

Next Generation
Effectiveness Standards
for Kentucky School Superintendents

Prepared by
Kentucky Association of School Administrators
Design Team
for New Superintendent Leadership Series

In partnership with the
Kentucky Department of Education



Historical Overview

In 2011-12, the Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA) began administering the state-required training and testing of new superintendents. As that work progressed, the need to more clearly define expectations for the performance of new superintendents became critical. The ISLLC Standards for School Leaders are the most commonly used indicators across the state; however, these standards were first published by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in 1996 and were designed for school leaders at the building and district level, not specifically for superintendents. Furthermore, in response to a concerted effort across the nation to more clearly define teacher and principal effectiveness standards, KASA's Design Team for Onboarding New Superintendents asserted that a companion set of superintendent effectiveness standards focused on the emerging challenges of leading next-generation teaching and learning efforts are essential not only for new superintendents, but for experienced superintendents as well.

To that end, Kentucky's Commissioner of Education, Dr. Terry Holliday, sanctioned KASA's proposal to develop and pilot a set of superintendent effectiveness standards, beginning with the new superintendent training cohort of 2012-13.

Intent of the Standards

The Pilot Kentucky NxG Superintendent Effectiveness Standards are intended to serve as:

- a framework for understanding the many complex elements of a superintendent's work to help them focus on the most important aspects of their job;
- a roadmap for the ongoing professional growth and effectiveness of Kentucky's superintendents from career entry (required training for new superintendents) through career exit;
- a basis upon which support for new superintendents can be individualized based on demonstrated performance in particular standards and indicators; and
- the basis upon which the new superintendent's support team can make a determination about successful completion of the state's induction program.

The Kentucky Pilot Standards are intended to illustrate proficient performance on the part of a superintendent; they are not intended only for new superintendents. Inherent in the Pilot Standards is also the notion that no one individual will likely possess all of these competencies and skills; instead, it is important to recognize that the strengths of individuals on the superintendent's leadership team should ideally complement the other members' experiences and skills.

Organization of the Standards

These Kentucky Pilot Standards are organized and formatted as follows:

1. **Standard** — A broad heading of the superintendent's knowledge, skills, and abilities
2. **Summary** — A statement which describes the content and rationale of the standard
3. **Practices** — A statement which describes the evidence of what one would observe the superintendent doing to address each particular standard
4. **Artifacts** — A list of examples of potential sources of evidence for each standard
5. **Competencies** — A list of competencies which support effective practices in addressing the standards (to be placed at end of document)

Effectiveness Standards

1. Strategic Leadership
2. Instructional Leadership
3. Cultural Leadership
4. Human Resource Leadership
5. Managerial Leadership
6. External Development Leadership
7. Micropolitical Leadership
8. Dispositions: Human Elements

Synthesis of Standards

The Standards referenced in this document represent a synthesis of several sets of existing standards, including the North Carolina Standards for Superintendents (2007). The North Carolina standards were adapted from a Wallace Foundation study, *Making Sense of Leading Schools: Study for the School Principalship* (2004). The Kentucky Pilot Standards also reflect the research of the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning's *School District Leadership that Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement* (2006), and are also aligned with the following resources:

- ISLLC Standards-Educational Leadership Policy Standards as adopted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA)
- Performance Planning and Review for Superintendent Evaluation, Kentucky School Boards Association
- Standards for Quality School Systems, AdvancED

Standard 1: Strategic Leadership

(A synthesis of standards and indicators from North Carolina Standards for Superintendents Standard 1; ISLLC Leadership Standard 1; KSBA Performance Planning and Review for Superintendents Evaluation Standard 1 Leadership and District Culture; AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems Standard 1 —Purpose and Direction)

SUMMARY: Superintendents create conditions that result in strategically reimagining the districts' vision, mission, and goals to ensure every student graduates from high school; is globally competitive in post-secondary education and the workforce, and is prepared for a productive life in the 21st century. They create a community of inquiry that challenges itself to continually repurpose by building on the districts' core values and beliefs about the preferred future, and then developing a vision that reflects that future.

