



EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP SERIES for Onboarding New Superintendents

Best practice, policy and procedure for guiding Kentucky's
new superintendents to a successful first year and beyond.



Rhonda K. Caldwell, Ed.D. and Ronald Anthony Strong, Ed.D.

Published by the Kentucky Association of School Administrators

Revised June 2026

A GUIDE TO KENTUCKY'S EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP SERIES FOR ONBOARDING NEW SUPERINTENDENTS

*Best practice, policy, and procedure for guiding Kentucky's new superintendents
to a successful first year and beyond*

RHONDA K. CALDWELL, Ed.D. AND RONALD ANTHONY STRONG, Ed.D.



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Published in the United States by the Kentucky Association of School Administrators Frankfort, Kentucky in 2015. Edited June 2026, eleventh edition.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Caldwell, Rhonda K. & Strong, Ronald Anthony

A Guide to Kentucky's Next Generation Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents

Best practice, policy, and procedure for guiding Kentucky's new superintendents to a successful first year and beyond /
authors Rhonda K. Caldwell, Ed.D.; Ronald Anthony Strong, Ed.D.; includes biographical references and index

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Dear New Superintendent,

Welcome to the Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents in Kentucky! On behalf of the onboarding team, we are excited to support you on this transformative journey as you step into your new leadership role.

Our mission is to ensure that you are empowered, informed, and equipped to navigate the complexities of your new position. We understand that the transition to superintendency can be both exhilarating and overwhelming, which is why we have designed a comprehensive program tailored specifically to the unique challenges and opportunities within Kentucky's educational landscape.

Throughout this series, you will engage with a wealth of resources designed to provide you with best practices, policy insights, and procedural guidance. Our modules will cover essential topics such as governance, strategic planning, community engagement, and leadership development. Each component of the program is crafted to facilitate your growth as a leader and to help you make a meaningful impact in your district.

We believe in the power of collaboration and community. As part of this onboarding experience, you will have the opportunity to connect with fellow superintendents and seasoned educational leaders. This network will serve as a vital source of support, allowing you to share experiences, seek advice, and collaborate on initiatives that benefit your students and community.

Our team is committed to your success. We are here to provide ongoing support, answer your questions, and guide you through the onboarding process. We encourage you to take full advantage of the resources and opportunities available to you, as your proactive engagement will enhance your leadership journey. Your commitment to continuous growth and development will have a profound impact on your leadership journey and, ultimately, on the success of your district.

Thank you for your dedication to education and for the vital role you play in shaping the future of our students. We are honored to be part of your onboarding experience and look forward to supporting you and witnessing your growth in the year ahead.

With Warm Regards

Rhonda Caldwell, Ed.D.
Chief Executive Officer

New superintendents in Kentucky benefit from an organized and sequenced professional learning and onboarding program designed and led by the Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA).

About This Guide

Today's school superintendent is an extraordinary leader who is a key player in the success of each student's education. The role is both complex and challenging. The role is also incredibly rewarding and satisfying.

I'm in charge—now what? This is the first question often asked by leaders new to the superintendency. Frequently, the next question is "How do I prepare for this important leadership role, and who can guide me?"

New superintendents can be assured their colleagues are asking the same questions and more than likely have much in common. Most have an extensive career in education and have moved from teacher to principal or central office administrator and then to superintendent. A gap typically exists between completion of a university preparation program and being selected for the school district's top position. Yet, all are selected for the job as the most highly qualified applicant and are chosen by the local board of education.

New superintendents in Kentucky benefit from an organized and sequenced professional learning and onboarding program designed and led by the Kentucky Association of School Administrators (KASA) and authorized by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). The Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents is a just-in-time, standards-based induction model that provides immediate support for a newly hired superintendent by an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) team.

This book is designed and written for the program participants—education leaders who are entering their first year as a new superintendent or their first year as a superintendent in Kentucky, and members of their ILP team. The book is available for viewing digitally and can be downloaded as a PDF file and printed. Icons to access video messages and hyperlinks to supporting documents or additional resource information are located throughout the book.

Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do.

—Steve Jobs

The book contains five chapters and is organized by role group for each member of the Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) team. The first chapter provides an overview of the program. It provides details about the program's structure, delivery methods, superintendent effectiveness standards and what experienced superintendents have to say about the program.

The second chapter is written specifically for the new superintendent. It provides information about steps for getting started, the year-long schedule, attendance requirements, accessing the online community, contact information for key supports, the curriculum, and the Individualized Learning Plan (ILP).

The remaining chapters provide information about the roles of the mentor, the school board member liaison, the director of executive coaching & mentoring and the ILP coordinator. It describes how each person works individually with the new superintendent and as a collective team to assimilate these new leaders to their role.

This book is designed as a companion to the Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents. New superintendents will find it helpful in navigating their leadership journey as a first year superintendent in Kentucky. With the KASA onboarding program, a standards-based induction model and a compendium of resources, we offer this book to help create schools of the future and prepare all of our children and youth to graduate life-ready for living and working in a global society.



Gary Fields *Bowling Green Ind.*

CHAPTER I

Program Overview

Kentucky's Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents

The onboarding program designed for new superintendents is truly impressive, offering a layered and supported approach during the initial year. Led by experienced superintendents, the program features timely learning sessions that provide invaluable insights. Additionally, the networking opportunities are extensive, and the assignment of both a mentor superintendent and a director of executive coaching & mentoring ensures comprehensive and confidential support for new superintendents.

- Superintendent Todd Neace

Trimble County Schools

Cohort #12

Program Overview

Today's superintendents must be systems thinkers (Fullan, 2005; Hoyle, Bjork, Collier, & Glass, 2005). They must understand the connection and alignment of all district dimensions while also understanding the relationship among the parts.

The Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents is the statewide induction program for first-year school superintendents in Kentucky. It is an extensive onboarding process that provides deeper knowledge levels, broadened skill sets, practical application, and dispositions for leadership based on five effectiveness standards for superintendents.

The Kentucky Association of School Administrators, in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), is the sole provider of the onboarding program, which is required by [KRS 156.111](#).

Important elements of the legislation include:

1. Required training and participation in the following components:
 - Core concepts of leadership quality best practice
 - Effective implementation of school-based decision-making
 - Kentucky school law
 - Kentucky school finance and budgeting
 - School curriculum and assessment
 - Instructional leadership
 - School improvement
 - Community and board relations
 - Effective communication
 - Ethical leadership
 - Executive coaching and mentoring program with an emphasis on demonstrated professional growth

To listen to this superintendent's message, click [here](#).



Program Overview Continued

2. A comprehensive collection of data and evidence demonstrating proficiency, which shall be delivered to KDE and the employing board of education during and at the conclusion of the training
3. Successful completion of the onboarding program within two years of taking office to maintain superintendent certification

Program Design

The program was designed by a team of experienced superintendents, KASA staff, and university representatives with support from Scholastic Achievement Partners and the International Center for Leadership in Education. The program is a continuous improvement model that includes the following elements:

1. Superintendent and district diagnostic data to inform and guide the training
2. Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) crafted by a team comprised of the new superintendent, director of executive coaching and mentoring, superintendent mentor, and a school board member liaison
3. Evidence-based self-assessments, including pre- and post-assessments of the superintendent standards, are integrated into the new superintendent implementation process alongside a 30-60-90-day plan and a professional growth plan. These documents are compiled in a digital portfolio and presented to the ILP team during a Capstone of Learning presentation at the end of year one. Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) data is also collected at the end of year one and used to guide mentoring sessions throughout year two.
4. Diverse learning modules in online formats that facilitate both customized learning from the ILP and a timely resource for new superintendents
5. Strong coaching and mentorship program with training and evaluation, including specific objectives outlined in the ILP and guidance throughout the onboarding process

I believe this program has been well organized and very informative from day one. It is professionally done; and the staff at KASA are great and easy to work with. Also, the collaboration time with other superintendents and building relationships is invaluable.

– Superintendent
Sean Horne, Ed.D.

Russell Ind. Schools

Cohort #2

Program Structure

Once a new superintendent is appointed, an onboarding team provides immediate and wraparound support through the leadership series. The team includes a number of high-performing team members who provide on-the-ground support, guidance, and professional learning.

ILP Team

The Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) team provides essential support, encouragement, and guidance to new superintendents. The team assesses current district needs while helping develop a flexible improvement plan that can be modified for the new superintendent in his or her ongoing decision-making process.

Executive Director of Coaching & Mentoring

The executive director of coaching and mentoring oversees and guides the new cohort superintendents, their mentors, and school board member liaisons through the onboarding process. The coach's duties are extensive and critical to the success of each new superintendent and to the onboarding program.

The director of executive coaching & mentoring possesses the highest credentials and is a former superintendent who remains actively involved in public education at the leadership level and exceeds the qualifications outlined in the [executive director of coaching & mentoring job description](#).

The ILP team quickly establishes itself as essential core support. Building trust and connections with these leaders is a key step for a new Superintendent. Their extensive knowledge and expertise can provide invaluable assistance when needed. Their coaching and encouragement to maintain a healthy work-life balance were greatly appreciated and always came at the right time. Undoubtedly, my first year as Superintendent was smoother, more productive, and more successful because of the support from my ILP team.

--Superintendent
Charles Broughton
Daviess County
Cohort #13

Program Structure Continued

Mentors are experienced superintendents who volunteer to serve in this capacity. They complete a required training program and possess the qualifications outlined in the [mentor job description](#).

Mentors are charged with guiding new superintendents through a successful first year, providing a continuum of ongoing support and timely learning. The mentor communicates frequently and meets in person and virtually at least four times throughout the year with the new superintendent.

School Board Member Liaison

A school board member liaison is selected by the new superintendent to serve on his or her ILP team. This team member serves as a liaison between the local board of education and the new superintendent, providing guidance and direction from the perspective of district needs and working to assimilate the new leader in the school district. Specific duties are outlined in the [school board member liaison job description](#).

Detailed job descriptions are located in the [appendix](#).

The onboarding process goes well beyond statutory requirements and theory by weaving practical, day-to-day, and just-in-time strategies throughout the process to help superintendents to be better educational leaders. The program (also) allows new superintendents to form a network of critical friends with fellow superintendents, mentors, and other state-wide educators and leaders.

– Superintendent
Brian Creasman, Ed.D.
Fleming County Schools
KY Supt. of the Year, 2019

Cohort #3

*Program Structure Continued***Professional Learning**

This part of the program focuses on the new superintendent's content knowledge base and his or her ability to apply it to the job. The director of faculty & curriculum, faculty members, program directors, support staff, and members of the Kentucky Department of Education team provide program support by sharing critical information to strengthen the first-year superintendent's knowledge base. It is important to note that faculty members are selected based on their area of expertise as proven in a particular field or content area. They are the state's top education leaders, are highly respected, and lead a school district or program of excellence. Faculty members who possess the highest levels of education, are award winners, and lead by example to facilitate the new superintendent's professional learning.

Curriculum for the onboarding program meets the requirements of [KRS 156.111](#). Core operational skills, a strong knowledge base, and both urgent and optional learning opportunities addressing new and emerging topics are embedded in the curriculum framework shown below. The professional learning provided by the faculty aids new superintendents in extending and refining their leadership vision, honing critical skills, addressing the most pressing challenges, and meeting essential goals.

Curriculum for Onboarding New Superintendents		
Community Engagement	Finance & Budgeting	Organizational Culture
Communication	Human Resources	Process Development through the Evaluation System
District Mission, Vision & Goals	Instructional Leadership Local Accountability Measures	School & District Governance
Education Law & Policy	Leadership: Foundational Framework & Practice	Strategic Planning & Visioning
Ethics & Personal Values	Operations	Supt.-School Board Relationships

**See pages 33-38 for more information*

Partner Support

New superintendents and partners are brought together in person so the new leader can meet the representatives from the organizations that support the work of public school districts and the students served. Partner organizations include the Kentucky Department of Education, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents, Kentucky Center for School Safety, Kentucky School Boards Association, Kentucky High School Athletic Association, Education Professional Standards Board/Kentucky Educator Credentialing System, and Kentucky's Educational Cooperatives.

Standards-Based Model

The onboarding program is a standards-based model that focuses on the emerging challenges of leading teaching and learning efforts across the state. Five Superintendent Effectiveness Standards serve as a framework for understanding the complex elements of a superintendent's work.

Effectiveness Standards

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Strategic Leadership | 4. Human Resource Leadership |
| 2. Instructional Leadership | 5. Operational Leadership |
| 3. Cultural Leadership | |

The effectiveness standards aim to achieve the following:

1. Help superintendents focus on the most important aspects of the job
2. Serve as a roadmap for ongoing professional growth and effectiveness from career entry through career exit
3. Assist the ILP team in determining the new superintendent's successful completion of the onboarding program ([ILP Details](#))

The superintendent effectiveness standards serve as a roadmap for ongoing professional growth from career entry through career exit.

Standards-Based Model continued

Each new superintendent, guided by his or her ILP team, develops an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP), which supports the evaluation conducted by the board of education for the new superintendent's annual evaluation. The plan is based on a rubric that outlines the five effectiveness standards and provides practices, indicators, and performance ratings. The plan provides opportunity for new superintendents to examine personal and district strengths. It also provides growth opportunities within the framework of the KASA Effectiveness Standards while building evidence and reflective benchmarks for the new superintendent's evaluation through an e-portfolio using the SuperEval platform.

The standards-based model serves to illustrate proficient performance on the part of the new superintendent while recognizing he or she is unlikely to possess all the competencies and skills inherent in each of the five effectiveness standards. Each new superintendent's ILP team uses the rubric to gauge his or her performance level for each of the standards. The performance levels are listed below.

