Leader Keys Effectiveness System Fact Sheets
Table of Contents

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"Making Education Work for All Georgians"

Fact Sheet #1 – LKES Implementation Procedures
THE LEADER KEYS EFFECTIVENESS SYSTEM

During the 2012-13 school year, as part of the Race to the Top Initiative (RT3), Georgia will implement the Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES), a common effectiveness system that will allow the state to ensure consistency and comparability across districts, based on a common definition of leader effectiveness.[1] The Leader Keys Effectiveness System consists of three components which contribute to an overall Leader Effectiveness Measure (LEM): Leader Assessment on Performance Standards (LAPS), Governance and Leadership, and Student Growth and Academic Achievement.

LEADER ASSESSMENT ON PERFORMANCE STANDARDS (LAPS)

The LAPS component of LKES provides evaluators with a qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation method by which they can measure leader performance related to quality performance standards. LAPS will offer a balance between structure and flexibility. It is prescriptive in that it defines common purposes and expectations, thereby guiding effective practice. At the same time, it provides flexibility by allowing for creativity and individual leader initiative. The overarching goal of LKES LAPS is to support the continuous growth and development of each leader by monitoring, analyzing, and applying pertinent data compiled within a system of meaningful feedback. *For procedural purposes, the reference to leader will be used to include the role of principal and assistant principal throughout the fact sheets.*

Domains, Standards, and Indicators

LAPS uses a three-tiered approach to define the expectations for leader performance consisting of four domains, eight standards, and multiple sample performance indicators. The four domains and eight performance standards are:

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
1. Instructional Leadership
The leader fosters the success of all students by facilitating the development, communication, implementation, and evaluation of a shared vision of teaching and learning that leads to school improvement.
2. School Climate
The leader promotes the success of all students by developing, advocating, and sustaining an academically rigorous, positive, and safe school climate for all stakeholders.
ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP
3. Planning and Assessment
The leader effectively gathers, analyzes, and uses a variety of data to inform planning and decision-making consistent with established guidelines, policies, and procedures.
4. Organizational Management
The leader fosters the success of all students by supporting, managing, and overseeing the school's organization, operation, and use of resources.
HUMAN RESOURCES LEADERSHIP
5. Human Resources Management
The leader fosters effective human resources management through the selection, induction, support, and retention of quality instructional and support personnel.
6. Teacher/Staff Evaluation
The leader fairly and consistently evaluates school personnel in accordance with state and district guidelines and provides them with timely and constructive feedback focused on improved student learning.
PROFESSIONALISM AND COMMUNICATION
7. Professionalism
The leader fosters the success of students by demonstrating professional standards and ethics, engaging in continuous professional development, and contributing to the profession.
8. Communication and Community Relations
The leader fosters the success of all students by communicating and collaborating effectively with stakeholders.

Performance indicators provide examples of observable, tangible behaviors for each standard. That is, the performance indicators are examples of the types of performance that will occur if a standard is being successfully met. The list of performance indicators is not exhaustive, is not prescriptive and is not intended to be a checklist. Further, all leaders are not expected to demonstrate each performance indicator. An example of performance indicators for Standard 1 (Instructional Leadership) includes:

The leader:

1.1 Articulates a vision and works collaboratively with staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders to develop a mission and programs consistent with the district's strategic plan.

1.2 Analyzes current academic achievement data and instructional strategies to make appropriate educational decisions to improve classroom instruction, increase student achievement, and improve overall school effectiveness.

1.3 Uses student achievement data to determine school effectiveness and directs school staff to actively analyze data for improving results.

Performance Appraisal Rubrics

Leaders will be rated on the performance standards using performance appraisal rubrics. The performance rubric is a behavioral rating scale that guides evaluators in assessing *how well* a standard is performed. It states the measure of performance expected of leaders and provides a qualitative description of performance at each level. In some instances, quantitative terms are included to augment the qualitative description. The resulting performance appraisal rubric provides a clearly delineated step-wise progression, moving from highest to lowest levels of performance. Each level is intended to be qualitatively superior to all lower levels. The description provided in the *Proficient* level of the performance appraisal rubric is the

actual performance standard, thus *Proficient* is the expected level of performance. Leaders who earn an *Exemplary* rating must meet the requirements for the *Proficient* level and go beyond it. The performance appraisal rubric for Performance Standard 1 (Instructional Leadership) is shown below:

Exemplary *In addition to meeting the requirements for Proficient...*	Proficient *Proficient is the expected level of performance.*	Needs Development	Ineffective
The leader actively and continually employs innovative and effective leadership strategies that maximize student learning and result in a shared vision of teaching and learning that reflects excellence. *(Leaders rated Exemplary continually seek ways to serve as role models and collaborative leaders.)*	The leader consistently fosters the success of all students by facilitating the development, communication, implementation, and evaluation of a shared vision of teaching and learning that leads to school improvement.	The leader inconsistently fosters the success of students by facilitating the development, communication, implementation, **or** evaluation of a shared vision of teaching and learning that leads to school improvement.	The leader does not foster the success of all students by facilitating the development, communication, implementation, **or** evaluation of a shared vision of teaching and learning that leads to school improvement.

Documenting Performance

Self-Assessment: As part of the LAPS process, the self-assessment is to be completed by the leader on the GaDOE TLE Electronic Platform. It should be completed prior to the Pre-Evaluation Conference.

Performance Goal Setting: Leaders are responsible for setting two performance goals. They are encouraged to consider linking one of the goals to the school improvement plan. These goals should be created using SMART criteria; that is, they should be specific, measurable, appropriate, realistic, and time-bound. Leaders should complete the *Performance Goal Setting Form* in the GaDOE TLE Electronic Platform and submit it to their evaluator. The evaluator and leader should review the progress toward the goals. They should reflect on the effectiveness of the strategies selected for achieving the leader's goals and modify them as

needed. Evaluators will use progress towards performance goal attainment to inform their Mid-Year Formative Assessment, conference documentation, and annual Summative Assessment rating decisions.

Documentation of Practice: The leader is responsible for submitting documentation to the evaluator showing evidence related to each performance standard in the formative assessment and summative assessment as well as the two selected performance goals. Leaders may organize the material as they see fit. A sheet, *Examples of LKES Documentation,* is provided in the *LKES Handbook*, but the examples are not required documentation. The emphasis should be on the quality of work, not the quantity of material presented. Based on feedback from the formative assessment, leaders should submit additional documentation to their evaluators prior to the summative assessment.   All documentation should be maintained within the GaDOE TLE Electronic Platform.

Evaluators are free to maintain their own documentation (e.g., evaluator commentary, observations, walkthroughs, conference notes, running record) relative to the leader's performance. This type of evaluator documentation may come from a variety of sources such as informally observing the leader during meetings, watching his or her interactions with community members, and so forth. This type of documentation should be considered, along with the documentation provided by the leader, when making formative and summative assessments.

