

# National SAM Innovation Project

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## Overview

The SAM process® is a set of professional development steps using a unique set of tools to change a school leader's focus from school management tasks to instructional leadership activities *directly connected to improving teaching and learning*.

Increasing instructional time is a step in the SAM process, not its purpose. The purpose is to increase the positive impact the leader has on teaching and learning.

SAM leaders use rubrics and TimeTrack® data to assess where they are in the process...everything leads to this question: *“Can you connect time spent with an individual, group or project with improved practice/outcomes?”* This question is the same whether the user is a principal, assistant principal, instructional coach or counselor.

External and independent studies conclude that principals, and other school leaders who use the process, significantly increase instructional time and their positive impact on teaching and learning. Currently, over 1,000 school leaders in twenty-four states contract for SAM services.

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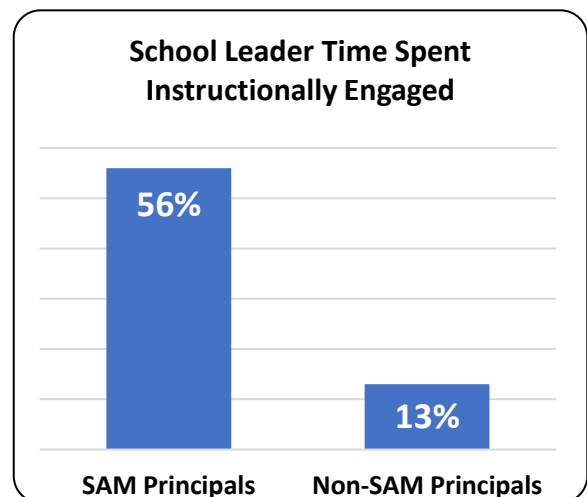
*“TimeTrack helps me be more reflective about our work. It has allowed us to change our systems to be more effective. The reflective questioning has helped us stay focused on teacher improvement and student outcomes.”*

*~Principal Corri Guy, Jackson Elementary School, Davenport, Iowa*

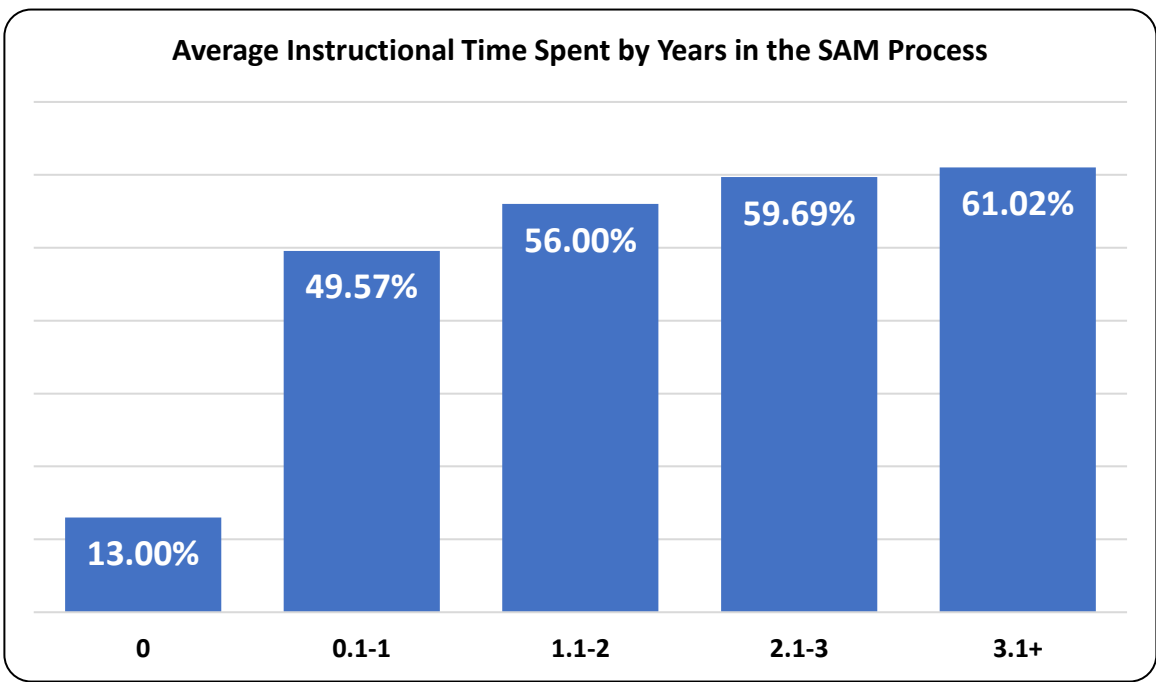
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## Instructional Focus and Intentionality