Performance Levels



The ILP provides an opportunity for new superintendents to examine their personal and district strengths as well as growth opportunities within the framework of the effectiveness standards. Their ILP team will determine their successful completion of the program, which is a determining factor for maintaining certification in the state of Kentucky.

– Jan Lantz, Ed.D.
ILP Support

Standards-Based Model continued

During the first year, each new superintendent will synthesize his or her own performance against the standards. At the end of the training year, they will use their ILP artifacts and share their work with the board of education in a culminating Capstone of Learning presentation.

At the end of the first year, new superintendents complete the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), a 360-degree assessment based on 30 leadership behaviors. The LPI is aligned to the Superintendent Effectiveness Standards ([page 7](#)).

The ILP team will then make a consensus decision regarding the new superintendent's successful completion of the Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents or will recommend additional time in the program. This decision is a determining factor for a new superintendent to maintain his or her certification in the state of Kentucky. It is important to note a new superintendent's board of education is still responsible for the annual evaluation, which may or may not be distinct from the ILP team's performance appraisal.

Copies of the effectiveness standards and the ILP rubric are located in the [appendix](#).

Delivery Methods

A variety of methods are utilized to deliver the onboarding program content to new superintendents. Content and curriculum are provided using a timely method in accordance with the superintendent's work flow, timelines, and legal deadlines. Methods for delivery include:

1. In-person training led by experienced superintendents and other experts in the education field
2. Peer-to-peer interaction in a virtual or online community that includes a repository of resources

Completing the ILP was a process that allowed me to reflect meaningfully on my strengths and areas in need of improvement as a leader. The input and feedback from my ILP team members was an invaluable part of my growth. Creating the e-portfolio gave me an in-depth look at the effectiveness standards and allowed me to analyze my actions and decisions within the scope of the standards.

– Superintendent
Kent Campbell,
Perry Co. Schools
Cohort #12

Delivery Methods continued

3. Interaction and support provided by faculty members
4. On demand video resources
5. Group web conferencing and virtual meetings
6. Individual mentoring and executive coaching

What Superintendents Say About the Program

At the culmination of cohorts 1 and 2 (2012–13 and 2013–14, respectively), participants responded to questionnaires and participated in focus groups. The message was a resounding voice of approval.

The average combined feedback of the two cohorts reported a 97.5 percent satisfaction rate, indicating that they were “highly satisfied” with the program. Participants said they felt empowered and equipped to manage daily operations, in addition to leading their districts on budget, tax rates, education law and policy, and communications. Superintendents also said the program challenged them to take leadership of their own personal growth, forcing them to think proactively about the challenges in their district.

Finally, participants reported the program positively impacted their leadership skills by helping them build a statewide network of their peers, establish key relationships with mentors and other resources across the commonwealth, and prepare for their evaluation in the Superintendent Professional Growth and Effectiveness System standards. Session scores from Cohort 11 in 2022-23 ranged from 4.30-4.99 (on a 5.0 point scale). Focus groups are now conducted at the end of each Cohort year to gather data regarding suggested improvements to the Onboarding program for the next Cohort.

Although the first year as school superintendent is a busy one for us all, the time I spent as a part of New Superintendent Cohort 13 was well worth my time and critical to my success navigating the unfamiliar waters of a new role. The program is sequenced intentionally, with just-in-time information provided throughout the school year. The aspect I appreciated most, however, was the wisdom shared by sitting and retired superintendents who have been there, done that, and seen it all. As I near program completion, I now have the tools and positive momentum needed to move my district forward in year two!

– Superintendent

Tom Radivonyk
 Carlisle County Schools
 Cohort #13

CHAPTER II

The First-Year Superintendent: Managing Your Leadership Transition

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.
– Mark Twain

The First Year Superintendent

"All the world's a stage," as William Shakespeare wrote in the play, *As You Like It*, "and all the men and women merely players."

One inescapable reality of being named the new superintendent of your school district is that you attract much more attention and a higher level of scrutiny than before. You become the lead actor in your community's public play. Your privacy becomes less and less, and there is mounting pressure to show the right kind of leadership presence at all times.

The Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents is an extensive process for deeper knowledge levels, practical application, and a standards-based curriculum. The program is designed to fully prepare you to lead your school district to new heights while managing its daily operations.

This chapter contains detailed information regarding steps for getting started, a schedule of training sessions and other important dates for superintendents. It also includes attendance requirements, the code of conduct for ethical leadership, an overview of the curriculum and the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) process, and a directory of program staff, faculty and members of the new superintendent cohort.

Whether you're joining your school district from the outside or have been promoted from within, this chapter will help you manage your leadership transition so you can take charge, develop your plan, enhance your learning, and deliver better results faster than you thought were possible.

The collegial network that is developed through KASA's executive leadership series, along with on-going collaboration among some of the most successful superintendents and education leaders in Kentucky, has provided new superintendents with a wealth of knowledge and experience in key areas of leadership, finance, communication, law, and culture which are critical elements in the success of all school district leaders.

– Superintendent
Rob Clayton
Warren County Schools
KY Supt of the Year, 2023

Cohort #2

Steps for Getting Started

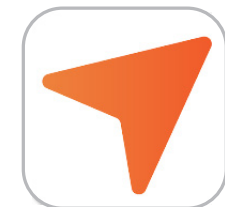
As a new superintendent, there are many steps you can take prior to assuming your position. The fuzzy front-end of your new position is the time period between the day you accept your new job and your first day on the job. A new position is typically more than you think. This fuzzy front-end period is an excellent time to get a head start on preparing for your first day while managing your leadership transition.

Much like a runner in a relay race, you should prepare and start moving in advance, taking control of the transition by putting your hand where you want the baton placed to accelerate a decisive handoff. (Bradt, Check, Pedraza 2011).

The following steps will prepare you for the onboarding program, as well as help you transition into your new role:

1. Read this guide.
2. Add the training dates, located on [pages 18-19](#), to your calendar.
3. Access and become familiar with your cohort's online community at connect.kasa.org (cohort 15) or by using the mobile app (Thrive 365). Details about the community are found on [page 24](#) of this handbook.
4. Ensure you have a laptop or tablet for use at all in-person training sessions.
5. Complete the [pre-program self-assessment tool](#). Results of your assessment will be used to assist program staff in understanding your level of experience and knowledge related to the effectiveness standards for superintendents and your knowledge level of school district finance and how we can best guide you through the learning process this year.
6. Review the Essential District Data list located on [pages 39-41](#). This information is beneficial and provided to ensure you have a solid understanding of your school district.
7. Connect with your mentor and executive coach to begin building your relationship and planning your schedule.

To listen to this superintendent's message, click [here](#).



Thrive 365

Steps for Getting Started continued

8. Select your school board member liaison and share his or her name and contact information with your executive coach or KASA program staff.
9. Manage the fuzzy front-end of your transition.

1. Take control of your own start

One of the most important things you can do is engage in the onboarding program as

Three Areas for Managing Your Transition

quickly as possible, completing the steps outlined at the beginning of this chapter.

2. Avoid onboarding landmines

A new leader's transition is often filled with landmines that are usually hidden and often undetected. An awareness of the landmines is helpful in managing them during the fuzzy front-end. Seven landmines referred to as the Deadly 7 are listed on the next page (Bradt, et al. 2011).

One of the most important things you can do is engage in the onboarding program now by completing the steps outlined on pages [13-14](#).

Chief Executive Officer
Rhonda Caldwell, Ed.D.
*KY Assn. of School
Administrators*

Deadly 7 Onboarding Landmines

Landmine	Cause	Time Period	Action
1. Organization	Lack of a winning strategy or the inability to implement that strategy	Before accepting the job	Ask tough questions.
2. Role	Expectations and resources or key stakeholders are not aligned	Before accepting the job	Listen for inconsistencies. Pursue.
3. Personal	Gaps exist in your strengths, motivation or fit	Before accepting the job	Ask yourself tough questions. Get a third opinion.
4. Relationship	Failure to build or maintain key relationships, up, across or down	Fuzzy front-end	Activate the data learned from your 360-degree LPI Inventory and use it to help guide potential challenges and landmines.
5. Learning	Failure to gain adequate information, awareness or knowledge of the 5Cs—customers, collaborators, capabilities, competitors or conditions	Fuzzy front-end	Activate an ongoing learning campaign to thoroughly master these 5Cs. Keep your learning sharp.
6. Delivery	Failure to build a high-performing team or deliver results fast enough	First 100 days	Identify and validate clear and genuine winning deliverables and a timetable. Empower and execute with team.
7. Adjustment	Failure to see or react to situational changes	As appropriate	Actively monitor conditions and results. Understand the causes of change. Replan and execute quickly.

(Bradt, et al. 2011) *Deadly Seven Onboarding Land Mines*

Three areas for managing your transition continued

3. Activate your communications strategy

Your communications strategy is at the core of your actions as a leader. While many of your key connections and contacts will occur during this time, it is also the time when your administrative team, teachers and other stakeholders begin to form their opinions of you and what is likely to happen in the coming weeks. The following is an outline of steps for your communications strategy (Bradt et al. 2011).

1. Identify key stakeholders.
2. Craft your message.
3. Manage your office setup.
4. Know what you can expect in staffing support.
5. If relocating, ensure your family is provided for and settled.
6. Conduct fuzzy front-end meetings and phone calls (board members, inner circle, key stakeholders) to share your message, learn aspirations, and understand the district's strengths and needs. When determining with whom and the order in which you speak with individuals, remember that people will view the order as a sign of relative importance. Those you speak with early will feel valued.
7. Deploy an information gathering and learning plan, including the Essential District Data located at the end of this chapter.
8. Plan your first 100 days.

The new superintendent mentoring process is a significant part of the cohort training model. Your mentor will provide perspective, focus, motivation and inspiration. My mentor was an important part of the support system provided by KASA. Thank you, team, for supporting and encouraging me through my first year.

- Superintendent
David Meinschein, Ed.D.
Murray Ind. Schools
Cohort #10

Important Dates for Your Calendar

Two calendars are critical to a new superintendent's success. The first provides an overview of in-person training sessions and activities of the onboarding program. The second is provided by the Kentucky Department of Education and lists important due dates to keep you apprised of numerous legal deadlines.

1. Overview of Training Sessions and ILP Team Activities

The calendar on the next page provides an overview of the new superintendents' training schedule.

2. Important Due Dates for Superintendents

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) publishes this document annually to keep superintendents apprised of legal deadlines for all education programs. The document is designed by month, due date, program, activity, and KDE contact person. The document is located in the [Appendix](#).

Two calendars are critical to a new superintendent's success. Adding these dates to your calendar will help keep you on track and plan for the year ahead.

Schedule for Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents

Month	Dates	Training Session or Activity	Location
June	26	Program Welcome Webinar f (9:30 a.m.-10:30 a.m. EDT)	Virtual Meeting
July	8-9	Session 1	KASA Training Center, Frankfort
	29	Session 2	Galt House Hotel, Louisville
August	1-31	Executive coach and mentor visit in district by September 1	Your District
	27	<i>Optional</i> Athletics Webinar (9:30 - 10:30 a.m. EDT)	Virtual
	31	Minimum of one artifact per standard due in digital portfolio	
September	9-10	Session 3	KASA Training Center, Frankfort
	17	<i>Optional</i> Social Media Webinar (9:30 - 10:30 a.m. EDT)	Virtual
	1-30	Executive coach and mentor conduct ILP team meeting	Virtual
	30	Minimum of two artifacts per standard due in digital portfolio	Your District
October	22	<i>Optional</i> Transportation Webinar (9:30 - 10:30 a.m. EDT)	Virtual
	29	Session 4	Hardin Co. EC ³ , Elizabethtown
	30	Minimum of three artifacts per standard due in digital portfolio	
	1-31	Executive director of coaching & mentoring and mentor conduct ILP team meeting	Your District
November	3	<i>Optional</i> Intruction Webinar (9:30 - 10:30 a.m. EDT)	Virtual
	12	Session 5 with CFO attending in the afternoon	Fayette Co. Board of Education
	19	<i>Optional</i> Burning Issues Webinar (9:30 - 10:30 a.m. EDT)	Virtual
	1-31	Executive director of coaching & mentoring and mentor conduct ILP team meeting	Your District
December	10	Session 6: Food Service Webinar (10:00 - 11:00 a.m. EST) <i>Required</i>	Virtual
	20	Minimum of four artifacts per standard due in digital portfolio; Quarterly progress report due to KDE	Your District
January	13	Session 7	KASA Training Center, Frankfort
	21	<i>Optional</i> Open Records/Legal Topics Webinar (9:30 - 10:30 a.m. EDT)	Virtual
	1-31	Executive coach and mentor attend board meeting	Virtual
	31	Minimum of five artifacts per standard due in digital portfolio (Completion of ILP)	

Schedule Continued

February	3	Session 8: Personnel Essentials Webinar (2:00 - 5:00 p.m. EST) <i>Required</i>	Virtual
	15	Session 9: Capstone Preparation Webinar (9:30-10:30 a.m. EST) <i>Required</i>	Virtual
	19	Session 10 (prior to KSBA Conference - 1/2 day)	Galt House Hotel, Louisville
	1-28	Director of executive coaching & mentoring and mentor attend board meeting	Virtual
March	18-19	Session 11 (in conjunction with Education Law & Finance Institute)	Central Bank Center, Lexington
	21	First draft Capstone of Learning recommended (title, acknowledgements, PGP)	
	25	Optional Burning Issues Webinar (9:30 - 10:30 a.m. EDT)	Virtual
	31	Revised artifacts due in digital portfolio and second draft of Capstone of Learning recommended	
April	15	Session 11 Leadership Practices Inventory Process Webinar (9:30 a.m. EST) <i>Required</i>	Virtual
	24-May 8	LPI administration window open	
	25	Third draft capstone of learning recommended (all standards)	
May	2	Final draft capstone of learning recommended	
	1-31	Executive coach and mentor attend Capstone presentation in May or June	Your District's Board Meeting
June	1-30	Executive coach and mentor attend Capstone presentation in May or June	Your District's - Board Meeting
	8-9	Session 12: Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership	KASA Training Center, Frankfort
	19	Documents Due: Post program mentor survey; post self-assessment; communication; and KDE final report	
July	29	Session 13: Year-End Celebration and Welcome New Cohort)	Galt House Hotel, Louisville

TBA – to be announced

Note: Be sure to incorporate these dates into your master schedule and share with your staff and board members.