All documentation will be reviewed by the evaluator. Formative and summative assessment documentation and documentation for performance goals should be submitted through the GaDOE TLE Electronic Platform.

Rating Performance
Formative Assessment: Evaluators should make decisions about ratings on the eight performance standards based on all available evidence. For the LAPS portion of LKES, this will consist of documentation provided by the leader, as well as, relevant documentation collected by the evaluator. Evaluators will use the *Formative Assessment Form* to write comments and to provide a formative assessment rating on each of the eight performance standards using the performance appraisal rubrics. Evaluators are required to have a Mid-year Formative Assessment Conference with the leader.

Summative Assessment: After collecting multiple data throughout the school year, including data from the Climate Surveys and progress toward performance goals, evaluators will provide a summative assessment rating on each of the eight performance standards. Evaluators will use the *Summative Assessment Form* to evaluate performance on each standard using the performance appraisal rubric. By receiving a rating on each individual standard, the leader will be provided with a profile of his or her performance and effectiveness through the LAPS. Evaluators are required to have a Summative Assessment Conference with the leader.

In making judgments for the summative assessment on each of the eight leader performance standards, the evaluator should determine the **"totality of evidence and consistency of practice,"** based on progress toward attainment of the performance goals and all documentation of practice. In addition to the eight separate ratings, the leader will receive an overall LAPS score. *Exemplary* ratings are 3 points, *Proficient* ratings are 2 points, and *Needs Development* ratings are 1 point. *Ineffective* ratings have no point value. The LAPS rating will be weighted as 30% of the Leader Effectiveness Measure (LEM).

STUDENT GROWTH AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT
The second component of the Leader Keys Effectiveness System is Student Growth and

Academic Achievement. **This component includes three measures of performance.**

The first measure is for school wide data on student growth and performance in tested subjects. This component consists of a **Student Growth Percentile (SGP)** measure.

The second measure is **Achievement Gap Reduction**. An achievement gap is the difference in student performance between a focal group and a reference group. The goal of measuring achievement gap reduction is to focus attention on increasing the achievement of the focal group – the schools' lowest achieving students. An Achievement Gap Reduction would be a decrease in this achievement gap from one year to the next.

The third measure is for teacher performance of non-tested subjects. This component consists of GaDOE approved **Student Learning Objectives (SLO)** using district-identified achievement growth measures.

The aggregate measure of SLO performance for all non-tested courses taught in the school will be used to calculate the LEM.

During the pilot/full implementation year, the combined SLO and SGP performance will be weighted as 50% of the LEM for leaders.

GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Governance and Leadership is the third component of the Leader Keys Effectiveness System. This component consists of measures of student attendance, retention of effective teachers, and climate surveys.

Student Attendance and Retention of Effective Teachers

Student attendance and retention of effective teachers are two of the measures included in the leader's performance on the Governance and Leadership component. Student attendance data and data gathered on the leader's effectiveness in retention of effective teachers will be collected within the GaDOE TLE Electronic Platform. These data are considered indicators of leader effectiveness and will be used to inform the LAPS performance rating.

The GaDOE regularly collects data on student attendance. This data recording will continue to be updated throughout the pilot/full implementation year and will be used as a source of documentation informing Performance Standard 2, School Climate, in LAPS.

The retention of effective teachers will become a data source used as documentation informing Performance Standard 5, Human Resources Management, in LAPS. It will not be implemented as a data source until valid and reliable data is gathered on teacher effectiveness from the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System.

Climate Surveys

The surveys to be included in the Leader Keys Effectiveness System (LKES) process provide teacher and staff perceptions on items they have directly experienced. The surveys include the following:

- Certified Staff Perceptions of the Principal
- Non-Certified Staff Perception of the Principal
- Certified Staff Perception of the Assistant Principal
- Non-Certified Staff Perception of the Assistant Principal

The surveys contains questions that address each of the leader performance standards in the LAPS component of the effectiveness system.

Teachers and staff will take the survey independently using the GaDOE TLE Electronic Platform. The survey will be available in secure conditions outside the presence of the school leader. Survey responses will be anonymous to promote secure, honest feedback. There will be no option for comments.

Survey results will be reported to the evaluator and leader at the end of the survey window as a means of feedback and information on appropriate performance standards. Evaluators may conduct multiple surveys as needed. Survey results will be compiled within the GaDOE TLE Electronic Platform, or uploaded in the document library if a different survey is approved by GaDOE, and must be utilized as documentation so support annual performance ratings of the appropriate LAPS performance standards.

Leader Effectiveness Measure (LEM)
The LEM for each leader will be reported as a rating of *Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Development, or Ineffective*. The LEM will be calculated with percentages/weighting of the LKES components as follows:

- Leader Assessment on Performance Standards (LAPS) will be weighted 30% with the Climate Surveys serving as a required documentation source for the appropriate performance standards. Only the LAPS component will be used for Human Resources purposes during the 2012-2013 school year.
- Student Growth Percentiles (SGP) and Student Learning Objectives (SLO) will be weighted 50%. These two parts of the Student Growth and Academic Achievement component will be "hold harmless" for the 2012-2013 school year.
- Achievement Gap Reduction will be weighted 20%. This part of the Student Growth and Academic Achievement component will also be "hold harmless" for the 2012-2013 school year.

[1] Georgia Department of Education (n.d.) Great Teachers and Leaders. Retrieved from http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/DMGeTAPSument.aspx/RT3%20GREAT%20TEACHERS%20AND%20LEADERS.pdf

Fact Sheet #2 - Performance Standard 1: Instructional Leadership

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The leader fosters the success of all students by facilitating the development, communication, implementation, and evaluation of a shared vision of learning that leads to school improvement.

What does *instructional leadership* mean?
In general terms, instructional leadership is a focus on factors that promote and support teaching and learning.[1] Research indicates that instructional leaders do impact student achievement, though indirectly.[2] Thus, it behooves leaders to prioritize their instructional role as one of critical importance.

Effective instructional leaders focus their efforts on school improvement and student success. They do this in several ways: by creating a vision for the school community, by sharing leadership so that responsibilities are distributed, by leading a learning community, and by monitoring curriculum and instruction.

What does research say about instructional leadership?
Creating a Vision. Effective, forward-thinking leaders understand that creating a vision is at the heart of what they do; a first step that becomes the impetus through which all future decisions, goals, and dreams are funneled.[3] They also understand that if a vision is to reach fruition it must be inspiring enough to be embraced by others within the organization; it must become a shared vision.[4]

Principals of high achieving schools are clear about the school's vision and goals.[5] A shared vision helps guide all in the school community to the destination—student success and school improvement. From the vision, goals for learning are established. Buy-in to both the vision and the learning goals are important—the savvy leader understands this and seeks commitment from the school community.[6]

Various research studies on high-achieving schools find that principals play an important role in building and sustaining the school's vision. High-achieving schools have principals who: communicate to all that the school's most important mission is learning,[7] believe that established school goals are attainable,[8] and expect that both teachers and students can meet established goals.[9]

Sharing Leadership. Effective instructional leaders believe in sharing leadership. Sharing leadership is not to be confused with delegating responsibilities or garnering extra help. Rather, it can be defined broadly as "teachers' influence over and participation in school-wide decisions."[10] Effective principals understand the value of collaborative effort in successfully realizing the common vision.