PRACTICES: Superintendents demonstrate effective strategic leadership practices when they:

- a. Create a working relationship with the local board of education that results in a shared vision for the district which guides the schools in preparing students to enter the changing world of the 21st century;
- b. Challenge systematically the status quo by leading change and transforming schools with potentially beneficial outcomes;
- c. Consider systematically new and innovative ways of accomplishing tasks and are comfortable with major changes in how processes are implemented;
- d. Model and reinforce the culture and vision of the district by having open discussion sessions with teachers, school executives, staff, board members, parents, and other stakeholders regarding the strategic direction of the district, and encourage feedback on how to better attain the district's vision, mission and goals;
- e. Serve as a driving force behind major initiatives that help students acquire 21st century skills;
- f. Create processes that provide for the development, periodic review, and revision of the district's vision, mission, and strategic goals by all stakeholders;
- g. Create processes to ensure the district's identity (vision, mission, values, beliefs and goals) actually drives decisions and reflects the preferred culture of the district;
- h. Facilitate the collaborative development of annual school improvement plans to realize strategic goals and objectives, adhering to statutory requirements;
- i. Facilitate the development and implementation of a district strategic plan, aligned to the mission and goals set by the Kentucky Board of Education and local priorities, using multiple sources of data (e.g., student performance data, data from KREP, universal screeners, TELL Surveys) in concert with the local board of education;
- j. Determine financial priorities in concert with the local board of education based on the Comprehensive District Improvement Plan and the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan
- k. Facilitate the implementation of federal, state, and local education policies;
- l. Facilitate the setting of high, concrete goals and the expectation that all students meet them;
- m. Monitor progress in meeting district goals;
- n. Communicate strong professional beliefs about schools, learning, and teaching that reflect the latest research and best practices in preparing students for success in post-secondary education, in work, and for life in the 21st century; and
- o. Create processes to distribute leadership throughout the district.

ARTIFACTS

- a. Comprehensive District Improvement Plan
- b. Implementation and impact checks documentation
- c. Agendas and updates on effective school improvement activities
- d. Superintendent's Individual Growth Plan (IGP) aligned with state and local strategic priorities and objectives
- e. Superintendent's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) aligned with personal areas for growth
- f. Evidence that staff can articulate the district's direction and focus
- g. Student performance data
- h. Kentucky NxG Superintendent Effectiveness Standards
- i. AdvancED documentation

Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

(A synthesis of standards and indicators from North Carolina Standards for Superintendents Standards 2; ISLLC Standard 2; KSBA Performance Planning and Review for Superintendents Evaluation Standards 1, 5, 6, and 9; AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems Standard 3 and 5)

SUMMARY: The core business of school superintendents must always be teaching and learning in a system committed to shared values and beliefs, and challenging, equitable educational programs and learning experiences for all students. The moral imperative of school district leadership is to create and sustain schools where all students learn, where performance gaps are systematically eliminated over time, and where the primary goal of the adults in the system is to ensure that every student graduates from high school college-and-career ready, prepared for a productive life in the 21st century.

Effective superintendents facilitate the stewardship of learning by creating professional learning communities focused on highly engaging, relevant instruction and improved student learning. They set specific achievement targets for schools and students and monitor those targets, ensuring consistent use of research-based best instructional practices in all schools and classrooms.

PRACTICES: Superintendents demonstrate effective instructional leadership practices when they:

- a. Lead with a clear, high-profile focus on learning and teaching grounded in high expectations and goals;
- b. Model learning for staff and students;
- c. Communicate high expectations for student achievement to staff and stakeholders;
- d. Challenge staff to deeply reflect on, define, and deliver the knowledge, skills, and concepts essential for ensuring every student graduates from high school globally competitive, ready for college and career, and prepared for a productive life in the 21st century;
- e. Establish and sustain a system that operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures (including effective, high-performing professional learning communities) that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels;
- f. Monitor effectiveness of instructional programs at the student, group, and programmatic level; and
- g. Monitor the efficient use of funds for student learning that produce effective results.