Preparing for In-Person Sessions and Attendance Requirements

Details about each in-person session are posted seven days prior to the training in your online community at connect.kasa.org. Specifically, look for the agenda, pre-assignment posts from faculty members, and any items you will need to bring to the session with you.

Equipment

A laptop or tablet may be needed for each in-person session. Please ensure your device is Wi-Fi accessible and will not be hindered by pre-set district firewalls.

Lodging

Some sessions will require overnight lodging. Lodging is a district expense. Please request the government rate.

Meals

Most meals will be provided as part of the training session and are sponsored by valued partners of KASA. Agendas will note when a meal is on your own.

Session arrival

Please arrive approximately 15 minutes prior to the session start time so you may find a seat, set up your laptop, organize your materials, and network with your colleagues. EILA credit will be awarded at the end of the onboarding year.

Plan to focus and be present in the moment

As a new superintendent, you will no doubt attend sessions with an overwhelmed state of mind and an unwieldy “to do” list. Honor this learning time and focus solely on the opportunity at hand. You will benefit a great deal from the experienced faculty and your colleagues.

What to wear

Dress for training sessions is business casual. Keep in mind that meeting room temperatures are often cool, so dress in layers.

Honor this learning time and focus solely on the opportunity at hand.

Attendance Requirements

The leadership series for onboarding new superintendents includes a series of professional learning sessions, which requires some out-of-district time throughout the year. The complete schedule is listed on pages [18-19](#). It is important to note attendance at these sessions is mandatory and must be a priority.

The attendance policy provides guidelines and steps to take in the event of an unforeseen emergency. There are two acceptable reasons for excused absences.

1. **Extreme hardship** shall be generally defined as an event which requires the superintendent's presence and is not subject to the superintendent's ability to schedule. Examples may include regular school board meetings, graduation, depositions, and court appearances. Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and the superintendent is expected to attend any portion of the training session that is not in conflict with the external event. Events at which the superintendent's attendance is discretionary or which are within the superintendent's ability to schedule will not be approved for an excused absence.
2. **Sudden emergency** shall be generally defined as a serious personal or immediate family illness or medical emergency, death in the immediate family, an accident or natural disaster, childbirth (immediate family), or other similar unpredictable events of a substantial nature.

Steps for Submitting a Request for Excused Absence

1. Submit your request for an excused absence to the Director of Executive Coaching and Mentoring or KASA's program staff.
2. Receive decision of the executive leadership team and notification regarding approval or non-approval.
3. If the request is approved, complete the determined assignment and submit the affidavit located in the [Appendix](#), explaining the reason for the absence.
4. Expect that the leadership team shall consider all relevant facts in determining the nature of the makeup work.
5. Submit the completed Affidavit to Lisa Ducker (lisa@kasa.org).

More than one approved request for an excused absence in a training year may require a second year of participation in the assessment and training program by the superintendent.

Be here.
Be present.
Wherever you are,
be there.
– Willie Nelson

Ethical Leadership

“The road of principle is the road to higher performance and richer results.”

– Wes Cantrell

Ethical behavior is the cornerstone of the education profession. The superintendent's character and humanity are a reflection of his or her own leadership as well as the school district's. The superintendent must be the best listener, the best interpreter, and the most passionate driver of the school district's purpose (Quinlan, 2000).

As a school superintendent, you are obligated to establish and maintain ethical policies to serve as a guide for the conduct of your board members, faculty, staff, students, and local community.

To assist you, the policies of ethical behavior adopted by the Kentucky Association of School Administrators are embedded in the Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents (KASA, 2012). The detailed policy, listing the purpose of the code, framework for which the code is written, behavioral policies, and commentary explaining those policies, can be found in the [Appendix](#). The policies for ethical behavior include:

1. Professional school administrators constantly uphold the highest standards of integrity in all interactions and relations with students, colleagues, school board members, and the public.
2. Professional school administrators obey local, state, and national laws; adhere to high ethical and moral standards; and express loyalty to the nation and to the cause of democracy and liberty.
3. Professional school administrators accept the responsibility throughout their career to ascertain, use, and contribute to the growing body of specialized knowledge, concepts, and skills which characterize school leadership as a profession.
4. Professional school administrators strive to provide the finest possible educational experiences and opportunities for all students in their school or district.

The superintendent's character and humanity are a reflection of his or her own leadership as well as the school district's.

- Quinlan, 2000

Ethical Leadership continued

5. Professional school administrators seek to preserve and enhance the prestige and status of the profession in obtaining and carrying out their contractual duties as an employee.
6. Professional school administrators carry out in good faith all policies duly adopted by the local board and the regulations of state authorities and render professional service to the best of their ability. Any desire to seek modification or renewal of policies is accomplished through legitimate and recognized means.
7. Professional school administrators honor the public trust of their position above any economic or social rewards.
8. Professional school administrators do not permit considerations of private gain or personal economic interests to affect the discharge of professional responsibilities.
9. Professional school administrators recognize that public schools are a transparent public endeavor, and they seek to keep the community fully involved with and honestly informed about its schools.

While these ethical standards are designed for KASA leaders, Kentucky's certified educators are also bound by the [Professional Code of Ethics](#) in accordance with KRS 161.028 (codified in 16 KAR 1:020) and the [Model Code of Ethics for Educators](#) (MCEE). School districts are encouraged to use the MCEE as a complementary document to the Professional Code of Ethics for Kentucky Certified School Personnel. New superintendents will learn direct from the Kentucky Department of Education's policy and legal counsel regarding duty to report and other matters of ethical leadership.

Every superintendent has a personal responsibility to be fully informed about ethical standards and their relationships to all aspects of the school district they lead. In keeping with this broad responsibility, it is essential that all members of the profession are committed and assume an active role in supporting high standards of ethical conduct throughout their careers.

Every superintendent has a personal responsibility to be fully informed about ethical standards and their relationships to all aspects of the school district they lead.

Stay Connected Throughout the Year

One of the greatest benefits of the Superintendent Onboarding Program is the opportunity to learn alongside your cohort. KASA provides two convenient ways to stay connected with your colleagues, your coach, and program staff—whether you're at your desk or on the go.

Option 1: Connect Online

Visit connect.kasa.org, KASA's secure online community designed specifically for new superintendents. This private collaboration platform allows you to:

- Connect with your cohort, mentors, and program staff
- Access announcements and session materials
- Share resources and best practices
- Ask questions and receive timely support
- Collaborate on challenges and innovative ideas

connect.kasa.org

Option 2: Connect on Your Mobile Device

Take the community with you by downloading the Thrive 365 mobile app.

1. Download Thrive 365 from your device's app store (look for the orange arrow icon).
2. Search for KASA.
3. Tap My Account in the lower-right corner.
4. Log in using your KASA website credentials.



If you need assistance with your login information, contact the KASA office at (800) 928-5272.

Make the Most of Your Community

This community belongs to you. The more members participate by asking questions, sharing resources, and supporting one another, the more valuable it becomes for everyone. We encourage you to connect often and take advantage of the collective knowledge and experience of your cohort.

Need assistance? Visit www.kasa.org for additional information about accessing both the online community and the Thrive 365 mobile app.

Leadership is a team sport. Your cohort, mentors, and KASA staff are only a click away—connect early and engage often.



Jason Booher
Superintendent, Mercer County Schools

Your Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)

As part of the onboarding program, you will create and implement components of the ILP, which is designed to assist with managing your learning and development throughout your first year as a new superintendent. The ILP is the foundation of your onboarding program and is directly tied to five effectiveness standards. It supports your official evaluation process to be conducted by your board of education, and will be used to create your Capstone presentation at the end of the year. Your learning plan will look forward to what is to be achieved within the larger framework of the ILP rubric.

Components of the ILP

1. Designed with the support and guidance of your executive coach, mentor, and school board member liaison
2. Based on your personal strengths and identified growth areas from your self-assessment tools and the identified goals set for you by your board of education
3. Synthesized within the larger framework of the effectiveness standards
4. Aligned to give credence to your personal aspirations
5. Developed in concert with a 30-60-90-day plan and your professional growth plan (PGP) that provide for a set of learning goals you will achieve over the course of the program year
6. Developed to provide an opportunity to build and collect evidence and reflective benchmarks for your evaluation through a digital portfolio that is utilized in preparing your year-end Capstone presentation

Your ILP culminates with a Capstone of Learning presentation to your board of education. The Capstone will reflect your year of learning, development, and the goals achieved on behalf of the school district. The Capstone is a learning record that looks to the past, includes what you have accomplished as a first-year superintendent, and sets potential goals for the future.

The Capstone project has been a very beneficial process for me. It was an effective way for me to stay on top of things. Having started late, I felt behind in looking at each of the standards. Collecting evidence in each area gave me a sense of accomplishment and control. After a few months my board members and I could look back and see my progress in a very short time. It also helped me when I began evaluating my principals and administrative staff. I had them collect evidence around their standards and file them either in hard copy or electronically; then, when it's time to evaluate them, everything is in one place and easy to access. It's definitely a process I will continue to use and share with my board members.

– Superintendent Denise Yonts

Letcher County Schools

Cohort #7

*Your Individualized Learning Plan Continued***Individualized Learning Plan Team**

Your Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) team is comprised of the executive director of coaching & mentoring, an experienced superintendent mentor, and a school board member liaison. The team's purpose is to provide support, serve as a sounding board, and act as a critical friend throughout your first year. These individuals will guide you on a daily basis, assist with the development of your ILP and your Capstone presentation, and ensure you successfully complete the training program.

The team meets a minimum of two times per year, but may meet as often as the superintendent and director of executive coaching and mentoring deem necessary.

Superintendent Effectiveness Standards and ILP Rubric

Five KASA Effectiveness Standards serve as a framework for understanding the complex elements of your work (KASA Standards, 2026). The standards are outlined in an ILP rubric for new superintendents as listed (KASA Rubric, 2026):

1. Strategic Leadership
2. Instructional Leadership
3. Cultural Leadership
4. Human Resource Leadership
5. Operational Leadership

The effectiveness standards aim to:

- Help you focus on the most important aspects of the job.
- Serve as a roadmap for your ongoing professional growth and effectiveness from entry into the superintendency through career exit.
- Form a basis of support from which the ILP team can determine your successful completion of the onboarding program.

To learn more about the value of the program click [here](#).



Jan Lantz, Ed.D.
KASA ILP Support Services

Your Individualized Learning Plan Continued

The ILP rubric is the foundation of the effectiveness standards. The standards are also aligned to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards, the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), superintendent evaluation document established by the Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA), the Standards for Quality School Systems-AdvancED, and the North Carolina Standards for Superintendents (adapted from a Wallace Foundation study).

The ILP rubric includes a summary of each standard with an accompanying set of practices and indicators that clarify the levels listed. New superintendents develop lists of potential artifacts for each standard during training sessions. Performance ratings are listed below.

The standards-based model serves to illustrate proficient performance on the part of the new superintendent while recognizing he or she is unlikely to possess all the competencies and skills inherent in each of the five effectiveness standards. Each new superintendent's ILP team uses the rubric to gauge his or her performance level for each of the standards.

The new superintendent contributes to the rubric by conducting a pre-program self-assessment which guides the inclusion of evidence of his or her performance in each standard area throughout the year. Near the end of the program year, each new superintendent, under the guidance of the ILP team, synthesizes his or her own performance against the effectiveness standards and the five leadership practices and shares those results with his or her board of education in a culminating Capstone of Learning presentation. At this point, the ILP team makes a consensus decision about

Performance Levels



The KASA Onboarding experience was incredibly valuable during my first year as a superintendent. Guidance from veteran leaders and the support of my superintendent mentor made a big difference. The first year can be both exciting and overwhelming, and I truly can't imagine navigating it without this program. This is a strong support system that helped me grow, lead, and succeed with confidence.

- Superintendent
Katie Webb,
Lawrence County Schools
Cohort #13

Your Individualized Learning Plan Continued

the new superintendent's successful completion of the Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents or will recommend additional time in year two of the program. It is important to note a new superintendent's board of education is still responsible for the annual evaluation, which may or may not be distinct from the ILP team's performance appraisal. At the end of the first year, he or she participates in a 360-degree review of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) demonstrated thus far in the new position that has been cross-walked to the KASA effectiveness standards. Coaches then work with the new superintendents providing feedback and mentoring during the second year.