They realize that in order to meet instructional goals, they need buy-in from the staff.[11] By sharing leadership, the principal acknowledges that everyone has important contributions to make. Further, providing opportunities for stakeholders to participate in decision-making about issues affecting them and that they are knowledgeable about, is an affirmation of the integral role they play in goal accomplishment.[12] Capitalizing on the leadership and instructional strengths of other staff members is smart leadership.

Research indicates that principals who tap the expertise of the school's teacher leaders are beneficiaries of the following:

- Teacher leaders positively affect change from the classroom when they inquire about school improvement and then participate in answering the question.[13]

- As teacher leaders work with principals toward school improvement, they provide valuable insights and ideas.[14]

- Teacher leaders willingly take on additional tasks and responsibilities that are not required of classroom teachers that benefit the school and other teachers within it.[15]

- Principals who develop and tap the expertise of teacher leaders and refocus their emphasis on learning throughout the school improvement effort are more successful than those who do not.[16]

Leading a Learning Community. Learning is a lifelong process. Effective principals take the lead in promoting professional growth and learning for both themselves and their staffs. Two primary functions around which schools are organized include: (1) teaching and learning, and (2) organizing for teaching and learning.[17] Communicating this focus to every stakeholder in the school community is a crucial leader responsibility.

Principals who prioritize student learning are successful.[18] Prioritizing student learning means paying attention to and communicating the importance of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. This is where leaders focus their instructional attention. It also means being visible in and around the school.[19] When staff see leaders out and about, interested in the daily goings-on, they see leaders who are engaged and involved.

In order to promote the practices that lead to effective teaching and mastery learning, leaders not only plan and organize professional development, they also participate in the process. They become learners alongside their staffs. Barth commented that the leader as learner "is critical because there is a striking connection between learning and collegiality."[20] Effective principals recognize the value of collaborative participation in the learning community as a way to build trust and collective responsibility, and to further the goal of improved student learning.[21]

Monitoring Curriculum and Instruction. Effective principals focus on curriculum and instruction. Monitoring teacher practice helps to identify instructional strengths and weaknesses. Leaders are aware of instructional practices in their school buildings, are knowledgeable about the curriculum standards, and ensure that they are taught.[22] Leaders trust their teachers to effectively implement instruction but visit classrooms regularly to observe the results of that instruction.[23]

In effective schools, leaders are able to judge the effectiveness of teaching and serve as role models for expected behaviors of school staff.[24] The emphasis on teaching and learning means that leaders consciously limit activities that diminish instructional time.[25] They allocate resources based on identified needs which may include: materials, staffing, and staff development.[26] They encourage teacher reflection regarding instructional practices and their impact on student achievement.[27]

Research related to leaders' roles in monitoring curriculum and instruction indicates the following: (1) both teachers and leaders believe it important that someone is positioned to guide the curriculum and to make decisions about staff development needs,[28] (2) effective leaders ensure continuity in the school instructional program,[29] and (3) leaders must spend time in classrooms to monitor instructional programs, curriculum implementation, and the quality of instructional practices.[30]

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Georgia Department of Education
Leader Keys Effectiveness System Fact Sheets

Leader Self-Assessment Checklist					
Performance Standard 1: Instructional Leadership					
Quality		Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
Creating a Vision	Creates a shared vision for the school.				
	Establishes learning goals from the vision.				
	Communicates that learning is the most important school goal.				
	Believes goals are attainable.				
	Expects teachers and students to attain goals.				
Sharing Leadership	Seeks goal attainment through individual and group effort.				
	Provides opportunities for stakeholders to participate in decision-making.				
	Taps the expertise of the school's teacher leaders.				
	Develops collaborative opportunities among teachers.				
Leading a Learning Community	Prioritizes student learning.				
	Focuses instructional attention on curriculum, instruction, and assessment.				
	Promotes and plans professional growth for self and staff.				
	Learns alongside and with faculty.				
Monitoring Curriculum and Instruction	Monitors teacher practice and student learning through regular classroom visits.				
	Serves as a role model for expected behaviors of school staff.				
	Limits activities that diminish instructional time.				
	Ensures continuity in the school instructional program.				

Fact Sheet #3 - Performance Standard 2: School Climate

SCHOOL CLIMATE

The leader promotes the success of all students by developing, advocating, and sustaining an academically rigorous, positive, and safe school climate for all stakeholders.

What does *school climate* mean?

In general terms, school climate refers to the "social and working relationships of staff and administrators."[1] When you enter the school's front office, how does it feel? As you walk down the halls, what behaviors do you notice? What is the energy level of teachers and students in classrooms? Does the school community work as a team? All of these questions relate to school climate. These and many other factors affect the climate in a school.

School climate affects everyone in the school community. Enlisting the support of all stakeholders is an important first step on the road to establishing and maintaining a positive climate. Since school climate influences student outcomes, staff satisfaction, and overall school morale, leaders should identify and implement practices that foster a positive climate.

What does research say about school climate?

The Leader's Role. School climate and student performance are linked. A positive school climate focused on student learning is correlated to student achievement.[2] Successful schools have a school climate that is significantly more positive than their less successful counterparts.[3] Since leaders play a pivotal role in fostering and sustaining school climate, it behooves them to concentrate effort in this area.[4] To maintain a positive school climate, leaders should:

- Enlist the assistance of school community members (students, parents, staff, and community members) in helping to create a safe and positive learning environment.[5]

- Model respect and high expectations for all community members.[6]

- Share decision-making to maintain high school morale.[7]

- Maintain a current crisis and conflict action plan and implement it as necessary.[8]

- Cultivate a positive learning environment by using knowledge of the school community (social, cultural, leadership, and political dynamics).[9]

The Stakeholder's Role. Stakeholder involvement in school success is well-documented. Kythreotis and Pashiartis note that positive parent-school relations are one of 10 factors in successful school leadership.[10] Building professional relationships between school leaders and staff is one of the critical leader responsibilities cited by Marzano and colleagues in a meta-analysis of school leadership research.[11] Parent and community outreach is identified by Cotton as an essential trait of effective leaders.[12] Effective leaders build positive relations between the parent and the school, build professional relationships with the staff, and provide outreach to parents and the greater community.