ARTIFACTS:

- a. Comprehensive District Improvement Plans and Comprehensive School Improvement Plans
- b. Professional development plans based on data
- c. TELL Survey
- d. Student performance data
- e. Formative and common assessments
- f. Curriculum framework (K-12 alignment)

Standard 3: Cultural Leadership

(A synthesis of standards and indicators from North Carolina Standards for Superintendents Standard 3; ISLLC Leadership Standard 2 and 3; KSBA Performance Planning and Review for Superintendents Evaluation Standard 1-Leadership and District Culture; AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems Standard—Purpose and Direction)

SUMMARY: Superintendents understand and act on the important role a system's culture has in the exemplary performance of all schools. They understand the people in the district and community, how they came to their current state, and how to connect with their traditions in order to move them forward to support the district's efforts to achieve individual and collective goals. While supporting and valuing the history, traditions, and norms of the district and community, a superintendent must be able to "reculture" the district, if needed, to align with the district's goals of improving student and adult learning and to infuse the work of the adults and students with passion, meaning and purpose.

PRACTICES: Superintendents practice effective cultural leadership when they:

- a. Communicate strong ideals and beliefs about schooling, teaching, student learning, and professional learning communities with all stakeholders and then operate from those beliefs;
- b. Build community understanding of what is required to ensure that every public school student graduates from high school globally competitive for work and post-secondary education and prepared for life in the 21st century;
- c. Create a school system (and not a "system of schools") in which shared vision and equitable practices are the norm;
- d. Build trust and promote relationships and a sense of well-being between and among staff, students, parents, and the community at large;
- e. Acknowledge systematically and fairly the areas of need and celebrate accomplishments of the district;
- f. Support visibly and engage actively in the positive, culturally responsive traditions of the community;
- g. Create opportunities for both staff involvement in the community and community involvement in the schools; and
- h. Create an environment in which diversity is valued and promoted.

ARTIFACTS:

- a. Tell Survey data
- b. Teacher retention data
- c. Student performance data
- d. Awards structure developed by the district and schools
- e. Community support of the district

Standard 4: Human Resource Leadership

(A synthesis of standards and indicators from North Carolina Standards for Superintendents Standard 4; ISLLC Leadership Standard 3; KSBA Performance Planning and Review for Superintendents Evaluation 7—Human Resources Management; Advanced Standards for Quality School Systems Standard 4—Resources and Support Systems)

SUMMARY: Superintendents ensure the district is a professional learning community with processes and systems in place that result in recruitment, induction, support, evaluation, development, and retention of a high-performing, diverse staff. Superintendents use distributed leadership to support learning and teaching, plan professional development, and engage in district leadership succession planning.

PRACTICES: Superintendents practice effective human resource leadership when they:

- a. Ensure necessary resources, including time and personnel, are allocated to achieve the district's goals for achievement and instruction;
- b. Provide for development of effective professional learning communities aligned with the district's strategic plan, focused on results and characterized by collective responsibility for 21st century student learning;
- c. Participate in consistent, sustained, and open communication with school executives, particularly about how policies and practices relate to the district's mission and vision;
- d. Model the importance of continued adult learning by engaging in activities to develop professional knowledge, skills, and abilities;
- e. Communicate a positive attitude about the ability of personnel to accomplish substantial outcomes;
- f. Create processes for educators to assume leadership and decision making roles;
- g. Ensure processes for hiring, inducting, and mentoring new teachers, new school executives, and other staff result in the recruitment and retention of highly qualified and diverse personnel;
- h. Use data, including the results of the TELL Survey, to create and maintain a positive work environment;
- i. Ensure all staff are evaluated in a fair and equitable manner and that evaluation results are used to improve performance;
- j. Provide for results-oriented professional development that is aligned with identified 21st century curricular, instructional, and assessment needs; is connected to district improvement goals; and is differentiated based on staff needs;
- k. Search continuously for the best placement and utilization of staff to fully develop and benefit from their strengths; and
- l. Identify strategic leadership positions in the district and have a succession plan for each key position.