Pre-Program Self-Assessment

This tool is based on the Superintendent Effectiveness Standards and is intended to obtain a self-assessment of superintendents at the beginning of their tenure. Individual data collected is shared with your executive coach and mentor to help you capitalize on your strengths and focus on your threshold areas. The director of faculty and curriculum develops and provides a cohort summary to assist faculty customizing instruction. It is imperative that you be honest and open about your strengths and growth areas to ensure support from the ILP team is effective. Complete the [pre-program self-assessment](#) as soon as possible.

You will learn more about developing your ILP through the year.

Completion of the ILP process is required of all new superintendents to comply with the provisions of [KRS 156.111](#) and to maintain certification to serve as a superintendent in the state of Kentucky. In rare cases, a new superintendent may not experience success and, as a result, will not receive a consensus vote of program completion. The Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) will be notified if a new superintendent has not successfully completed the program by the end of his or her second year.

The honest and open completion of the pre-program self-assessment is critical. The feedback that is received from this tool will allow one to see his or her growth throughout the journey in year one.

- Superintendent
Bill Boblett

Boyd County Schools

Cohort #7

Key Contact Information

Your cohort is comprised of new superintendents entering the program in 2026, along with superintendents who are completing the program as a member of the previous cohort. Cohort members are listed.

Cohort 15 Members

Superintendent Name	Email	Mobile Phone
Adam Ritter, Campbell Co.	adam.ritter@campbell.kyschools.us	(859) 991-0518
David Petett, Campbellsville Ind.	david.petett@cville.kyschools.us	(270) 789-9222
Cortnei Flucas, Covington Ind.	cortnei.flucas@covington.kyschools.us	(317) 418-2754
Matt Engel, Erlanger-Elsmere Ind.	matt.engel@erlanger.kyschools.us	(859) 638-1649
Darrell Witten, Fulton Ind.	darrell.witten@fultonind.kyschools.us	(270) 899-0951
Kalem Grasham, Garrard Co.	kalem.grasham@garrard.kyschools.us	(859) 319-3138
Ben Davenport, Green Co.	ben.davenport@green.kyschools.us	(270) 932-1597
Josh Blevins, Henry Co.	josh.blevins@henry.kyschools.us	(859) 200-2646
Daniel Day, Leslie Co.	daniel.day@leslie.kyschools.us	(606) 275-1944
Josh Yonts, Letcher Co.	josh.yonts@letcher.kyschools.us	(606) 634-4457
Miranda Reed, Lyon Co.	miranda.reed@lyon.kyschools.us	(270) 559-0542
Stephanie Harris, Montgomery Co.	stephanie.harris@montgomery.kyschools.us	(859) 585-8743
Kevin Cloyd, Monroe Co.	kevin.cloyd@monroe.kyschools.us	(270) 427-8222
Brian Lile, Muhlenberg Co.	brian.lile@muhlenberg.kyschools.us	(270) 225-8133
John Derek Faulconer, Nicholas Co.	johnderek.faulconer@nicholas.kyschools.us	(865) 416-7494
Kent Mayfield, Pulaski Co.	kent.mayfield@pulaski.kyschools.us	(270) 705-6145
Sean Bailey, Robertson Co.	sean.bailey@robertson.kyschools.us	(270) 878-0013
Matt Cook, Science Hill Ind.	matt.cook@sciencehill.kyschools.us	(606) 340-7240
Dylan Smith, Walton-Verona Ind.	dylan.smith@wv.kyschools.us	(606) 813-2892
Michael Gooch, Webster Co.	michael.gooch@webster.kyschools.us	(270) 213-3051
Nick Brooks, Wolfe Co.	nick.brooks@wolfe.kyschools.us	(606) 899-5611

My favorite part of the onboarding program was connecting with other new superintendents of our cohort and other state-wide leaders. The relationships you will gain from this program will be invaluable to you as you move into your new role. Trainings were perfectly aligned with the many issues we face, including budgeting, staffing, and human resources. This program prepares superintendents to go into many situations with the confidence and knowledge to lead a district successfully. Knowing that you will receive ongoing leadership support is extremely valuable. I am a better leader because of the onboarding program.

-Superintendent

Mark Wade
Boyle County Schools
Cohort #12

Note: This page will be updated as information becomes available.

Program Staff

Wrap-around support is provided 24/7 by your executive coach, faculty members and staff who lead the program. Their names and contact information are listed:

Name	Phone Number	Email Address
Casey Allen, Ed.D., Superintendent Staff Advisor	(270) 559-5122	casey.allen@ballard.kyschools.us
Rhonda Caldwell, Ed.D., Program Director	(859) 583-5652	rhonda@kasa.org
Casey Allen, Ed.D., Program Advisor	(270) 559-5122	casey.allen@ballard.kyschools.us
Lisa Ducker, Coordinator Support Services	(502) 875-3411	lisa@kasa.org
Scott Hawkins, Director of Executive Coaching & Mentoring	(859) 621-1090	scott@kasa.org
Nannette Johnston, Director of Faculty & Curriculum	(270) 872-3700	nannette@kasa.org
Jan Lantz, Ed.D., Individual Learning Plan Support Services	(502) 249-2022	jan@kasa.org
Matt Matt Robbins, District Finance Advisor	(270) 316-1858	matt@kasa.org
Wayne Young, Director of Compliance/General Counsel	(859) 361-0887	wayne@kasa.org

Core Team

These leaders provide an additional level of support in the field and connect with new superintendents at cooperative meetings:

Name	Email Address
Gary Cornett, Owsley Co. Schools	gary.cornett@owsley.kyschools.us
Jason Faulkner, Adair Co. Schools	jason.faulkner@adair.kyschools.us
Dustin Howard, Clark Co. Schools	dustin.howard@clark.kyschools.us
Denise Griebel, Laurel Co. Schools	denise.griebel@laurel.kyschools.us
Todd Moody, Grant Co. Schools	todd.moody@grant.kyschools.us
Todd Neace, Trimble Co. Schools	todd.neace@trimble.kyschools.us
Tom Radivonyk, Carlisle Co. Schools	tom.radivonyk@carlisle.kyschools.us

Program Faculty

Name	Email Address	Mobile
Amanda Abell	amanda.abell@caverna.kyschools.us	(270) 932-1376
Jon Akers	jon.akers@eku.edu	(859) 314-6146
Casey Allen, Ed.D.	casey.allen@ballard.kyschools.us	(270) 559-5122
Susan Barkley	susan.barkley@shelby.kyschools.us	(502) 633-2375
Rhonda Caldwell, Ed.D.	rhonda@kasa.org	(859) 583-5652
Nick Carter, Ed.D., SOY	nick.carter@breck.kyschools.us	(270) 668-2201
Rob Clayton, SOY	rob.clayton@warren.kyschools.us	(270) 781-5150
Whitney Crowe, J.D.	whitney.crowe@ky.gov	(502) 782-2120
Scott Hawkins	scott@kasa.org	(859) 621-1090
Nannette Johnston	nannette@kasa.org	(270) 872-3700
Mark Martin, Ed.D.	mark.martin@meade.kyschools.us	(270) 422-7500
Stephen McCauley	stephen.mccauley@paris.kyschools.us	(859) 588-1287
Brenda McClain	brenmcclain@aol.com	(843) 817-3474
Michael Melton, Ed.D.	michael.melton@bath.kyschools.us	(606) 216-1893
Terrie Morgan, SOY	terrie.morgan@hardin.kyschools.us	(270) 766-8668
Contessa Orr	contessa.orr@muhlenberg.kyschools.us	(270) 604-1787
Billy Parker	billy.parker@scott.kyschools.us	(859) 948-2120
Matt Robbins	matt@kasa.org	(270) 316-1858
V. Wayne Young, J.D.	wayne@kasa.org	(859) 361-0887

KASA's New Superintendent Cohort training was indispensable. With this training, I benefited from:

- working with a network of new superintendents who became some of the best contacts I have made this year.
- participating in trainings that were really “just-in-time” for the season and topic.
- utilizing an online library stocked full of the presentations that we have participated in during the school year.
- learning from some of the best experts in the state on the subject of superintendent leadership.

- Superintendent
Tonya Driver

Crittenden County Schools

Cohort #11

Kentucky Department of Education Support

The commissioner of education, his chief of staff and associate commissioners are an integral part of the onboarding program. You will meet them throughout the year and will gain insight as to the various offices and their functions, who is in charge of what, the role of the department of education versus the state board of education, local board, the superintendent and the SBDM council. In addition, you will learn what is needed from you during the first year, including delivery targets, assessments, reports, and other items.



Commissioner and Support Staff

Robbie Fletcher, Ed.D., Commissioner of Education

Matt Ross, Associate Commissioner, Office of Finance & Operations

David Couch, Associate Commissioner, Office of Education Technology

Kelly Foster, Associate Commissioner, Office of Continuous Improvement & Support

Jennifer Stafford, Ed.D., Associate Commissioner, Office of Assessment & Accountability

Beth Hargis, Associate Commissioner, Office of Career & Technical Education

Thomas Woods-Tucker, Deputy Commissioner, Teaching & Learning

Greta Hyltan, Associate Commissioner, Special Education & Early Learning

Meredith Brewer, Associate Commissioner, Office of Education Licensure & Effectiveness

Todd Allen, General Counsel, Office of Legal Services

Micki Ray Marinelli, Chief Academic Officer, Office of Teaching and Learning

Karen Dodd, Chief Performance Officer, Office of Strategic Planning and Research

GlyptusAnn Jones, Director of Education Policy

Jennifer Ginn, Director of Communications

Brian Perry, Director of Government Relations

Curriculum Overview

Curriculum for the onboarding program is aligned with the KASA five effectiveness standards and exceeds the requirements of [KRS 156.111](#) by providing additional optional learning opportunities. Core operational skills, a strong knowledge base, and emerging issues and trends are embedded in the curriculum framework. The professional learning provided by the faculty aids new superintendents in extending and refining their leadership vision, honing critical skills, addressing the most pressing challenges, and meeting essential goals. The onboarding program includes the following courses:

1. Community Engagement and Collaboration

New superintendents will think through the purpose and value of community collaboration, forms of engagement, desired learning outcomes and connections for students. Community engagement ranges from brief visits or activities to long-term collaborations.

Takeaways from these modules include a preliminary planning framework for developing a community collaborative action plan and examples of current community collaboration and partnerships.

2. Communication

This module helps superintendents step into communications leadership with confidence, knowing their job is to communicate to their various constituents on behalf of the students they serve. These sessions are delivered under the just-in-time learning principle.

The first session focuses on understanding communications leadership, why it is critical to everyone's success and the ability to apply it to your opening day presentation. The second session focuses on developing a message tree for effectively communicating a challenging or critical message impacting the school district.

To learn more about the value of the program click [here](#)



*Curriculum Overview and Module Descriptions continued***3. Education Law and Policy**

This module covers a wide range of education law topics, including personnel law and ethics, the superintendent's role in Kentucky's statewide education framework; civil rights, constitutional rights, and due process for students and employees; student discipline, including suspension and expulsion; juvenile court dealings, law enforcement, social services, and child abuse; Site Based Decision Making (SBDM), and compliance with various laws such as the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), criminal records checks, open meetings and open records, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, and board policy compliance.

4. Ethics and Values

Ethical behavior is the cornerstone of the education profession. The superintendent's character and humanity are a reflection of his or her own leadership as well as the school district's.

Every superintendent has a personal responsibility to be fully informed about ethical standards and their relationships to all aspects of the school district he or she leads. In keeping with this broad responsibility, it is essential that all members of the profession feel a commitment to and assume an active role in supporting high standards of ethical conduct throughout their careers. Ethics and values are embedded in education law and policy, finance and management, and governance courses, and include:

- a. Review the Superintendent's Duty to Report
- b. Explore differences between the Kentucky Education Professional Standard Board's disciplinary statutes, [KRS 161.120](#), and [KRS 161.790](#)
- c. Review the tribunal statute
- d. Review potential ethical pitfalls for new superintendents, strategies for ensuring ethical behavior from staff, and other legal reporting duties required by superintendents and school staff

Curriculum Overview and Course Descriptions continued

- e. Study procurement and bid laws, direct or indirect benefit statute, conflicts of interest, employing relatives
- f. Ensure the finest possible educational experiences and opportunities for all students
- g. Honor the public's trust, recognizing public schools are a transparent public endeavor, and preserving and enhancing the prestige and status of the profession as it relates to contractual duties

5. Finance, Budgeting and Management

This module contains sessions beginning in July and concluding in June to enhance the just-in-time learning of a superintendent in the areas of annual financial reporting, tax rates, budget and audit, internal control and financial accounting, facilities funding, bidding, SBDM, financial planning, year-end reporting, analysis, and planning.

6. Human Resources Systems and Processes

These sessions will assist new superintendents to take advantage of proven systems, processes and laws to maximize the efficiency of scarce financial resources, ensure fair and equitable treatment of staff and improve student achievement by effectively recruiting, selecting and retaining the very best teachers and staff.

7. Instructional Leadership

Participants will explore the role of superintendent as lead learner and oversight as it relates to Effectiveness Standard 2. Particular emphasis will be placed on the new superintendent's ability to a) Employ strategies and well-defined processes to ensure there is a district-wide focus on teaching and learning; b) Articulate his/her curriculum and assessment platform to shape district vision and mission and strengthen the district's strategic plan; c) Operationalize around deeper learning and high levels of student achievement for all learners, thereby closing achievement gaps by ensuring equity of access and opportunity to ensure overall school improvement; and d) Implement local accountability measures that reflect the community's needs and prepare students for success in local and global contexts.