*School leaders using the SAM process spend the majority of their time on instructional activities intended to improve teacher practice and student learning.* Data from the annual SAM Team Performance Rubric Assessment and TimeTrack records demonstrate SAM principals spent 56% of their time instructionally engaged during the 2023-24 school year. The longer SAM principals participate in the process the higher their instructional time, reaching 72% for leaders who have advanced to the highest performance level.



National studies have determined principals *who do not do the SAM process* spend between 13% and 25% of their time instructionally engaged. (Grissom, Loeb, & Master, 2013, PSA, 2011)

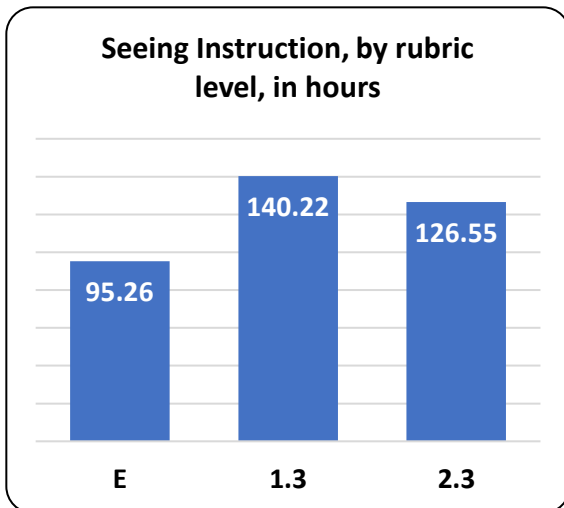


*“In the past, I was doing clean-up every day. Now I am staying ahead of crises, and I am much more productive in my daily work. My overall percentage of instructional time improved by 40% this year. I see the results of this with my teachers.”*

*~Principal Matthew Adelman, Albemarle Road Middle School, Charlotte, North Carolina*

## Seeing Instruction

What people see the principal do each day demonstrates what that principal really cares about.



Education leadership author Danny Steele says it this way, “I don’t care what your personal mission statement says. Everyone in the building knows what you’re about by how you spend your time.”

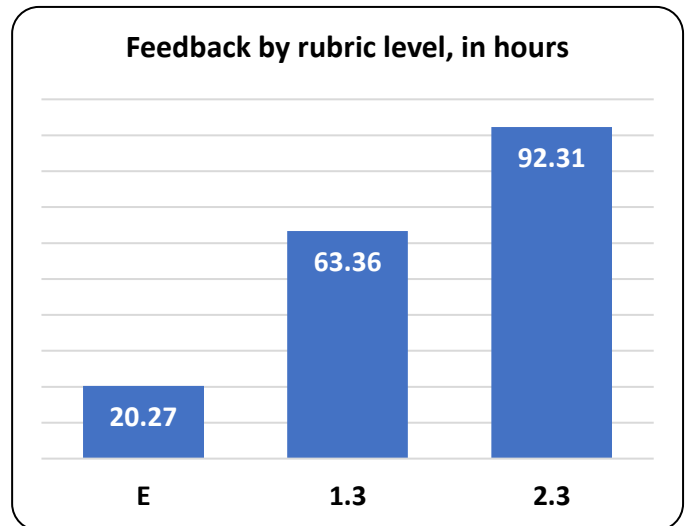
Data from the annual SAM Team Performance Rubric Assessment demonstrates that principals who do the SAMs process spent 11% of their time seeing instruction, averaging 135 hours each school year, *more than twice the time of non-SAM principals*. The amount of time seeing instruction increases each year the leader does the SAM process.

## Feedback

A study conducted by The New Teacher Project, TNTP, reported 75% of teachers could not recall receiving any specific feedback from their principal on how to improve their instructional practice. Feedback, defined in the SAM process as conversation with a teacher about instructional practice, is measured daily by TimeTrack.