ARTIFACTS:

- a. TELL Survey
- b. Leadership Development Plans (for district administrators— EILA)
- c. Student performance data
- d. Administrators' professional growth plans
- e. Number of teachers in the district with National Board Certification
- f. Staff evaluation process and protocols

Standard 5: Managerial Leadership

(A synthesis of standards and indicators from North Carolina Standards for Superintendents Standard 5; ISLLC Leadership Standard 3; KSBA Performance Planning and Review for Superintendents Evaluation Standard 4—Organizational Management; AdvancED Standards for Quality Systems Standard 4—Resources and Support Systems)

SUMMARY: Superintendents ensure the district has processes and systems in place for budgeting, staffing, problem-solving, communicating expectations, and scheduling that organize the work of the district and give priority to student learning and safety. The superintendent must solicit resources (both operating and capital), monitor their use, and assure the inclusion of all stakeholders in decisions about resources so as to meet the 21st century needs of the district.

PRACTICES: Superintendents practice effective managerial leadership when they:

- a. Apply and assess current technologies for management, business procedures, and scheduling;
- b. Create collaborative budget processes to align resources with the district vision and strategic plan through proactive financial leadership, using a needs assessment process;
- c. Identify and plan for facility needs;
- d. Assess and reassess programs and resource allocation and use for relevancy and impact as the organization changes;
- e. Develop collaboratively and enforce clear expectations, structures, rules, and procedures for effective and efficient operations;
- f. Create processes to build consensus, communicate, and resolve conflicts in a fair and democratic way;
- g. Assure a system of communication that provides for the timely and responsible exchange of information among school and district staff and stakeholder groups;
- h. Assure scheduling processes and protocols that maximize staff input, address diverse student learning needs, and provide individual and ongoing collaborative planning time for every teacher;
- i. Create processes for the storage, security, privacy, and integrity of data;
- j. Develop collaboratively and enforce clear expectations, structures, rules, and procedures for ensuring the safety of students and staff; and
- k. Develop, implement, and monitor emergency plans in collaboration with appropriate local, state, and federal officials.

ARTIFACTS:

- a. External reviews and audits (e.g., budget, food service, transportation, federal programs)
- b. District/school safety and crisis plans
- c. Community Emergency Response Plans
- d. TELL Survey
- e. Facility plan
- f. District policy

Standard 6: External Development Leadership

(A synthesis of standards and indicators from North Carolina Standards for Superintendents Standards 4; ISLLC Leadership Standard 6; KSBA Performance Planning and Review for Superintendents Evaluation Standard 7—Human Resources Management; AdvancED Standards for Quality School Systems Standard 4—Resources and Support System)

SUMMARY: Superintendents, in concert with the local board of education, design structures and processes that result in broad community engagement with support for and ownership of the district's vision. Acknowledging that strong schools build strong communities, superintendents proactively create—with school and district staff—opportunities for parents, community members, government leaders, and business representatives to participate with their investments of resources, assistance, and goodwill.

PRACTICES: Superintendents practice effective external development leadership when they:

- a. Develop collaborative partnerships with the greater community to support the 21st century learning priorities of the school district and its schools;
- b. Implement processes that engage stakeholders in shaping and then supporting significant (nonnegotiable) achievement and instructional goals for the district and its schools;
- c. Create systems that engage the local board and all community stakeholders in a shared responsibility for aligning their support toward the district's goals for student and school success;
- d. Design protocols and processes that ensure compliance with federal, state and district mandates;
- e. Develop and implement proactive partnerships with community colleges, universities, professional associations, and other key professional development organizations to provide effective training and development opportunities for school district employees;
- f. Develop and implement proactive partnerships with community colleges and universities to ensure all students have access to college courses while in high school and that barriers to enrollment are eliminated;
- g. Communicate the status and needs of the schools and district to the local board, all community stakeholders, and media to garner additional support for meeting district goals; and
- h. Build relationships with individuals and groups to support the district's learning-teaching agenda and its potential for individual school and district improvement.