*Curriculum Overview and Module Descriptions continued***8. Leadership Foundational Framework**

Superintendents are called upon to make extraordinary things happen in their school districts. Effective leadership is required for success. Leaders will learn Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes, Posner) a research-based framework for leading your district and community. Together, we will focus on a shared definition for leadership, your practice as a leader, and a clear path for growth. This framework will arm you with the behaviors and skills needed to make a tremendous difference as a trusted, respected and admired leader in your community today. Feedback from a 360 Leadership Effectiveness survey and individualized coaching will support continuous growth in year two of your superintendency.

9. Operations

A series of in person discussions and webinars will explore various aspects of school district operations, the importance of systematic processes and ideas for practical best practice implementation.

To learn more about the value of the program, please click [here](#)



Sheri Satterly

Superintendent, Frankfort Independent Schools

*Curriculum Overview and Module Descriptions continued***10. Process Development through the Evaluation System**

This session provides an overview of how to use a process-centered approach to implement the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership (PSEL). The focus of this session is on the role of the leader in applying a process improvement to this and other operational systems throughout the school district.

11. School and District Governance

Numerous topics fall within the scope of these sessions, including governance, strategic planning, visioning, and superintendent-school board leadership.

Governance

For effective governance, district leaders and the board of education work effectively with each other and with educational partners, including schools, unions, state-level associations and parent groups. Working collaboratively and in sync, the superintendent leads the board to fulfill its responsibilities for district oversight and governance and provides a critical link between the district and schools and the district and community.

Strategic Planning & Visioning

The visioning module (developed through the LPI and strategic leadership content) has been created to allow superintendents to explore district-level vision and mission statements grounded in the core beliefs of their school district community. This vision and mission work is essential to the life of a school district as it sets the course for the work of school personnel and in doing so lays the foundation for both short- (district improvement planning) and long-term strategic planning.

*Curriculum Overview and Module Descriptions continued****Superintendent-School Board Leadership***

The Superintendent-Board relationship is the key to success for leading a school district. Content for this session involves basic requirements, including clarity of roles, cultivation of the district's vision and mission, self-management, tips to maintain a good relationship with your board, spending needed time with your board, effective communication, board member styles, preparation for effective meetings, building consensus around tough issues, dealing with a divided board, your evaluation, and your next contract.

12. Trends and Emerging Issues

Incidents happen! Situations and resolutions by sitting superintendents will be analyzed and discussed to help gain insight into what a new superintendent might face and what first steps might be taken when similar incidents arise, and what communication might surround these issues.

We were extremely impressed with KASA's support and guidance for Mr. Booher during his first year as our superintendent. Being that he was completely new to the role, the information and resources given by KASA were vital to Mr. Booher's growth in year one. We witnessed this growth first hand and as a result, our district has become stronger. He has implemented processes and procedures within our leadership because of what he learned during this time.

--Randy Phillips
Board Chair,
Mercer County Schools

Essential District Data for Review

While many new superintendents will have conducted some research as part of initial interview preparations, the following list represents essential school district data to assist you with getting to know your district while gaining an in-depth understanding of its history, celebrations, and challenges. A review of this data will help drive your sustainable competitive advantage.

District and Community Information

1. Administrative Team
 - Notes from recent meetings
 - Names, roles and profiles of cabinet members
2. Board of Education
 - Board meeting minutes from the last three years
 - Board member profiles
 - Strategic plan
3. Transportation & Specifics about the Bus Fleet
4. Community
 - Economic factors
 - Government and community leaders
 - Social and demographic information
 - Political, regulatory and governmental information
 - Private schools
 - Home schools
5. District Information
 - History to understand how the district got to its current state
 - Mission, vision, and values
 - Newsletters, including community, district and school
 - Student and staff performance, components of the overall numbers to get at what is working well and less well
 - Website, social media feeds, technology plan, certified evaluation plan, code of conduct, corrective action plans, and school handbooks

I was able to form a real bond with my cohort which has connected me to literally every corner of the state and makes me certain that in any difficult spot, I have so many friends and colleagues ready to help.

- Superintendent
Josh Hurt
Metcalf County Schools
Cohort #9

Essential District Data for Review continued

6. Facility Plan, LPC Notes, Bonding Capacity, History and Rationale
7. Finance and Management
 - Budget review and comparison of the last three years
 - Financial audits from last three years
8. Insurance Policy and Provider
9. Litigation, Pending and Current
10. Policies and Procedures
11. Safety Plan and Crisis Response Leaders
12. SBDM Allocations (and if schools are utilizing)
13. Staffing
 - Allocations and any district add-ons (staff on MOAs)
 - District office staffing configuration
 - New fiscal year staffing, reduction-in-force, non-renewals, etc.
 - Number of tenured and non-tenured certified staff
 - Personnel on corrective action plan
14. Stakeholders to Know by Name
 - Award winners (staff and students)
 - Booster club leaders
 - Commonwealth Parent Institute participants
 - Parent Teacher Association (PTA) presidents
 - School council members
 - Teachers' association president
15. Trend Data for District/Community Profile (KIDS Count data/SAP)



*Essential District Data for Review continued***Kentucky Department of Education Information**

1. College and Career Readiness (CCR)
2. ACT
3. AP data (map backwards AP—intermediate grades)
4. Attendance data for students and staff
5. Bonding potential
6. Assessment data the last five years
7. Comprehensive school and district improvement plans (CDIP and CSIP)
8. District profile
9. Facility plan
10. Memoranda of Agreements with Kentucky Department of Education
11. Nonrenewable grants providing staff salaries
12. School Report Card last three years
13. Student services data/discipline
14. Impact data

Should you have questions about the data, please talk with your mentor or post in the cohort's online community.

In my first year as a superintendent, the demands, unknowns, and requirements of the new position seemed overwhelming at times. With the support of the Superintendent Onboarding Program, I felt like I had an outlet and network to guide me through the challenges. The training, topics, and relevancy of the information provided was outstanding. Without question this professional development was one of the top experiences of my career and essential for all new Kentucky Superintendents.

-Superintendent Chris Bentzel
Christian County Schools
Cohort #9

CHAPTER III

The Role of the School Board Member Liaison

When the board works with a united and conscientious perspective, the superintendent is in a strong position to carry out the duties effectively. With a supportive and positive relationship between the superintendent and board mentor that allows for critical conversations, the superintendent can confidently initiate new innovations and experience professional growth.

– Ivory & Acker-Hocevar, 2007

The School Board Member Liaison

The Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents represents an extensive onboarding process for deeper knowledge levels, practical application, and a standards-based curriculum. The program is designed to fully prepare the superintendent to lead the school district while managing its daily operations.

This chapter is devoted to you and your role as the school board member liaison serving on your new superintendent's Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) team. It provides steps your board can take to assist with the onboarding process. It also outlines your role and responsibilities, provides information about accessing the superintendent's e-portfolio, and gives important dates and timelines for your calendar.

Successful onboarding is a true partnership between the new superintendent, the school district, and the Kentucky Association of School Administrators. In partnership, the three work to ensure the new superintendent has greater impact on student achievement.

Without an onboarding program, research data shows that 40 percent of leaders hired into new organizations don't succeed and are out of the position after 18 months. In addition, 20 percent of leaders who are internally promoted without an onboarding program are underperforming after two years (Sessa, Kaiser, Taylor, & Campbell, 1998).

The onboarding program aims to get first-year superintendents up to speed faster, accelerating their progress while helping them transition to their new role. Effective onboarding drives productivity, accelerates delivery of results, and significantly improves retention rates of highly talented leaders.

Three onboarding components include accommodation, assimilation, and acceleration (Sims, 2011). Accommodation is doing what it takes to make your new superintendent ready, eager and able to do the job from the start. Assimilation helps them join with others, including their ILP team, their colleagues, faculty and program staff who oversee the onboarding program, and the many stakeholders in your community. Finally, acceleration is helping the new superintendent and his or her team deliver better results faster.

To learn more about the value of the program, please click [here](#)



Robbie Asberry,
Hancock County Schools

1. Accommodation: Preparing for Your Superintendent's Arrival and Transition

First-year superintendents begin to develop and enhance their leadership when the announcement of their employment is made; but the initiative should occur from both directions as soon as the contract of employment is signed.

As the board team works to accommodate the new superintendent, the board member liaison should share information to ensure the new superintendent is well-versed on hot topics, trends, challenges and emerging issues in the community. This is not test data or demographics, but rather what some may call the lightning rod topics in the community. Initiating this conversation will give the new superintendent the opportunity to learn the issues, explore the history behind them, and use the information to better lead the district. This also leads to a supportive and positive relationship that paves the way for critical conversations in the future.

The district should immediately begin accommodation work by providing the new superintendent with the necessary tools for his or her office and work space. This includes work station setup, storage, space to meet with individuals, equipment, and access to the system network for email, file storage and pertinent district logins for access to data and reports.

In addition, the board should facilitate and foster relationships with the new superintendent and the staff through introductory meet-and-greets. These opportunities provide the pathway to success for impacting student achievement.

Onboarding begins the day your new superintendent accepts the job. This is the best time to roll out the welcome mat and assist him or her in managing the early transition. Your board's combined knowledge base is an excellent source of information that contributes to guiding and assisting your new superintendent.

The superintendent should expect a team-oriented, supportive relationship based on open and honest communication that is free from special interests.

(Tuttle, 1963)

2. Steps for Getting Started

The Board Member Liaison should complete the following tasks in preparation:

1. Read chapter one of this guide to gain a thorough understanding of the onboarding program for new superintendents—how it works, what it requires of the new superintendent, and the roles and responsibilities of each ILP team member.
2. Lead a discussion with the board of education on ways it can incorporate best practices into the onboarding processes.
3. Prepare a briefing information packet about the school district and deliver to your new superintendent long before his or her first day on the job. This information should include applicable items listed in the Essential District Data for Review section found at the end of chapter two.
4. Mentor your superintendent through the community's political arena.
5. Assist with the relocation process by connecting your new superintendent to community resources. Ensure his or her family is provided for and settled.
6. Connect your new superintendent with his or her administrative team quickly and recognize that leadership is key to providing the support principals and teachers need to be effective instructional leaders (Glass, Franceschini, 2007). When possible, provide some flexibility to allow for the superintendent's individual taste and working style.
7. Prepare and host a meet-and-greet schedule of key stakeholders.
8. Ensure your new superintendent's office space is welcoming, set up, equipped and move-in ready.
9. Connect your new superintendent with support staff who can assist with identification cards, access to the building, email account, setting up voice mail, etc.
10. Make coping, understanding and reducing superintendent stress a high priority for the board (Glass & Franceschini, 2007).

Onboarding begins the day your new superintendent accepts the job. It is the best time to roll out the welcome mat.

– Chief Executive
Officer
Rhonda Caldwell, Ed.D.
*KY Assn. of School
Administrators*

Steps for Getting Started Continued

11. Review expectations for communication with your new superintendent, including delivery method, frequency and information to be shared.
12. Ensure your new superintendent has your support and the tools needed to participate in the onboarding program. Mobile devices and a laptop are essential for the program.

Completion of these steps indicate you are prepared for your new superintendent's transition and that you genuinely care about getting him or her up to speed.

When a formal onboarding program is in place, new superintendents experience the following results (Sims, 2011):

1. Position matched their expectations
2. Clear understanding of their role and how it fits into the school district
3. Positive and welcoming environment
4. Transition objectives clearly focused the first weeks on the job
5. Meet-and-greets were planned, productive, and led to stronger relationships
6. Early wins built the new superintendent's confidence and organization
7. Having structure the first few weeks/months was effective
8. Environment supports and encourages development on the whole

Most superintendents accept the top job because of their desire to have a greater impact on student achievement. School boards are instrumental in establishing many of the working conditions for their new leader, which in turn helps accelerate the transition and enables them to focus on student achievement and getting results much faster (Glass & Franceschini, 2007).

I am indebted for the mentoring that I received during the onboarding process. The quality coaching built my capacity to layer ideas and lead with pace. You have to go slow to go fast.

- Superintendent
Mark Martin, Ed.D.,

Meade County Schools

Cohort #9

3. Assimilation: Key to Engagement and Acceleration

The school board member liaison is key to helping the new superintendent connect and engage in the onboarding program. The assimilation and acceleration phases include specific responsibilities to be carried out by the liaison.

The new superintendent's ILP team is comprised of an executive coach, an experienced superintendent mentor, and a school board member liaison. The team's purpose is to provide support, serve as a sounding board, and act as a critical friend throughout the first year. These individuals guide the new superintendent on a daily basis and assist with the development of the ILP and Capstone of Learning presentation at the end of the program year, as well as ensure successful completion of the onboarding program. The team meets a minimum of two times per year, but may meet as often as the superintendent and executive coach deem necessary.

The school board member liaison is selected by the new superintendent to serve on the ILP team. This team member serves as a liaison between the local board of education and the new superintendent, providing guidance and direction from the perspective of district needs and working to assimilate the new leader into the school district and the statewide onboarding program.

Specific responsibilities of the school board member liaison include:

1. Inform the superintendent about pertinent topics and issues.
2. Ensure the accommodation phase is completed.
3. Assist in the development of the ILP, ensuring board goals and objectives are aligned.
4. Communicate updates to the full board regarding the onboarding process.
5. Effectively guide and evaluate the new superintendent's growth over time.
6. Complete the action items outlined on the next page.

We know that leadership is very much related to change. As the pace of change accelerates, there is naturally a greater need for effective leadership.

