There are several in-common components of the IPLA curriculum used to support each of the ISSL Standards and problem-based themes. These components are essential to the learning of the participant to skillfully use as future leaders. Participants practice these skills throughout the program. The use of the action research model is continually repeated to use learner and learner environment data; to develop a deep understanding of theory, research, and best practice; and to practice setting goals and making action plans. The in-common elements include:

- **Conduct Action Research Study**: Action research study is used for each of the problem-based themes to provide practice with a methodology to use consistently with staff to analyze data of the learner and of the learning environment, and to conduct a specific study of current research and best practice before developing goals and action plans.
- **Develop a Professional Development Plan**: A professional development plan is completed for each theme area. Each Iowa district and/or building completes a plan annually.
- **Participate in Field Activities**: Activities conducted in the field are the heart of the IPLA process. Participants are immersed in theory, research, and best practice during the seminars (approximately 40%), and the field activities connect learning regarding the specific topic, grade level, or activity selected to actual experience (approximately 60%).
- **Engage in Cohort Group Activities**: Cohort groups meet face-to-face a minimum of three times during each ISSL Standard. During the Saturday meetings, different expert faculty/mentor practitioners provide theory, research, and best practice concerning application in the field. Primary activities include relationship building, networking, teamwork, sharing, inquiry, and reflection.
- **Track Competence Through Portfolio and Log of Activities**: A portfolio is developed to demonstrate competence in each problem-based theme and ISSL Standard. The Program Director and/or mentors continuously monitor the portfolio. Each participant is required to achieve the proficiency level of 4 or higher on the rubric for each Standard and problem-based theme. A log of activities is kept to demonstrate the time spent on each of the requirements, and provides necessary data for the participant and the Program Director.
- **Monitor Reflective Thinking Through Journaling**: This process allows participants to relate personal learning to demonstration of ability to thoughtfully and insightfully come to understandings of methods to improve teaching and learning in the school.

- **Complete Tool Box Activities**: These activities explore daily management and organizational expectations of districts/buildings, and are aligned with the ISSL Standard and the problem-based theme.
- **Evaluate Learning Through Assessment Activities**: Evaluation and assessment include: 1) continuous monitoring and feedback on progress by the Program Director through a minimum of two on-site visitations during each Standard and by email, ICN, or other method, as determined by the participant and the Program Director; 2) continuous monitoring and feedback on activities by mentors through cohort activities, email, ICN, site visits, etc., as needed; 3) review of portfolio, log, journal, and tool box activities with the Program Director for approval, with additional work assigned by the Program Director and/or mentors; and 4) successful completion at proficiency level (4 or 5) on the rubrics for each Standard.
- **Faculty and Mentors**: These people are responsible for delivery of the seminars. Each participant is teamed with a mentor to provide support. Mentors will support any portions of the of the clinical activities and tool box activities for each ISSL Standard. Additional support in mathematics, science, reading, Special Education, English Language Learner, at-risk, Talented and Gifted, multi-cultural gender-fair, differentiated learning, etc. is available at the Area Education agency. The building principal or other district staff may choose to provide additional support by mentoring the IPLA participant.