The research surrounding leader and stakeholder involvement in school climate indicates the following:

- Leaders possess the authority, power, and position to impact school climate.[13]

- A positive relationship that exists between school climate and leadership affects overall school effectiveness.[14]

- Fundamentally important to establishing and maintaining school success is the

importance of stakeholder involvement and relationship building.[15]

Trust. Trust is a precursor to success in any relationship—be it organizational or individual. If members of a school community are distrustful of others' motives and actions, that community will most certainly fail. Moreover, anxiety, isolation, and estrangement are correlated with the absence of trust.[16] The effective school leader leads from a position of trust—modeled and fostered daily in the school environment.[17] Leaders desiring a trustful environment can cultivate one by sharing information, power, and decision-making with teachers.[18]

Everyone in the organization benefits when trust abounds. Schools with high levels of trust are more open to new ideas, more likely to reach out to the community, and commit to organizational goals.[19] Teachers demonstrate greater professionalism when leaders evidence trust and when they adopt a professional rather than a bureaucratic orientation.[20] Students are the recipients of higher levels of teacher trust when trust is a prevailing culture trait within a school faculty.[21]

Multiple studies indicate that increased collaboration, improved academic productivity, and risk-tolerant climates are positively associated with trust in schools.[22] As is evidenced by the research base, trust between members of a school community benefits all members.

Shared Leadership. As the role of the principal has evolved from being primarily managerial to both managerial and instructional, duties and responsibilities have increased. In order to meet the demands of the job it is increasingly necessary to share leadership. Paradoxically, when leaders give power away they oftentimes become more powerful.[23] This enables them to narrow their focus and concentration to factors that contribute directly to school effectiveness.

Shared leadership has been defined as "multiple sources of guidance and direction, following the contours of expertise in an organization, made coherent through a common culture."[24] In essence, shared leadership results in the creation of multiple leaders within a school. It affects leaders and stakeholders in different ways.

For the leader, it lightens the load and provides support. For the stakeholder, it highlights the important role that everyone has in guiding and directing the school community toward the vision and goals. When decision-making becomes a team effort, the leader is more fully able to act as diagnostician and facilitator—identifying issues and resources necessary to address the issues.[25] With this structure, the leader does not relinquish responsibility, rather he/she promotes others, encourages shared decision-making, and builds relationships.[26] All of this contributes to a positive school climate.

The research surrounding school climate and shared leadership includes these findings:

- In effective schools, leaders distribute administrative tasks and create multiple leaders.[27]

- Shared leadership has a positive effect on school improvement and reading achievement.[28]

- Shared leadership has a positive effect on school improvement and math achievement.[29]

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Leader Self-Assessment Checklist					
Performance Standard 2: School Climate					
Quality		Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
Fostering and Sustaining Climate	Cultivates a positive environment focused on student learning.				
	Models respect and high expectations for all community members.				
	Shares decision making to maintain high morale in the school.				
	Maintains a current crisis and conflict action plan and implements it as necessary.				
	Fosters and sustains a positive school climate by seeking assistance from community members.				
Building Relationships	Builds professional relationships between school leaders and staff.				
	Builds positive relations between parents and the school.				
	Provides outreach to parents and the greater community.				
Developing Trust	Cultivates a trusting environment by sharing information, power, and decision-making with teachers.				
	Remains open and amenable to new ideas from all members of the school community.				
	Reaches out to the larger community to build and sustain trust.				
Sharing Leadership	Develops multiple leaders within the school.				
	Distributes administrative tasks among school faculty.				
	Facilitates shared decision making between staff members.				
	Regularly reviews school programs.				

Fact Sheet #4 - Performance Standard 3: Planning and Assessment

PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT

The leader effectively gathers, analyzes, and uses a variety of data to inform planning and decision-making consistent with established guidelines, policies, and procedures.

What do *planning and assessment* mean?
In general terms, planning is the "act or process of making or carrying out plans."[1] Assessment is "the act of making a judgment about something."[2] Careful planning and thoughtful assessment make realizing the school's vision and goals attainable.

Effective school leaders realize the important role planning plays in successful daily operations. Likewise, planning is essential if long range goals that reflect the school's vision are to be met. Leaders make time for both daily planning and long-range planning. When adequate planning occurs, and the outcomes of the planning are disseminated to and supported by appropriate stakeholders, the school runs like a well-oiled machine—both functionally and academically.

What does research say about planning and assessment?
Planning Affects other Key Areas of Responsibility. In a meta-analysis of 70 studies, Waters, Marzano and McNulty found that effective leadership is comprised of 21 key areas of responsibility.[3] Each of these areas is positively correlated to higher levels of student achievement. Many of these 21 areas require planning for fruition. For instance, one of the key areas of responsibility is *order*. To help maintain order, effective leaders establish a set of standard operating procedures and routines. These procedures do not materialize on their own. They are the result of planning.

The importance of planning in both daily operations and long-range goal attainment cannot be underestimated. Likewise, consider the key area of responsibility that is *discipline*. To maintain discipline, effective leaders

establish procedures that protect teachers "from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus."[4] Without planning, creating and implementing these procedures would be impossible. As evidenced, efficient and comprehensive planning is an essential skill of effective leaders.

Using Data in Planning. Making use of student data to improve student outcomes is an important organizational management responsibility of a school leader. Successful schools use assessment data to measure student progress in meeting instructional goals and to drive improvement.[5] Cawelti and Protheroe studied six school districts serving at-risk school populations. They found that students increased performance on state tests after districts started disaggregating data and developing lessons to address learning deficits.[6]

Successful schools, which have increased student achievement, use multiple sources of data and track the progress of individual students over time.[7] This gives them a more complete picture of students as learners, their areas of strength and their areas for growth. Monitoring data on a frequent basis can have a positive impact on student achievement.[8] Reeves asserts that asking these questions about the data is relevant in moving toward vision attainment:

- What percentage of a group of students is proficient now, compared to a year ago?

- What percentage of our students has gained one or more grade levels in reading when we compare their scores today to their scores a year ago?

- Of those students who were not proficient a year ago, what percentage are now proficient?

- Of those students who were proficient a year ago, what percentage are now advanced?[9]

School Improvement Planning and Assessment. Effective leaders realize the value of long-range planning.[10] In most school systems, this planning is formalized into a process. Often called school improvement planning, it is a collaborative effort of the school improvement team. The use of data to inform instructional planning and collaboration is essential to this planning process.

Once data is analyzed, the school improvement team develops the plan, oversees its implementation, and monitors the implementation. This cycle of continuous improvement is identified as characteristic of successful school leaders.[11] Marzano and colleagues identified a correlation between monitoring the effectiveness of school programs and their impact on student learning with student academic achievement. Monitoring student progress, sharing findings, and using those findings for program improvement are also key findings from Cotton's research on effective leaders.[12] Additionally, Cotton further elaborated on different ways effective principals use the achievement data. These include:

- Effective principals ensure their teachers track student progress and improvement.

- Effective principals of culturally or socioeconomically diverse schools disaggregate achievement data to determine both academic performance and instructional needs of particular groups.

- Effective principals establish procedures for disseminating the results to parents and community members.