– John Kotter

Important Dates and Action Items for ILP and Capstone of Learning

Month	Date(s)	Action Item
July	1-31	Attend orientation session in July or view on demand video for in-depth understanding and knowledge of the program, its requirements and the impact on the new superintendent.
August	1-31	Meet with the new superintendent for ILP development and alignment to district strategic plan goals and/or priorities. Lead board of education in discussing the five effectiveness standards utilized in the program and consider aligning with the superintendent's annual evaluation.
September	1-30	Meet with full ILP team in September or October.
October	1-31	Meet with full ILP team in September or October.
December	1-31	Meet with superintendent to discuss and review progress on ILP and PGP.
February	21-22??	Attend ILP team meeting held in conjunction with KSBA annual conference.
March	1-31	Meet to discuss ILP checkpoints.
May or June	1-30	Schedule Capstone of Learning to be presented by your new superintendent during a May or June board meeting. Mentor and director of executive coaching and mentoring to attend.
July	29	Celebrate your new superintendent's successful completion of the program (if entered the yearlong program in July of the previous year)

Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)

As the School Board Member Liaison, your role in the Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) is crucial in supporting your newly appointed superintendent throughout the onboarding journey. The ILP is designed to provide personalized growth opportunities, culminating in a Capstone of Learning at the end of the program year that showcases each superintendent's development and impact on their district.

The ILP is a year-long initiative that allows superintendents to create a tailored learning plan based on their specific goals, challenges, and the unique needs of their school district. This individualized approach ensures that the learning experience is relevant and applicable, empowering superintendents to focus on areas that will yield the greatest benefits for their leadership and the communities they serve.

Throughout the ILP, superintendents will engage in ongoing reflection and assessment of their progress. This reflective practice encourages them to document their experiences, insights, and the application of best practices, fostering a culture of continuous growth and self-awareness.

At the end of the program year, new superintendents will present their Capstone of Learning to the Board of Education, which reflects the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the program. The Capstone will highlight your new superintendent's key learnings, the outcomes of their individualized projects, and the strategies implemented to address specific challenges within their districts. This presentation is an opportunity for superintendents to showcase their leadership development and the positive impacts they have made in their educational community.

To enhance the ILP process, the Capstone of Learning will be managed through SuperEval, a powerful platform designed for evaluation and feedback in educational contexts. SuperEval provides a structured environment for the presentation of Capstone projects, allowing superintendents to effectively communicate their leadership, achievements, and the impact of their work.



As the School Board Member Liaison, you play a vital role in guiding and supporting your new superintendent through the Individualized Learning Plan process.

Your engagement in this process will undoubtedly contribute to the success of your new leader and the school community.

Completion of the steps outlined in this chapter accelerates your new superintendent's onboarding, bringing about immediate and positive results for the school district.

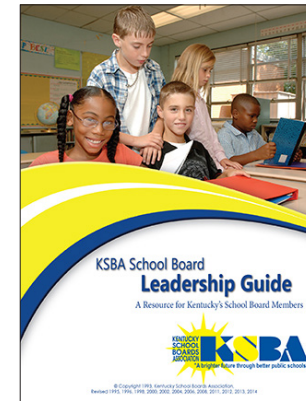
Fred Carter, Ed.D.
KY Assn. of School
Administrators

Recommended Reading

The following books are recommended by school board members, superintendents and participants who have completed the onboarding program or served on an ILP team. These publications serve as resources and are found beneficial by experienced school board members and superintendents.

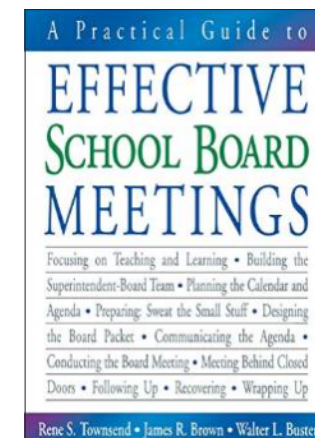
KSBA School Board Leadership Guide

An excellent resource for working with your school board is KSBA's Leadership Guide.



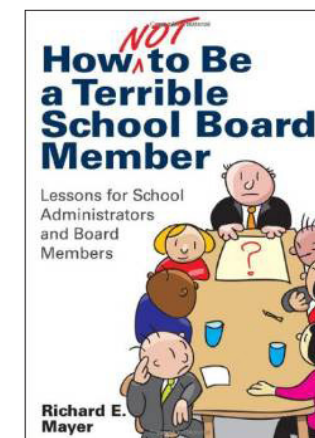
A Practical Guide to Effective School Board Meetings

Written by Rene Townsend, James Brown, and Walter Buster, this book provides realistic, detailed information for turning board meetings into productive, result-getting events that help you focus on teaching, learning and achieving your districts' goals. The authors have chaired over 1,000 board meetings and discuss creating role clarity, building the superintendent-board team to increase effectiveness and support positive working relationships, developing general operating procedures that work, carrying out effective board meetings, and following up post meeting.



How Not to Be a Terrible School Board Member: Lessons for School Administrators and Board Members

Veteran school board member, Richard E. Mayer, takes a humorous but substantive approach to the relationship between school administrators and board members. Key features of the book include 28 brief case studies and lessons learned for board members and administrators. In addition to highlighting typical traps, the case studies light the path to positive collaboration and shared decision-making between superintendents and school boards.

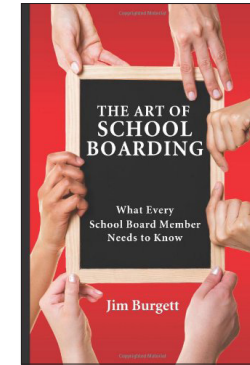


A capacity and taste for reading gives access to whatever has already been discovered by others. It is the key, or one of the keys, to the already solved problems. And, not only so, it gives a relish and facility for successfully pursuing the yet unsolved ones.

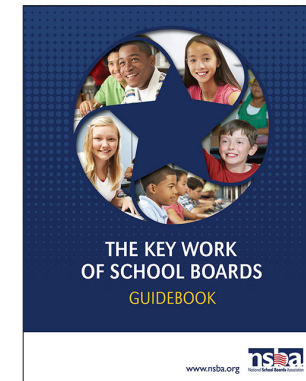
– Abraham Lincoln
Speech to the
Wisconsin State
Agricultural Society,
September 1859

The Art of School Boarding

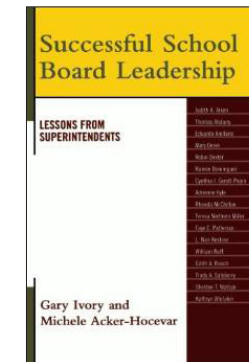
This easy read by Jim Burgett, written for school board rookies and veterans alike, describes how board members should treat the position and gives guidance on dealing with families, law, curriculum, finance, mandates, athletics and more.

***The Key Work of School Boards Guidebook***

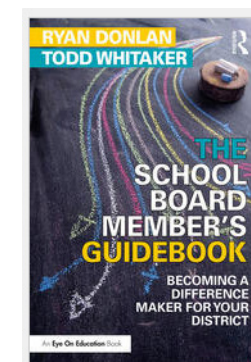
This guide provides a systems-thinking framework for improving student achievement by focusing on eight essential and interrelated action-areas for effective school governance. Authors Katheryn Gemberling, Carl Smith, and Joseph Villani refer to this as the Key Work of School Boards. The eight Key Work action-areas are vision, standards, assessment, accountability, alignment, collaboration, climate and continuous improvement.

***Successful School Board Leadership***

Authors Gary Ivory and Michele Acker-Hocevar provide success strategies for school board members in this book. They tackle leadership in an era of change, data driven decisions, leading with integrity, developing good staff, learning about education and your role, shortages of resources, mandates and micro politics, and understanding your superintendent's perspective and good relationships.

***The School Board Member's Guidebook***

Every student deserves a high-impact, well-qualified, and governance-driven school board. In this helpful book, best-selling authors Ryan Donlan and Todd Whitaker show you as a school board member how to make smart, worthwhile decisions that will lead to positive change in your district. The School Board Member's Guidebook addresses the challenges of making realistic choices that will truly benefit the school and have a lasting impact.



CHAPTER IV

The Role of the Superintendent Mentor



Good mentoring depends on a reciprocal learning relationship between the new superintendent and the mentor. Together you form a partnership to work collaboratively on achieving mutually defined goals that focus on developing your skills, abilities, knowledge and thinking. (Zachary 2009).

The Mentor-Match

One of the most valuable components of the Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents is the Mentor-Match of a first-year superintendent to an experienced superintendent mentor.

Serving as the chief executive officer of a school district is a challenging, daunting and gratifying experience, and it can also be a lonely one. Things happen that cannot or should not be shared with subordinates but would only be understood by someone in a similar position.

The mentor is key to helping the new superintendent navigate the superintendency and learn what works and what doesn't work within the school culture. Research conducted by one of the authors shows past participants gained the following from their mentor (Caldwell, 2015):

1. Created a focused and strong framework of support that successfully guided them through their first year as superintendent.
2. Gave confidence and direction for year two.
3. Expanded their network of colleagues from whom they could seek additional support.

This relationship has proven to be one of the most powerful sources for individual growth and performance among Kentucky's first year superintendents.

Matching Mentors and New Superintendents

KASA's program staff matches first-year superintendents through a variety of means that require different levels of consideration. Mentors are identified, selected and assigned following discussion with the KASA chief executive officer, general counsel, the director of executive coaching & mentoring, and the new superintendent. When possible, matches are made with pairings of similar districts.

The Onboarding Program has been an invaluable resource during my transition into the superintendent role. Having access to experienced leaders who genuinely understand the challenges and responsibilities of the position made a world of difference. The cohort provided not only practical insights and guidance, but also a strong network of peers and mentors who continue to support and encourage one another. It's reassuring to know you're not navigating this journey alone.

-Superintendent
Greg Conn

Knott County Schools

Cohort #13

The most successful matches are those that balance the following:

1. Mentor's expertise and strengths aligned to the participant's growth areas
2. Mentor and participant districts who are in close geographical proximity

This chapter is written especially for mentors who are matched to first-year superintendents enrolled in the onboarding program. It contains detailed information about mentor qualifications, essential duties, a pre-flight checklist for the first meeting, Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) development, and timelines. Most importantly, essential details and tools for supporting you as a mentor in the onboarding program are included.

Steps for Getting Started

The following steps will prepare you to mentor your new superintendent:

1. Read this guide in its entirety for full understanding of the program.
2. Contact your new superintendent by phone within one week to begin building the relationship and planning the schedule.
3. During your first call, remind your new superintendent to read this guide.
4. Schedule your first meeting with your new superintendent within one month to build your relationship and confirm the overall schedule.
5. Add the training dates located on pages [18-19](#) to your calendar to help support your new superintendent.
6. Ensure your new superintendent is prepared for in-person sessions as noted on pages [20-21](#) of this guide book.
7. Ensure you have access and are familiar with your new superintendent's digital portfolio using the SuperEval platform.
8. Ensure your new superintendent completes the pre-program self-assessment tool and shares the results with you.
9. Review the Essential District Data list located on pages [39-41](#).

I consider myself truly fortunate to have had a mentor who was readily accessible—whether by text, phone call, or email—whenever I sought guidance or support. I cannot imagine navigating the challenges of my first year without his steady leadership and willingness to invest time in my development. His mentorship has been instrumental in helping me build the capacity to lead effectively and serve the needs of our district community with confidence and clarity.

- Superintendent
Wendy Duvall
Owensboro Ind. Schools
Cohort #13

Overview of Mentor's Role and Responsibilities

Mentors serving in KASA's onboarding program are experienced, successful superintendents who volunteer to serve in this capacity and have two or more years of experience as a superintendent or are recently retired from a Kentucky school district. Mentors complete a required training program annually and are among the state's most successful superintendents.

Mentors guide new superintendents through a successful first year, providing a continuum of ongoing support and just-in-time learning. The mentor should meet in person at least once each quarter with the new superintendent in his or her district (initial, ILP, board meeting & Capstone) and communicates frequently to provide guidance and counsel. Note that joint attendance at a cooperative meeting does not take the place of a visit to the district.

Essential Duties for Successful Mentoring

The mentor's duties focus on three distinct areas:

1. Understanding the onboarding program's focus and available tools
2. Helping develop the new superintendent's ILP
3. Effectively guiding and evaluating the new superintendent's growth over time and offering a knowledgeable and empathetic ear for those issues that cannot be aired within the district

The detailed job description is located in the [Appendix](#).

To learn more about the value of the program click [here](#).



Overview of Mentor's Role and Responsibilities

Mentor's Checklist

The following checklist has been designed to assist you in supporting your new superintendent while serving as a mentor:

MENTOR DUTIES	ACTION ITEM
1. Understand the onboarding program's focus and tools. a. Participate in initial training, refer to mentor resources, and implement examples of best practices that are provided throughout the year. b. Access and use state data and survey information to effectively engage superintendents in discussions leading to understanding the district's profile, needs, and possible action items. c. Communicate quarterly with the executive coach to discuss and monitor success of your mentorship. d. Attend continuing professional learning with the new superintendent when possible. e. Be available in person, by telephone, email and virtually to support the superintendent. f. Possess good working knowledge of new superintendent's e-portfolio.	☐ Implement best practice strategies for mentors as shared through emails and other resources. ☐ When unavailable to attend, connect with your executive coach or program staff for updates and new information. ☐ Access, understand and use district data to involve the new superintendent in the process. ☐ Engage the superintendent in making data driven decisions for developing goals and taking action. ☐ Communicate quarterly with your executive coach and review action item checklist progress. ☐ Be available and accessible through face-to-face, email, mobile device and connect.kasa.org so that superintendents know they have access to you.