ARTIFACTS:

- a. Minutes from school board meetings
- b. Business partnerships
- c. Membership and participation in community organizations
- d. Media coverage of school and district accomplishments
- e. Community college/university partnerships (professional development initiatives and dual credit courses)

Standard 7: Micropolitical Leadership

(A synthesis of standards and indicators from North Carolina Standards for Superintendents Standard 4; ISLLC Leadership Standard 3; KSBA Performance Planning and Review for Superintendents Evaluation Standard 7—Human Resources Management, AdvancED Standards for Quality School System Standard 4—Resources and Support Systems)

SUMMARY: Superintendents promote the success of learning and teaching by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, ethical, and cultural context. From this knowledge, superintendents work with the board of education to define mutual expectations, policies, and goals to ensure the academic success for all students.

PRACTICES: Superintendents practice effective micropolitical leadership when they:

- a. Provide leadership in defining superintendent and board roles and mutual expectations that result in an effective superintendent-board working relationship;
- b. Define and understand the internal and external political systems and their impact on the educational organization;
- c. Define, understand, and communicate the impact of legal and ethical issues affecting public education;
- d. Survey and understand the political, economic, and social aspects/needs of groups in the community, and those of the community at large for effective and responsive decision making;
- e. Prepare and recommend district policies to improve student learning and district performance in compliance with local, state, and federal requirements;
- f. Apply laws, policies, and procedures fairly, wisely, and considerately;
- g. Utilize legal systems to protect the rights of students and staff, and to improve learning opportunities; and
- h. Access local, state, and national political systems to provide input on critical educational issues.

ARTIFACTS:

- a. School board policies
- b. Superintendent's performance goals
- c. Teacher, administrator and staff retention data
- d. Parent, community, and staff survey data
- e. Outreach efforts

Standard 8: Dispositions—Human Elements

SUMMARY: The effective superintendent is first and foremost an effective person. Superintendents must know much and have many skills. However, what differentiates effective, transformational leaders (those who can facilitate more than a year's worth of growth with a year's worth of effort) from the rest is that they are successful not only because of what they **know and do** but because of **who they are** shining through their knowledge and skills. These human qualities—core values, beliefs and perceptions—are called *dispositions*. Four areas of dispositions that have the greatest impact on facilitating progress and positive change in people and organizations are: (1) realistic and positive dispositions about one self; (2) the belief that others are valuable, able, and worthy; (3) dispositions about the larger purposes of the educational endeavor; and (4) dispositions about the primacy of building and sustaining positive, long-term relationships with all constituents. High performing schools/districts recognize the importance of these dispositions and intentionally hire for and grow them in all partners

PRACTICES: Superintendents practice effective strategies for leading dispositional growth in self and others when they:

- a. Facilitate conversations with **all** constituencies regarding the importance of dispositions—the human elements—in teaching, learning, and leading;
- b. Develop and grow realistic and positive dispositions about oneself and facilitates growth in others;
- c. Demonstrate a belief in the value, ability, and worthiness of staff, students, and community members;
- d. Exhibit dispositions regarding the larger purposes of the educational endeavor;
- e. Display dispositions about the primacy of building and sustaining positive, long-term relationships with all constituents; and
- f. Develop and implement a hiring policy that intentionally includes effective dispositions of all personnel as the core selection element.

ARTIFACTS:

- a. Tell Survey
- b. ILSA results
- c. Dispositional Growth Plans
- d. District Belief Statements
- e. Leadership Compacts
- f. Team Commitments/Agreements

Resources

Educational Leadership Policy Standards: ISLLC (2008), National Policy Board for Educational Administrator (2007)
Individual Leadership Self-Assessment (ISLA)
Kentucky Department of Education
Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board
North Carolina Standards for Superintendents (2007) State Board of Education
Performance Planning and Review for Superintendent Evaluation, Kentucky School Board Association
Standards for Quality School Systems (2012), AdvancED