The annual SAM Team Performance Rubric Assessment process for the 2023-24 school year demonstrates that principals who do the SAM process spent 4.9% of their time providing feedback, averaging 49 hours each school year,

*more than three times the amount of non-SAM principals.* Importantly, principals in the SAMs process provide feedback *in conversation with teachers*. Written feedback is coded separately.



NSIP separates feedback by type: Directive, when the principal tells a teacher what to do; Non-directive, when a principal facilitates a conversation and encourages the teacher to explore and reflect; and Celebratory, when the principal engages the teacher in a conversation about a successful practice. NSIP views all three kinds of feedback as necessary and important. Interestingly, the longer a principal does the SAM process the more Non-directive feedback they provide.

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*“The SAM process has been a game changer for me as a principal making instructional leadership a priority. The process allows me to be intentional with my day-to-day goals, allowing my goals to be my priority. The data reports become your monitor to determine if you are achieving your goals. As a result, the most important work of increasing student achievement and improving teacher practice happens with a greater sense of validity.”*

*~Principal Sherie Turner, Franklin D. Roosevelt PK-8, Cleveland, Ohio*

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*“It is enlightening to have TimeTrack monthly meetings to break down the time spent in a school day. It keeps the team accountable. It is beneficial to see how much time is spent with each person. I am more focused on instruction and recognize that I need to spend more time on combined feedback and combined observations next year.”*

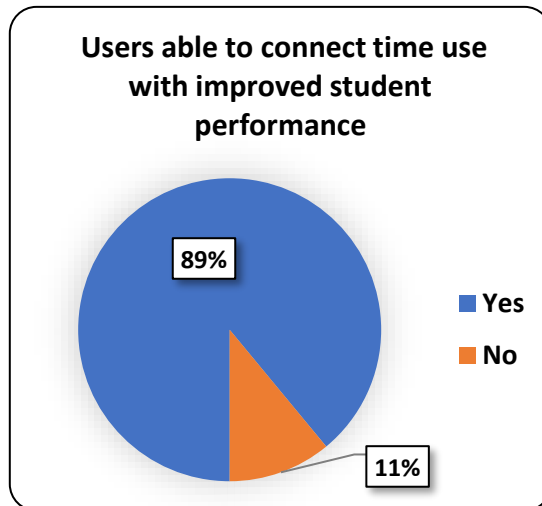
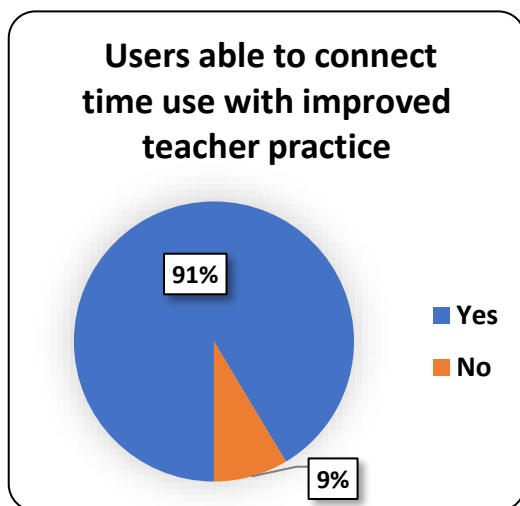
*~ Jacob Bretz, Danville High School, Danville, Illinois*

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## Connecting Instructional Leadership with Improved Teaching and Learning

The Mission of the National SAM Innovation Project is to provide a comprehensive process and set of tools designed to develop effective instructional leaders resulting in greater student success.

The success of the SAM process is measured by the extent to which principals feel, and can demonstrate with data, that they are improving teacher practice and student performance. 91% of TimeTrack users and SAMs can connect their work with improved teacher practice using data. 89% percent can connect their work with improved student outcomes using data.