Mentor Checklist continued

2. Assist the new superintendent in developing his or her Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

- a. Utilize the pre-program self-assessment tool to determine growth areas for inclusion in the plan.
- b. Use the results of state data and survey data to develop the ILP with SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound).
- c. Apply a reasonable timeline to the plan and set expectations for accountability to complete the plan.

3. Effectively guide and evaluate the new superintendent's growth over time.

- a. Support and guide the superintendent in the development of an e-portfolio based on the goals of the ILP. The professional Growth Plan (PGP) and 30-60-90 Plan must be completed by September 15.
- b. Throughout the year, assess incremental growth toward the goals.
- c. Evaluate the superintendent's success in growth toward the goals of the ILP by reviewing the e-portfolio prior to attending the portfolio review with the local school board.
- d. Visit the new superintendent quarterly in his or her district and attend board meetings to support and monitor superintendent presentations.
- e. Supervise the new superintendent's work and provide constructive feedback quarterly or more frequently if needed.
- f. Provide quarterly reports and a final evaluation to the executive director of coaching & mentoring.

- ☐ Help the superintendent build the ILP, PGP, and 30-60-90 Day Plan he or she develops with their board.
- ☐ Utilize the pre-program self-assessment tool to determine growth areas for inclusion in the plan.
- ☐ Ensure district data is reviewed within the first two months and substantive goals developed for the ILP.
- ☐ Help develop a personal timeline with milestones for the completion of key action items, ILP, submissions and the final Capstone presentation from year one.
- ☐ Make your first contact within the first week after notification and schedule your first in person meeting within the first month.
- ☐ Ensure artifacts representing evidence of growth toward an ILP goal are uploaded in the e-portfolio.
- ☐ Monitor progress of uploading artifacts on a continuous basis to track growth within each individual goal.
- ☐ Work with the superintendent on a continuous basis throughout the year to track growth within each individual goal.
- ☐ Assist in the development of the final Capstone of Learning presentation.
- ☐ Ensure quarterly meetings by scheduling in-district visits and attendance at board meetings.
- ☐ Schedule time to prepare appropriately for upcoming discussions.
- ☐ Respond to questions within 24 hours.
- ☐ Set clear next steps to close regular discussions.
- ☐ Follow-up on commitments.
- ☐ Submit quarterly reports to the director of executive coaching & mentoring October 1, December 1, April 1, and July 1 using the Mentor Quarterly Report template located in the [Appendix](#).

Connecting with Your New Superintendent

Following notification of the mentor assignment, contact your new superintendent to begin developing a relationship and establish rapport. Schedule your first meeting within the first month of your assignment. As one who walked the path of the new superintendent, you will share your experiences and expertise to challenge him or her toward achieving the goals of the ILP and completing the onboarding program.

All too quickly, your new superintendent will begin feeling overwhelmed and somewhat alone. It is important to spend time at your first meeting establishing your schedule for the year and the best way to communicate with each other. Email addresses, mobile phone and office numbers, and a preset schedule for the year will be critical.

While the relationship you develop will last a lifetime, it is also the cornerstone of your new superintendent's success.

One of the great things about the cohort is the relationship you make with your superintendent mentor. You can always pick up the phone and ask for advice, bounce ideas off each other, share documents, and vent. Your mentor is a resource, but in the end, you become friends. The relationships you make with your mentor, coaches and fellow superintendents through the program will help you get through your first year successfully.

- Superintendent
Tommy Burrough
McLean County Schools
Cohort #7

Pre-flight Checklist

This pre-flight checklist contains key discussion items for your mentor-new superintendent meetings. The mentor shall discuss every pre-flight checklist item with the new superintendent during their initial visit with the new superintendent.

First Call - within the first week

- ☐ Share your professional experiences and background.
- ☐ Determine ground rules, confidentiality, and expectations for the relationship.
- ☐ Establish a tentative meeting and checkpoint schedule for the mentor and mentee.
- ☐ Remind your mentee to read the entire eBook and schedule your first in-person visit.

First Visit - within the first month

- ☐ Review the Self-Assessment Tool results with the new superintendent.
- ☐ Establish superintendent-board leadership guidelines and methods for communication.
- ☐ Establish goals and review timelines of the onboarding program for the mentor and the mentee.
- ☐ Review the Kentucky Department of Education's [Important Due Dates for Superintendents](#).
- ☐ Discuss any district personnel challenges and opportunities.
- ☐ Examine current or pending legal issues.
- ☐ Review district budget, tax rates and bonding capacity.
- ☐ Assist with the set-up of the ILP. (The PGP and 30-60-90 Plan are due by September 15).
- ☐ Identify the Cooperative the new superintendent will attend.

Ongoing Visits - a minimum of one each quarter

- ☐ Discuss district assessment data including test score results and remediation needed.
- ☐ Assist with the continuing development of the ILP.
- ☐ Enhance superintendent-board leadership and suggest methods to improve communication.
- ☐ Discuss development of school board agendas and meeting facilitation support with the chairperson.
- ☐ Discuss district climate, possible morale boosters, celebrations, recognitions and early wins.
- ☐ Share professional learning and networking opportunities.

Pre-flight Checklist Continued

- ☐ Share professional learning and networking opportunities.
- ☐ Discuss superintendent participation in civic organizations, visibility, and community leadership.
- ☐ Discuss pupil attendance and enrollment data.
- ☐ Examine the district certified evaluation plan.
- ☐ Discuss other items noted in the Essential District Data section at the end of chapter two.
- ☐ Continue reviewing district budget and bonding capacity.
- ☐ Remind the new superintendent that he/she is expected to review progress on one Standard each month at the Board meeting.

Communication, meeting in-person, and connecting virtually are key to your new superintendent's success. Be sure to plan the year in advance as soon as possible.

Confidentiality and Trust

Confidentiality and trust go hand-in-hand in a mentoring relationship. Neither the relationship nor the outcome will reach its full potential without these important elements. Confidentiality is a component of ethical behavior and part of the best practices for ethics outlined in chapter two of this book. A promise of confidentiality builds trust between the mentor and the new superintendent.

Be sure to discuss confidentiality during the initial meeting, identifying those items to remain confidential. Your new superintendent will need reassurance that he or she can speak freely without worrying what may be shared with others. With trust driving the relationship, candid conversations will take place and you will be there to help as a mentor.

Quarterly Reporting

Mentors must complete and submit a quarterly report detailing all interactions and discussion topics with their new superintendents. The reports are collected and compiled for use in the final evaluation and determination if the new superintendent successfully completed the onboarding program. Reports should be submitted to the director of executive coaching & mentoring on the following dates:

1st quarter	October 1
2nd quarter	January 1
3rd quarter	April 1
4th quarter	July 1

The Mentor Quarterly Report template is located in the [Appendix](#) (KASA Quarterly, 2014).

Accessing the Digital portfolio

Stay in touch and keep abreast of conversations with new superintendents at connect.kasa.org, a vibrant online community platform for collaboration and resource sharing among first-year superintendents, their mentors, the director of executive coaching & mentoring, and program faculty.

In addition, your new superintendent's ILP requires an electronic portfolio of artifacts for showing progress on the standards as listed on the ILP rubric and the KASA Effectiveness Standards. The digital portfolio is available through the SuperEval platform. It is organized by standard and is designed for your new superintendent to store his or her ILP artifacts and collaborate with you, the director of executive coaching & mentoring and the school board member liaison.

Your new superintendent's ILP requires an electronic portfolio of artifacts for showing progress on the standards. It is designed so that you may assist and collaborate for a strong first year.

connect • kasa • org

[Connect.kasa.org](https://connect.kasa.org) is a secure, private community platform that is purpose-built to improve engagement, promote information sharing, increase collaboration, solve problems, and provide a forum for innovation. Contact one of the KASA staff members listed on page [30](#) or visit www.kasa.org for access information and login credentials.



The online community platform, connect.kasa.org, is also supported on mobile devices. Download the Thrive 365 app from app store.

A mentor community called “New Superintendent Mentors” was created to enhance communication and provide valuable resources and support for those serving as mentors.

Individualized Learning Plan (ILP)

As part of the onboarding program, your new superintendent will design and implement an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP is the foundation of the onboarding program and is directly tied to the KASA Seven Effectiveness Standards. The learning plan looks forward to what is to be achieved within the larger framework of the program and is used to develop the superintendent's year-end Capstone of Learning presentation.

Components of the ILP

1. Designed with the support and guidance of the executive director of coaching & mentoring, superintendent mentor, and designated board member liaison
2. Synthesized within the larger framework of the effectiveness standards
3. Aligned to give credence to the new superintendent's personal aspirations
4. Reflected in the 30-60-90-day plan and the PGP written by the superintendent that provides for a set of learning goals to be achieved over the course of the program year
5. Developed to provide an opportunity to build and collect evidence and reflective benchmarks for the new superintendent's evaluation through an e-portfolio

The ILP culminates with a Capstone of Learning presentation to the new superintendent's Board of Education. The Capstone will reflect the year of learning, development, and goals achieved on behalf of the school district. The Capstone is a learning record that looks to what has been accomplished during the first year and sets potential goals for the future. The ILP process can serve as a first-year superintendent's official evaluation within the five effectiveness standards if the Board of Education wishes.

The KASA Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding Superintendents was an invaluable experience during my first year as superintendent. The program provided the support and the tools that I needed to effectively operate a school district. The program's mentor component, which paired me with a veteran superintendent from a similar district, was instrumental in navigating difficult situations and answering any questions that I had. The relationships that I was able to build within the cohort will undoubtedly contribute to my success not just in my first year, but for years to come.

— Superintendent
Billy Edwards
Mayfield Ind. Schools

Cohort #13

*Components of the ILP Continued***The ILP Team**

The ILP team is comprised of the new superintendent, an executive coach, a superintendent mentor, and a school board member liaison. The team's purpose is to provide support, serve as a sounding board and act as a critical friend throughout the new superintendent's first year. The team provides guidance on a daily basis and assists with the development of the ILP and Capstone presentation at the end of the program year, as well as ensures successful completion of the onboarding program.

The team meets a minimum of two times per year, but may meet as often as the superintendent and the executive director of coaching & mentoring deem necessary or is desired.

Superintendent Effectiveness Standards and ILP Rubric

Five Superintendent Effectiveness Standards serve as a framework for understanding the complex elements of the new superintendent's work. The standards include:

1. Strategic Leadership
2. Instructional Leadership
3. Cultural Leadership
4. Human Resource Leadership
5. Operational Leadership

The ILP team is instrumental to the success of a Superintendent. The training sessions are not only engaging and timely but are also directly aligned with the specific demands of each segment of the school year. However, the most invaluable aspect is the unwavering support offered by the team. Whether it be through regular check-ins, in-person visits, or around the clock availability during critical moments, I couldn't be more grateful for their dedication and commitment.

– Superintendent
Rex Booth
Trigg County Schools
Cohort #13

Superintendent Effectiveness Standards and ILP Rubric Continued

The five effectiveness standards and the ILP rubric are very similar with only two exceptions:

1. Dispositions for leadership are embedded in the rubric.
2. The performance rating of “needs growth” in the effectiveness standards is replaced with “threshold” in the rubric.

The effectiveness standards aim to:

1. Help focus the new superintendent on the most important aspects of the job.
2. Serve as a roadmap for ongoing professional growth and effectiveness from career entry through career exit.
3. Form a basis of support from which the ILP team can determine the new superintendent's successful completion of the onboarding program.

The ILP rubric is the foundation of the KASA Superintendent Effectiveness Standards. The standards are also aligned to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards, the superintendent evaluation document established by the Kentucky School Boards Association (KSBA), the Standards for Quality School Systems-AdvancED, and the North Carolina Standards for Superintendents (adapted from a Wallace Foundation study).

The ILP rubric includes a summary of each standard with an accompanying set of practices and indicators that clarify the levels listed. New superintendents develop lists of potential artifacts for each standard during training sessions. Performance ratings are also included in the rubric. The standards have been cross-walked with the Five Practices of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) and the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL).

The standards-based model serves to illustrate proficient performance on the part of the new superintendent while recognizing he or she is unlikely to possess all the competencies and skills inherent in each of the seven effectiveness standards. Each new superintendent's ILP team uses the rubric to gauge his or her performance level in each of the standards.

Creating the Capstone presentation was a great way to self-reflect on the school year, and uploading documents for each standard throughout the year gave me a great starting point when I began creating my capstone presentation. The Capstone Presentation was also a great way to review each standard with the Board of Education. It allowed the School Board to not only read some of our team accomplishments, but to see the many pictures and artifacts that were a great representation of those accomplishments!

— Superintendent
Rick Wolf

Dayton Ind. Schools

Cohort #13

Components of ILP Continued

The new superintendent contributes to the rubric by conducting a pre-program self-assessment and provides evidence of his or her performance in each standard area throughout the year. Near the end of the program, each new superintendent, under the guidance of the ILP team, synthesizes his or her own performance against the standards, and shares those results with the board of education in a culminating Capstone of Learning presentation. At this point, the ILP team makes a consensus decision about the new superintendent's successful completion of the Next Generation Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents or will recommend additional time in year two of the program. It is important to note a new superintendent's board of education is still responsible for the annual evaluation, which may or may not be distinct from the ILP team's performance appraisal.

Toward the end of the second semester, the new superintendent participates in a 360-degree review of the leadership practices demonstrated thus far in the new position through the use of the LPI- Leadership Practices Inventory (which has been cross-walked with the KASA Superintendent Effectiveness Standards). Coaches work with the new superintendents providing feedback and mentoring concerning the LPI Practices during the second year.