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Leader Self-Assessment Checklist				
Performance Standard 3: Planning and Assessment				
Quality		Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
Planning for Instruction	Establishes and implements standard operating procedures and routines.				
	Demonstrates efficient daily planning resulting in smooth school operations.				
	Develops comprehensive long-range plans focused on goal attainment.				
	Monitors effectiveness of school programs.				
Planning for Learning	Ensures data is disaggregated so that lessons are planned to address learning deficits.				
	Uses data to inform collaboration efforts to maximize learning.				
	Uses multiple sources of data to track the progress of individual students over time.				
	Uses multiple sources of student data to maximize student outcomes.				
Assessing for Learning	Uses assessment data to measure student progress in meeting instructional goals.				
	Uses assessment data to determine instructional needs of particular groups within the school.				
	Uses assessment data to drive school improvement.				
	Establishes procedures for disseminating student results to parents and community members.				

Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
"Making Education Work for All Georgians"

Fact Sheet #5 - Performance Standard 4: Organizational Management

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The leader fosters the success of all students by supporting, managing, and overseeing the school's organization, operation, and use of resources.

What does *organizational management* mean?
In general terms, organizational management pertains to those responsibilities relating to the functioning of the school. These include but are not limited to: (1) coordinating a safe and orderly school environment, daily operations, and facility maintenance; (2) using data in organizational management; (3) seeking and managing fiscal resources; and (4) organizing and managing technology resources.[1]

What does research say about organizational management?
Organizational management is a primary responsibility of the school leader. A smoothly functioning school requires a leader's focused time and effort on those factors that keep it running so. More than anything else, the school must first be a safe and positive learning environment for all. School leaders are charged to ensure this.[2] However, they have other duties and responsibilities.

They use data to inform decisions and to plan strategies for school improvement. School leaders are also responsible for budgetary matters pertaining to the school. And, in more and more schools, technology plays a central role in teaching and learning. Leaders must organize and manage their technology resources. If a school is to function efficiently and effectively, careful thought and committed time must be allocated to each of these areas.

School Safety, Daily Operations, and Facility Maintenance. The effective leader addresses each of these three areas, realizing they can impact a smoothly functioning school. Each is addressed in turn.

School Safety. A school leader prioritizes safety of students and staff above all else. Routines and procedures are created and implemented to ensure a safe, orderly, and positive environment. In their meta-analysis of 69 empirical studies on school leadership, Marzano and colleagues identified order as one of 21 responsibilities of leaders. More specifically, they noted evidenced behaviors to include:

- Established routines regarding orderly school operations, which are understood and followed by staff.

- Established structures, rules, and procedures, provided and reinforced to the staff.

- Established structures, rules, and procedures, provided and reinforced to the students.[3]

Likewise, Cotton's research confirms that maintenance of a safe and orderly school environment is a priority of effective principals.[4] Cotton found that effective principals have behavior policies that are established with solicited input from staff and students. They set clear expectations for student behavior. Discipline is fairly and consistently enforced. Finally, teachers are granted authority to maintain the established discipline policies. Additionally, Cotton noted that crisis management plans are in place and current, and a trained school crisis management team is on board and ready to handle situations effectively.

Daily Operations and Facility Management. Leaders complete a wide range of tasks on any given day. Some may seem unrelated to student outcomes. However, Lashway contends that even mundane tasks can affect student outcomes.[5] For instance, heating and cooling problems can certainly affect classrooms and

student learning. It behooves the leader to keep the school running efficiently so that maximum learning occurs.

Master schedules, usually an administrative task, can impact student learning outcomes. Thoughtful and careful consideration while scheduling can result in more time for instruction.[6] Scheduling that maximizes blocks of instructional time and decreases wasted time is beneficial to all. Building in co-teaching opportunities benefits both students with special needs and others, as teaching capacity is doubled. More needs can be met when leaders include key personnel in the collaborative creation of a master schedule.[7]

Seeking and Managing Fiscal Resources. The school leader is charged with responsible management of resources. This requires a thorough understanding of local school board and state policy.[8] It also requires a cycle of actions to plan and oversee the budget.

Resources include materials—books and equipment—but also included in the definition are opportunities for staff development and professional collaboration.[9] Sometimes managing resources requires creativity to maximize teaching and learning. Research indicates that:

- Effective school leaders use resources creatively to improve teaching and learning.[10]

- Strong organizational managers are effective in allocating budgets and resources.[11]

- Schools showing academic improvement are more likely to have strong organizational managers.[12]

Organizing and Managing Technology Resources. As schools increase technology capabilities and applications, leaders are expected to organize and manage those resources effectively. Leaders must concern themselves with technology issues related to instructionally appropriate allocation, equity, sustainability, and training. To facilitate student learning and staff productivity, technology must be accessible and in working order. In addition, smart school leaders hire technology staff who fully understand how best to capitalize on and exploit technology use for teaching and learning.

In a case study of 14 schools implementing technology use in both reading and math, schools that achieved learning gains with technology were characterized in this way:[13]

- Schools provided support for implementation.

- Instructional vision between leaders and teachers concerning how best to implement software use was consistent.

- Principal support included scheduling access to equipment and collaborative planning time for teachers to co-learn about the technology.

- Teachers collaborated and supported one another on the use of the technology.

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Leader Self-Assessment Checklist					
Performance Standard 4: Organizational Management					
Quality		Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
School Safety	Prioritizes safety of students and staff above all else.				
	Creates and implements routines and procedures to ensure a safe, orderly, and positive environment.				
	Sets clear expectations for student behavior.				
	Enforces discipline fairly and consistently.				
	Grants teachers the authority to maintain the established discipline policies.				
	Maintains a current crisis management plan.				
	Ensures a trained school crisis management team is on board and prepared.				
Daily Operations and Facility Maintenance	Develops a master schedule that maximizes blocks of instructional time.				
	Includes key personnel in the collaborative creation of a master schedule.				
	Ensures the efficiency of school operations and routine maintenance.				
Seeking and Managing Fiscal Resources	Understands local and state school board fiscal policies.				
	Reviews previous budgets.				
	Creates an annual budget.				
	Manages and allocates resources responsibly by setting expense priorities.				
Organizing and Managing Technology Resources	Ensures technology training is provided to teachers.				
	Ensures technology is accessible and in working order for students and staff.				
	Ensures instructionally appropriate allocation, equity, and sustainability of technology.				

Fact Sheet #6 - Performance Standard 5: Human Resources Management

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

The leader fosters effective human resources management through selection, induction, support, and retention of quality instructional and support personnel.

What does *human resources management* mean?

In general terms, human resources management encompasses "selecting quality teachers and staff, inducting and supporting new teachers, mentoring novice teachers, providing professional growth opportunities, and retaining quality staff."[1]

What does research say about human resources management?

