Internal accountability is based on the notion that individuals and the group in which they work can transparently hold themselves responsible for their performance. Successful schools build a collaborative culture that combines individual responsibility, collective expectations, and corrective action. Internal accountability must precede external accountability if lasting improvement in student achievement is the goal.

Policy makers and other leaders should establish conditions for developing cultures of internal accountability. Individuals should develop collaborative work with peers and push upward for this work to be supported.

Local leaders have to play their part in establishing internal accountability and in relating to the external accountability system. It is essential to engage the external policy and accountability system.

External authorities should focus their efforts on two interrelated activities:
1. Investing in internal accountability
2. Projecting and protecting the system

Central authorities should focus their efforts on two interrelated activities:
1. Investing in internal accountability
2. Projecting and protecting the system

The best approach for securing accountability is to develop conditions that maximize “internal accountability” and reinforce internal accountability with external accountability. The more that internal accountability thrives, the greater the responsiveness to external requirements and the less the externals have to do.

Successful systems establish strong degrees of internal accountability that serve them well in the external accountability arena.

The perspective of locals: Successful systems establish strong degrees of internal accountability that serve them well in the external accountability arena.