapped a comprehensive professional learning plan aligned to the needs of online evaluators and educators, grounding the process in goal setting and continuous, year-round growth opportunities anchored in the five Focus Areas.

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Framework

Model Interactions

The Redmer Model visually represents these continuous interactions within the online teaching environment (see Figure 2). It provides educators and principals with an evaluative tool grounded in both research and practice that supports meaningful observation, feedback, and professional growth.

By centering Instructional Ingenuity and Nexus of Engagement as foundational concepts, the Redmer Model advances our understanding of quality online teaching while offering a practical pathway for principals to evaluate and support teachers effectively in digital learning contexts.

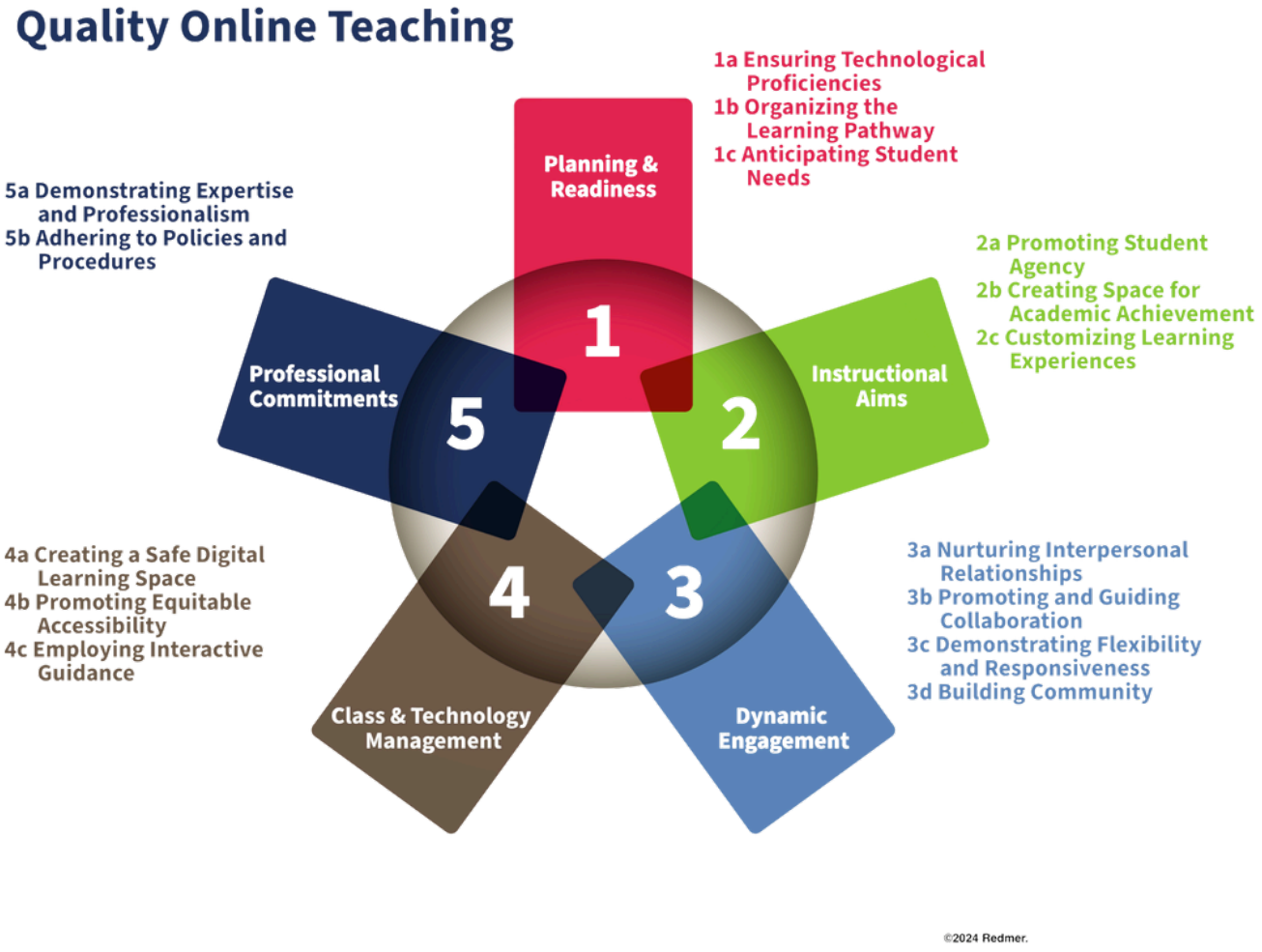

Figure 2

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