Effective leaders understand that one of their most important responsibilities is the selection, induction, support, evaluation, and retention of quality instructional and staff personnel.[2] They also understand that supporting, affirming, and finding opportunities for teachers and staff to grow professionally affects the bottom line, student achievement.[3] Targeting the right people to the right position is critical, and effective leaders take this responsibility seriously.[4]

As stated by Horng and Loeb, "school leaders can have a tremendous effect on student learning through the teachers they hire, how they assign those teachers to classrooms, how they retain teachers, and how they create opportunities for teachers to improve."[5]

A study by Beteille, Kalogrides, and Loeb found that:

- School leaders' organizational management practices - particularly in the area of personnel management - appear to play a critical role in improving schools.

- Effective schools retain higher-quality teachers and remove lower-quality teachers.

- Teachers who work in more effective schools improve more rapidly than do those in less effective ones.[6]

Selection. Taking the time to make careful personnel selection decisions pays dividends later on. The principal's impact on school effectiveness may be indirect, but selecting quality teachers has a direct effect on student outcomes. Equally important is the careful selection of support staff. Portin and colleagues note that principals in their study talked about the impact of support staff on the climate of the school.[7]

A study of 90/90/90 school principals is illustrative. These schools are composed of a student body of at least 90% minority, 90% receive free or reduced lunch, and the passing rate on standardized achievement tests is 90% or better. One of the factors cited in beating the odds is their "mindful allocation of staffing resources."[8] Setting schools up for success means leaders staff their schools with quality instructional and staff personnel. Such is the case at these schools.

Additional findings from various research studies indicate:

- Leaders trained in research-based hiring practices are more likely to use those practices in teacher interviews and selection. Practices include: multiple interviewers, prepared questions, and scoring rubrics.[9]

- Effective leaders understand the school district's hiring system and use this knowledge to acquire the best qualified people for the positions they seek to fill.[10]

Induction and Support. Quality induction programs positively impact teacher retention.[11] "*Induction* is the process of systematically training and supporting new teachers, beginning before the first day of school and continuing through the first two or three years of teaching."[12] Principals have an important role to play in fostering and sustaining these programs. With high teacher turnover rates showing no signs of abatement, the savvy principal provides as much systematic training and support to teachers as is needed throughout induction. Wong outlines overarching objectives of induction programs.[13] These objectives include: (1) easing the transition into teaching, (2) improving classroom management and instruction, (3) promoting the district's culture, and (4) increasing teacher retention rate.

In a review of 15 research studies on induction programs, Ingersoll and Strong identified several interesting findings:[14]

- Beginning teachers who participate in induction have higher satisfaction, commitment, or retention than those who do not participate.

- Beginning teachers who participate in induction have more on-task students and viable lesson plans than those who do not participate.

- Beginning teachers who participate in induction are more likely to use effective student questioning practices and are more likely to adjust classroom activities to meet students' interests than those who do not participate.

- Beginning teachers who participate in induction are more likely to maintain a positive classroom atmosphere and demonstrate successful classroom management than those who do not participate.

- Beginning teachers who participate in induction have students with higher test scores or demonstrate greater gains on academic achievement tests than those who do not participate.

There are practices that leaders can adopt that reduce new teacher turnover rates.[15] Smith and Ingersoll culled data from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), administered by the National Center for Education Statistics. The statistics included all beginning teachers in the United States during the 1999-2000 academic year. Several factors appeared to affect turnover and retention rates.

Researchers found that matching mentors and mentees by teaching specialty—subject or grade level—appeared to reduce turnover rate. Establishing a common planning time for collaboration was effective in reducing turnover. Finally, being part of an external network of teachers also reduced turnover. It behooves leaders to keep these ideas in mind as they work to induct and support new teachers. Providing a culture of support where new teachers are supported by all staff can reduce new teacher attrition.[16]

Evaluation. The research on this topic is addressed in the fact sheet titled, "Teacher/Staff Evaluation."

Retention. Approximately one-third of new teachers leave teaching during their first three years of teaching.[17] Within five years, one-half of new teachers leave the field. Providing an induction program and support for new teachers helps to reduce that rate and keeps new teachers in the classroom.[18] Leaders can impact teacher loss in their schools. Supporting a systematic induction program is beneficial and a win-win strategy for all involved.

Marshall and Klotz identify specific actions principals can take to support new teachers.[19] The first three goals focus on the school and the district. Mentors, supported by leaders, help new teachers to: (1) become familiar with the

school's culture, traditions, and rituals; (2) learn more about the community's goals for education; and (3) gain insight into district and school policies and procedures. Instructionally, leaders support new teachers by: (1) assisting with instructional issues, such as helping new teachers learn to adjust delivery based on student need; (2) helping new teachers build more skill in challenging students to think on a higher level and providing higher-level learning experiences; and (3) assisting and supporting new teachers as they develop the necessary skills needed to collect, analyze, and apply data instructionally to increase student learning.

Leaders also support new teachers by: (1) encouraging and helping them to integrate new technologies to enhance instruction; (2) supporting and encouraging ongoing collaborative efforts within and among grade levels and subject areas; and (3) educating and supporting new teachers so that their instruction is aligned with state and national standards thereby ensuring students are taught what will be tested.

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Leader Self-Assessment Checklist				
Performance Standard 5: Human Resources Management				
Quality		Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
Selection	Understands the school district's hiring plans and uses them to the school's advantage.				
	Selects competent and capable teachers/support staff.				
	Uses research-based hiring practices to include: multiple interviewers, prepared questions, and scoring rubrics.				
Induction and Support	Fosters and sustains the induction program.				
	Matches mentors and mentees by teaching specialty − subject or grade level − where practical.				
	Identifies new teachers' strengths and weaknesses.				
	Provides systematic training and support to teachers throughout induction.				
	Provides a culture of support where new teachers are supported by all staff.				
Retention	Supports innovation and risk-taking.				
	Works to retain quality staff.				
	Ensures working conditions are positive.				
	Supports and encourages ongoing collaborative efforts.				

Fact Sheet #7 - Performance Standard 6: Teacher/Staff Evaluation

TEACHER/STAFF EVALUATION

The leader fairly and consistently evaluates school personnel in accordance with state and district guidelines and provides them with timely and constructive feedback focused on improved student learning.

What does *teacher/staff evaluation* mean?
In general terms, teacher/staff evaluation is "the ability to judge and evaluate teacher (staff - added) effectiveness."[1]

What does research say about teacher/staff evaluation?
The two major purposes of teacher/staff evaluation are professional growth and performance accountability. Though viewed by some as mutually exclusive, Stronge argues that:

> there is room in evaluation systems for both accountability and performance improvement purposes. Indeed, evaluation systems that reflect both accountability and personal growth dimensions are not only desirable, but also necessary for evaluation to productively serve the needs of individuals and the community at large.[2]

The National Education Policy Center advocates an evaluation system that targets both continual improvement of the teaching staff and timely dismissal of teachers who cannot or will not improve."[3] An effective system meets both of these objectives.

Good Practices. If teacher evaluation is to benefit teachers, leaders must consider ways to improve the evaluation process so that it is marked by quality characteristics.[4] These characteristics include: positive climate, clear communications, teachers/staff and leaders committed to the evaluation, and practices that are technically sound.