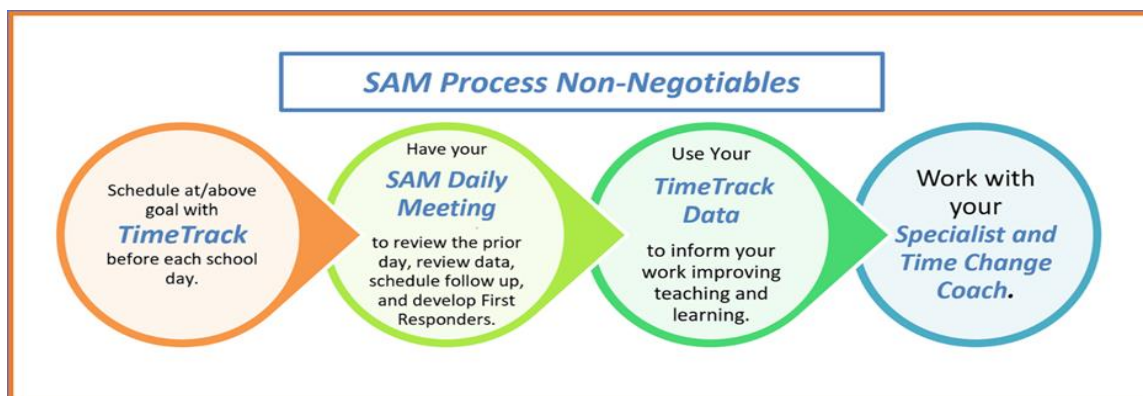
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*“I could not do my work as efficiently without TimeTrack. TimeTrack allows me to thoughtfully integrate teacher observations and walkthroughs with the time for feedback to support teachers. Scheduling time for feedback intentionally, opens the door to work with teachers, promote instructional dialogue, and develop collegial relationships to support positive outcomes.”*

*~Assistant Principal, Deb Amos, Hillside Elementary, Farmington, Michigan*

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SAM teams focus on connecting one event to another. The SAM is a staff member who meets with the principal each day to schedule work, review data, and ask reflective questions. If a principal observes a teacher on Monday, the SAM asks what follow-up should be scheduled. A good leader connects each event completed with teachers and students to the next.



## Annual National SAM Conference

1,000+ school leaders in twenty-four states do the SAM process every day. NSIP hosts an annual national professional development conference to celebrate their work. Attendees must be doing the SAM process with efficacy to be eligible to attend. Sessions feature keynotes from national and international educational and corporate leadership authors and speakers as well as breakout sessions with SAM teams from across the country. The conference is designed to push the thinking of SAM teams while celebrating their success.

Miami Beach is the site of the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual National SAM Conference.

*Save the Date! 18<sup>th</sup> Annual National SAM Conference*

**Loews Miami Beach**

January 16, 2025 ~ January 18, 2025

*Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Weekend*



*Registration opens Labor Day*

## Getting Started

For each SAM team the initial training is done in an all-day in-person session or optional on-line, two-hour session. By the end of the session the leader's TimeTrack is in place and the team is ready for the SAM Daily Meeting the next day.

Each team is introduced to the advanced features of TimeTrack and a SAM Implementation Specialist who will support them online for the next two weeks. We make sure the process is easy and comfortable. When implementation is complete, a Time Change Coach is assigned to provide weekly support online.

### SAM services include:

- subscription for use of TimeTrack® cloud-based software at each school site for the principal and other leaders in the school the principal supervises
- subscription for use of NoteTrack® cloud-based software at each school site for the principal and other leaders in the school the principal supervises
- subscription for use of First Responders® cloud-based software at each school site for the principal and other leaders in the school the principal supervises
- subscription includes access to online and in-person technical support for TimeTrack, NoteTrack and First Responders, as needed, each school site
- initial training, in person, all-day or online
- implementation support, ten days at each school site during the SAM Daily Meeting; more, as needed, online
- monthly remote coaching, two-hours, each school site, online
- weekly online coaching review of TimeTrack with email and/or phone feedback, online
- subscription, professional development, [The Marshall Memo](#)
- subscription, professional development, [The Main Idea](#)
- Online professional development sessions, SAM Talks, featuring national speakers
- access, NSIP HD recordings and support materials from past conferences
- annual national conference

The National SAM Innovation Project was founded in 2005 with support from the Wallace Foundation. NISP is a non-profit, 501c3 corporation and the sole source provider for The SAM Process.

NSIP provides services directly to districts, schools and states. Districts and schools use Title 1, Title II, school improvement, teacher leadership, Professional development, grants, general funds and private grants to pay for SAM services.

You can schedule an online overview session to see *SAM Process tools* by using the contact Information below.