One of these characteristics is a positive climate. A positive climate is one characterized by mutual trust. Evaluation "conducted in an environment that fosters mutual trust between evaluator (representing the institution) and evaluatees holds the greatest potential for benefiting both parties."[5] A second characteristic is clear communication between teachers and leaders during the evaluative process. Two-way communications, where both parties are encouraged and able to share ideas and interpretations, fosters mutual understanding. Mutual understanding leads to evaluations focused on growth and accountability.

Leaders and teachers committed to teacher evaluation is a third quality characteristic that can improve a teacher evaluation process. When leaders are committed to the teacher evaluation system and prioritize their commitment, the evaluation process becomes a vehicle for teacher growth and improvement. Everyone benefits from this commitment.

Since effective achers impact student achievement, a teacher evaluation system that improves teacher effectiveness can serve as a tool for increasing student achievement. Leaders can demonstrate this priority by setting aside time and focusing attention on the evaluative process and by allocating resources that support the evaluation system and teacher improvement practices.[6]

Finally, leaders should ensure their evaluative practices are technically sound. This means leaders participate in training to build knowledge and understanding of the teacher/staff evaluation system.[7] They commit to the process.

Research related to these quality characteristics is summarized:

- Teachers/staff who participate more fully in the evaluation conference are more satisfied with both the conference and the leader than those who participate less.[8]

- More trustworthy relationships are built by leaders who balance caring and high expectations than relationships characterized by high caring and low expectations or low caring and high expectations. Balance is key.[9]

- Teacher involvement at every level of the evaluation process is a requirement for an effective evaluation system.[10]

Documentation. Multiple data sources inform understanding in every context. Teacher/staff evaluation is no different. Using multiple data sources or measurement tools increases information about teacher/staff effectiveness and thus provides a more fully rounded picture of teacher/staff levels of competency. Moreover, the use of different measurement tools can offset weaknesses found in others. Evaluation tools that are used without proper training can impact the validity of an evaluation.[11]

Teacher observation is the measurement tool used most often by leaders during the teacher evaluation process. A study of measurement tools by Goe, Bell, and Little identified both strengths and weaknesses. Observations are feasible and can provide useful information. However, observations provide limited information because of the narrow focus on instructional delivery and classroom management. The whole of teachers' work— e.g., instructional planning, student assessment, professional development—is left unexamined.[12] The National Education Policy Center advocates multiple measures to include: classroom observation, instructional artifacts, portfolios, teacher self-reports, student surveys, and value-added assessment.[13] Though each has strengths and weaknesses, when combined, they can provide a holistic view of teacher/staff performance. This, in turn, provides the leader

with both quantitative and qualitative data to fully inform the evaluation product.

District Guidelines. Effective school leaders understand the district guidelines of the personnel evaluation system. The following are research findings related to evaluation:

- School leaders affect student learning primarily by hiring and supporting high-quality teachers and staff.[14]

- Effective leaders hire, support, and retain good teachers while removing less-effective teachers.[15]

- School leaders' abilities in performing evaluation affect the ability to remove teachers due to incompetence.[16]

- Remediating or removing low-performing teachers is the responsibility of the school leader.[17]

- Effective leaders continue to document deficiencies while working to help struggling teachers so that they have the necessary documentation should dismissal become necessary.[18]

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Leader Self-Assessment Checklist				
Performance Standard 6: Teacher/Staff Evaluation				
Quality		Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
Communication	Fosters mutual trust between the evaluator and the teacher being evaluated.				
	Encourages two-way communications where both parties share ideas and interpretations.				
	Focuses on growth and accountability.				
	Participates in both formal and informal conferences.				
Documentation	Uses multiple data sources to document standards.				
	Conducts both formal and informal observations.				
	Offers feedback following observations.				
	Uses evaluation as a means to remediate or remove low-performing or unsatisfactory teachers.				
Legal Considerations	Adheres to district guidelines regarding teacher evaluation.				
	Documents adherence to designated standards.				
	Maintains objectivity during the evaluation process.				
	Describes existing deficiencies clearly.				
	Offers remediation actions for identified deficiencies.				

Fact Sheet #8 - Performance Standard 7: Professionalism

Professionalism

The leader fosters the success of students by demonstrating professional standards and ethics, engaging in continuous professional development, and contributing to the profession.

What does *professionalism* mean?
In general terms, professionalism is defined as "the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person."[1]

What does research say about professionalism?
School leaders set the standard for professionalism in the school building and the community. This includes demonstrating professional standards and engaging in ethical behavior. As role models for teachers and staff, they engage in continuous professional development and contribute to the profession.

Wurtzel outlines tenets of professionalism and applies them to teachers. They are equally appropriate in describing principal professionalism. A professional:

- owes his/her primary duty to their clients;

- is accountable to the profession for results;

- has a duty to improve his/her own practice;

- has a duty to improve common or collective practice in the profession;

- adheres to a body of specialized knowledge, agreed-upon standards of practice, and specific protocols for performance; and

- is expected to exercise professional judgment.[2]

Professional Standards. The school leader has numerous duties and responsibilities; they continue to increase and change rapidly. The job has become increasingly complex. Compounding this complexity are the national, state and local accrediting and governing bodies that have each established their own performance standards and guiding principles. The result is multiple standards which can confuse or even contradict one another.[3]

Leading performance standards for the principalship (school leaders) should support and complement the multi-faceted role of school leaders. The Leader Assessment on Performance Standards and the 2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards are complementary. Moreover, the Leader Assessment on Performance Standards and Council of Chief State School Officers standards are also complementary. When school leaders adhere to and demonstrate the professional standards set forth in the Georgia Leader Keys Effectiveness System they can be assured that they are practicing professionalism and acting as role models to the school and larger community.

Ethical Behavior. School leaders serve as role models, providing the moral purpose for their schools.[4] Moral purpose can be defined as "social responsibility to others and the environment."[5] In an educational environment, the school leader has a responsibility to students, staff, and the larger school community. First and foremost is the responsibility to behave ethically.

A survey of 180 K-12 educators found a correlation between effective leadership and ethical decision making. Survey respondents ranked honesty and integrity as the most important characteristics educators value in leaders.[6] Effective principals are fair and honest, have integrity, and expect to demonstrate ethical behavior.[7] They share their ethical beliefs with faculty, staff, parents, and students.[8]

Professional Development. To hone skills and continue to evolve in the highly skilled profession of school principalship requires continuous professional development. In a study that focused on why good principals stay in the profession, professional development was key.[9] These principals viewed and described themselves as life-long learners.

When comparing effective professional development programs with those that are less so, LaPointe and Davis found that effective principals attended more professional development and found the sessions to be more helpful. They were also more likely to attend professional development along with their teachers, and were almost twice as likely to make visits to other schools. These principals were also more likely to participate in development networks with other principals, to mentor other principals, and to be willing to observe and critique fellow principals.[10]

Research findings about principal professional development includes:

- Effective principals recognize the importance of professional development.[11]

- Effective principals participate in a variety of professional development activities. These include attending conferences, networking with others, mentoring other principals, and observing other principals.[12]

- Research-based professional development programs providing what principals need to be successful are now available.[13]

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Leader Self-Assessment Checklist					
Performance Standard 7: Professionalism					
Quality		Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
Professional Standards	Adheres to and demonstrates the professional standards set forth in the Georgia Leader Keys Effectiveness System .				
Ethical Behavior	Serves as a role model for ethical behavior.				
	Shares ethical beliefs with faculty, staff, parents, and students.				
	Carries out duties with competence and integrity.				
Professional Development	Views professional development as ongoing and continuous.				
	Participates in a variety of professional development opportunities.				
	Networks with other principals to provide support.				
	Willingly participates in peer observations.				
	Visits other schools.				

Fact Sheet #9 - Performance Standard 8: Communication and Community Relations

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The leader fosters the success of all students by communicating and collaborating effectively with stakeholders.

What does *communication and community relations* mean?

In general terms, communication and community relations "consists of staff members' personal relations with colleagues, students, parents, and the larger community."[1]

What does research say about communication and community relations?

Communicating clearly and establishing strong relations with the community are critical school leader responsibilities. Increasingly, leaders find themselves not only responsible to faculty, staff and students but also responsible to parents, policy makers, and the larger community. Effective leaders unite these various stakeholders into a cohesive group moving toward the same quality goal - educating children and raising student performance.[2]

One of the ways they do this is through relationship building and effective communications. Effective leaders understand they do not act in a vacuum; they realize the importance of bringing stakeholders into the mix in a collaborative decision-making model. Moreover, they reach out to stakeholders on a continual basis.[3]

Effective Communication. Effective school leaders foster communication with, and between all school constituents on an ongoing basis.[4] They realize they do not have all the answers. They are good listeners and value the opportunity to hear alternate views on topics.

Today's technologies offer an array of communication possibilities and opportunities.[5] Porterfield and Carnes advocate the use of both traditional and new media to open the lines of communication to build parent and community

trust. They offer five suggestions for improving communications: [6]

(1) Make communications planning a top priority.

Communication planning should be a consideration whenever new programs are designed, test dates changed, or rules revised. Questions leaders should ask themselves are: (a) Who should know about these changes? and (b) How do we assure they know? The answers to these questions ensure that all the affected parties are identified and a plan for communicating changes is in place. In other words, the authors advocate school leaders, "get out ahead of the story, put your frame around it, and plan ahead."[7]

(2) Leave the office and network with others.

Networking builds relationships by increasing mutual understanding. It can include being available to news agencies, attending committee meetings of special groups (e.g. special education and gifted education), breakfasting with PTA officers, and meeting with faculty liaison groups. This demonstrates that the leader values these groups and is anxious to listen to their viewpoints and issues of concern.

(3) Be aware of the different audiences served.

School leaders serve varied constituencies. They have different interests and concerns. Do not lump all parents into one category; they are not monolithic. Ensure that employees are the first to hear of changes, they hear the whole story, and they understand fully the ramifications. Then enlist their support to market the changes to parents and community members.

(4) Invite naysayers to work with you.

Look for those who find fault. Enlist them in efforts to realize the vision. Listen to their arguments and try to appreciate their views. When critics are invited in and become familiar with the school environment, relationships are built and new understandings are often forged. This is a way to become a team rather than adversaries.

(5) Be strategic with available technology.

Become familiar with how the school community receives its information. Parents under 50 oftentimes get news from online sources rather than printed newspapers. Survey parents to find out and then focus communication efforts in these areas.

Communicating with Families. It behooves all school leaders to involve parents in the school community. Principals who reach out to involve parents and community members are more successful than others.[8] These principals articulate the school vision to parents.

In a series of focus groups and a nationally representative survey of 1,006 parents of current and recent high school students from urban, suburban, and rural communities, Bridgeland et al. note that among other findings: (1) high-performing schools do a better job of communicating with parents, (2) high-performing schools are more likely to be perceived as encouraging parental involvement, (3) parents of students in low-performing schools are much less likely than their peers to talk with their children's teachers, and (4) high-performing schools are more likely than low-performing schools to notify and engage parents if their child is having performance issues at school.[9]

A review of existing literature on parental involvement found that some types of involvement benefit the school directly:

- telling parents that their involvement and support greatly enhances their children's school progress;

- fostering parent involvement from the time that students first enter school;

- teaching parents that they are role models for reading behavior;

- developing parent programs that are focused on instruction;

- working to engage parents of disadvantaged students; and,

- emphasizing that parents are partners of the school and that the school values their involvement.[10]

Communicating with the Larger Community. School leaders serve as advocates of their schools. As such, it is their responsibility to "communicate a positive image of their school."[11] Support from mass media sources is important; therefore, leaders should develop positive relationships with various media outlets. According to a study by Brooking Institution, Americans want news coverage of their public schools. This means school leaders must "learn how to navigate the new digital new ecosystem."[12] Some of the suggestions include: developing relationships with journalists, creating in-house news networks focusing on positive school outcomes, and connecting local stories to national studies and trends. Reaching out to the media strengthens school vision and develops relationships undergirded by shared purpose and mutual support.[13]

Schools are part of a larger community network. Their effectiveness is in part influenced by these other agencies. School leaders can garner resources, enlist support, and form relationships that are mutually beneficial. Forming partnerships can assist in furthering the school vision to the larger community and can directly benefit students and teachers.

In a study of partnering benefits, two Ontario secondary schools heavily involved in community partnerships served as the sample. Conclusions drawn about partnering benefits include: (a) educators met the needs of their students and programs that could not be addressed in the school; (b) partnering provided material, financial, and social support; (c) principals obtained district resources unavailable to other schools; and (d) the schools' reputations within the communities were raised. Partnering with outside agencies can benefit students, teachers, programs, and participating agencies.[14]

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Leader Self-Assessment Checklist					
Performance Standard 8: Communications and Community Relations					
Quality		Exemplary	Proficient	Needs Development	Ineffective
Effective Communication	Ensures two-way, open communications with faculty and staff.				
	Listens to suggestions of faculty and staff.				
	Adopts suggestions of faculty and staff, when appropriate.				
	Makes communication planning a top priority.				
Communications with Parents and Families	Emphasizes the partnership between parents and the school community.				
	Involves parents in the school community.				
	Develops parent programs focused on instruction.				
	Works to engage parents of disadvantaged students who may not be active participants.				
	Uses both traditional and new media to open the lines of communication to build parent trust.				
Communication with Larger Community	Establishes relationships with the larger community that are mutually beneficial.				
	Uses both traditional and new media to open the lines of communication to build community trust.				
	Builds a positive relationship with the media.				