Completion of the ILP process is required of all new superintendents to comply with the provisions of [KRS 156.111](#) and to maintain certification to serve as a superintendent in the state of Kentucky.

The chart on the following page outlines the process for developing each phase and timeline for the ILP.

Completion of the ILP process is required of all new superintendents to comply with the provisions of [KRS 156.111](#) and to maintain certification to serve as a superintendent in the state of Kentucky.

Timeline for Developing ILP

Phases as a Process	Months (July - June)											
	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Phase 1: Collaborate with the ILP Team and discuss the inclusion of artifacts in the digital portfolio based on individual and district needs.	→											
Phase 2: Work throughout the year with the executive coach and mentor to identify and collect evidence based on action items in the ILP. Progress reports are required at the end of each quarter.	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
Phase 3: Collect and review evidence and offer formative feedback quarterly.	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
Phase 4: Upload evidence of success for the digital portfolio.		→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
Phase 5: Review digital portfolio with the executive coach and mentor in quarter 4 and prepare for the Capstone presentation to the board.							→	→	→	→	→	→
Phase 6: Prepare Capstone presentation (digital portfolio artifacts) and receive feedback.										→	→	→
Phase 7: Suggest use of feedback from the LPI to create ILPs and Capstone presentations in future years.											→	→

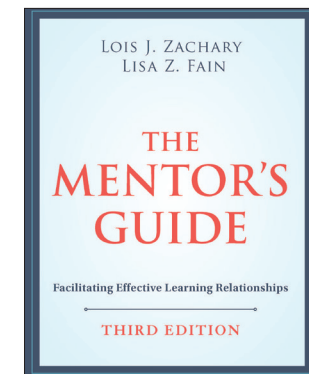
Recommended Reading

The following publications are recommended by program staff and mentors as helpful resources to coaches and mentors:

The Mentor's Guide

by Lois Zachary and Lisa Fain

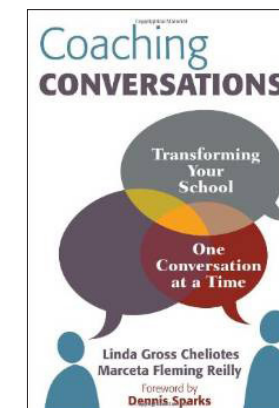
Mentoring is a proven way to promote growth and development in leadership. The book explores the valuable process of mentoring. Leaders in any setting will benefit from the practical tools shared in this book. The hands-on exercises provided in this unique resource will help the mentor successfully navigate the learning journey with their mentee. Using this guide will enhance the professional growth experience for the mentee and will serve as a self-reflection tool for the mentor as well.



Coaching Conversations: Transforming Your School One Conversation at a Time

by Linda Gross Cheliotas and Marceta Fleming Reilly

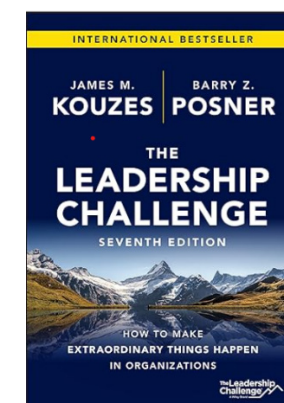
Backed by research, this book shifts responsibility for instructional improvement from the school leader to the entire school community. It has numerous tips for those who are coaching and mentoring. Learn how to engage your new superintendent to work on a grass roots level to achieve instructional transformation. Includes tips on developing open, reflective conversations, motivating staff, and adopting new habits internally.



The Leadership Challenge®

by James Kouzes and Barry Posner

TLC is a framework that provides the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership®. TLC® is foundational to leadership and helps leaders transform values into actions, visions into realities, obstacles into innovations, separateness into solidarity, and risks into rewards.



CHAPTER V

The Role of the Executive Leadership Staff

“I never cease to be amazed at the power of the coaching process to draw out the skills or talent that was previously hidden within an individual, and which invariably finds a way to solve a problem previously thought unsolvable.” – John Russell

Key Program Leadership Staff

This chapter outlines the roles and responsibilities of key leadership staff to assist you in understanding how they support new superintendents and in the development of their ILP teams.

The Executive Director of Coaching & Mentoring

The executive director of coaching & mentoring guides new superintendents, their mentors, and school board member liaisons through the onboarding process. The goal of coaching is to clarify the new leader's most essential duties in the first year and to help him or her assimilate and achieve the district's goals as they relate to the ILP (KASA Executive, 2015).

Executive coaching is an experiential and individualized leader development process that builds the new superintendent's capability to achieve short- and long-term goals for the school district. It is conducted through one-on-one and group interactions, driven by data from multiple perspectives, and is based on mutual trust and respect. The executive director of coaching & mentoring works in partnership with the new superintendent and his or her ILP team to achieve maximum impact (Executive Coaching Forum, 2012).

KASA's director of executive coaching & mentoring possesses the highest credentials and is a former superintendent who remains actively involved in public education at the leadership level. He or she maintains high standards of competence and exercises careful judgment in determining how to best serve the new superintendent and lead the ILP team. His or her experience as a school superintendent combined with his or her coaching, psychological, district and organizational expertise are powerful in guiding new superintendents while supporting their mentors.

He or she must meet the qualifications outlined in the [Executive Director of Coaching & Mentoring](#).



Scott Hawkins
*Executive Director of
Coaching & Mentoring*

Essential Duties for Successful Coaching

KASA's executive director of coaching & mentoring guides the Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) teams. The duties are extensive and critical to the success of both new superintendents and the onboarding program (KASA Coordinator, 2015).

The responsibilities of the executive director focus on five distinct areas:

1. Coaching New Superintendents

- a. Guide new superintendent development of ILP, PGP, 30/60/90 presented to the board.
- b. Solve tactical problems.
- c. Develop self-reflection skills and habits that ensure learning continues after coaching ends.

2. Communication

- a. Communicate the new superintendent's progress on a quarterly basis (or more frequently if necessary) to mentors, board chairs, community, and program staff.
- b. Ensure consistent and effective communication through in-person and virtual meetings.

3. Onboarding Program

- a. Attend professional learning events for mentors and new superintendents.
- b. Apply program information and tools to bring new mentors into the program and provide training.
- c. Spend a full day with the new superintendent in his or her district by September 30, attend an ILP meeting virtually, attend a school board meeting virtually, visit the district in May or June for the Capstone of Learning presentation.
- d. Conduct ILP team meeting with mentor in the fall.
- e. Virtually attend a board meeting with the new superintendent to support and monitor his or her presentations and guidance to the board chairperson.
- f. Submit detailed reports outlining interactions with the new superintendent and mentor October 1, December 1, April 1, and July 1.
- g. Onboard new superintendents that enter throughout the year.

A Good Coach

- Listens
- Asks open questions
- Clarifies points made
- Encourages reflection
- Avoids telling
- Builds rapport
- Is non-judgmental
- Challenges beliefs
- Helps to see the big picture
- Encourages commitment to action
- Doesn't have all the answers
- Develops trust and respect
- Is solutions focused
- Has a strong belief that colleagues have the capacity to learn, develop and change

*Essential Duties for Successful Coaching continued***4. Mentor Support**

- a. Join mentors on periodic site visits to the new superintendent's district.
- b. Respond to mentor questions immediately.
- c. Support mentors with the superintendent evaluation process, including monitoring progress of the ILP, the digital portfolio and development of the Capstone of Learning presentation.

5. Mentor Evaluation

- a. Supervise mentor work and provide constructive feedback each quarter.
- b. Provide written feedback quarterly to KASA on mentor work with the superintendent.
- c. Provide KASA and the mentor a final evaluation, using the [Summary of Mentor Experience and Assistance](#) survey tool located in the [Appendix](#).
- d. Onboard new mentors that enter throughout the year.

6. Individual Learning Plan (ILP) Support

ILP support services are available to assist the new superintendent in building an effective capstone presentation at the end of the program. Although optional, this support service ensures the necessary presentation components are met. Feedback provided through this service has proven to lead to successful capstone delivery.

The ILP support team will:

- a. Work with the ILP team leader (mentor) to provide assistance in structuring the following assessments:
 - Mid-year assessment sessions of superintendent's effectiveness of the 30-60-90- day plan, PGP, and draft district improvement plans (December)
 - ILP assessments of the new superintendent's district draft budget reviews (March)
 - Final year-one review of the portfolio and suggested creation of year-two ILP (May/June)

The ILP coordinator is a valuable resource to all members of the ILP team.

The Director of Faculty & Curriculum

The Director of Faculty and Curriculum guides the curriculum development and content delivery of the onboarding program in accordance with state law and guidelines established through the superintendent standards. Duties include:

1. Organize and facilitate meetings of staff, core team, and faculty

- a. Plan and organize monthly meeting agendas for the staff team.
- b. Plan and organize meeting agendas for core team and faculty.
- c. Send reminders and advanced notification of meetings to team members.
- d. Collaborate with the new superintendent staff team to organize and facilitate LPI coaching calls.

2. Plan, organize, and develop program agendas

- a. Work collaboratively to build training agendas around the following:
 - New superintendent self-assessment strengths and growth areas
 - Survey data and feedback from current and previous cohorts (customer voice)
 - Timing of content delivery that connects with yearly order of district workflow
 - Location/agenda flow based on alignment with other conference obligations and agendas (KASA, KSBA, KASS, ELF).
- b. Communicate and coordinate with faculty the session focus, date, time, and support needed.
- c. Work collaboratively to integrate The Leadership Challenge™ and the Leadership Practices Inventory™ into the curriculum for new superintendents.

3. Ensure smooth delivery of training sessions

- a. Collaborate with KASA staff to ensure meeting space, agenda, presentations, materials, and sponsors.
- b. Communicate with faculty to secure final PPT presentation. Work in collaboration with KASA staff. Upload information in the online community platform.
- c. Collaborate with KASA staff to record training sessions and upload in the Connect community.
- d. Facilitate smooth flow and transition between sessions among faculty members.
- e. Ensure completion of session survey data and follow up with faculty regarding next steps.
- f. Oversee completions of affidavit process and assignments for required sessions missed.

Compliance Officer & General Counsel

The job title serves a brief but clear indicator of the duties of the position, but the role of the Compliance Officer & General Counsel is multi-faceted and extends beyond what may initially come to mind. One clear primary role is to coordinate with other program leaders to make certain the implementation of the Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents meets all the standards set in law for its content and operation. These are found in [KRS 156.111](#) and its companion administrative regulation, [704 KAR 3:406](#). The duties also include making certain that participants fulfill their legal duty to attend, participate, and produce work products that meet the program standards. The Compliance Officer and General Counsel also serves as a faculty member for the school law training module.

Duties and responsibilities include:

- Work cooperatively as a member of the leadership team of the program to assure that all facets of the program are in compliance with governing law and regulation.
- Monitor participation and attendance of all program participants to verify that they met the requirements set out in law required for successful completion of the program.
- Advise the program leadership team on matters related to operational integrity or compliance by faculty members and participants.
- Serve as a faculty member for the purpose of delivering content within the school law and human resources portion of the program curriculum.
- With other leadership team members, meet with participants who are not in compliance with program requirements and seek corrective action.
- Provide ongoing legal advice and assistance to program participants upon request as they carry out the duties of their superintendency.

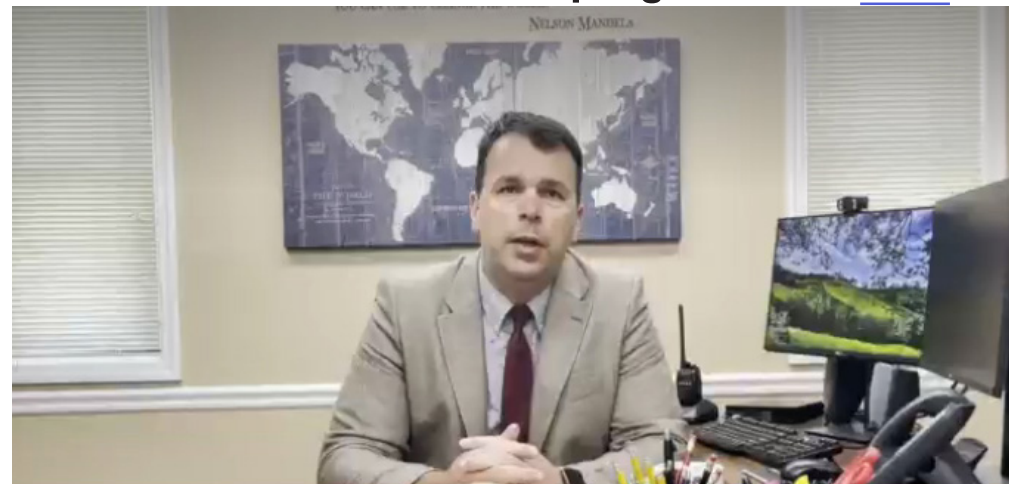
Integrity and Candor

The executive director of coaching & mentoring, and director of faculty and curriculum operate with the highest levels of integrity and candor when working with new superintendents and their ILP teams. Confidentiality is a component of integrity as it relates to ethical behavior and is part of best practice for ethics outlined in chapter two of this book. The relationships nor the intended outcome will reach their full potential without these important elements.

Building and maintaining relationships around these elements are key when discussing sensitive information as it relates to the onboarding process, the new superintendent's development, challenges faced, goals and activities on behalf of the school district and the Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents.

The onboarding program brings you together with these school leadership development experts. With them, you will explore the essence of effective leadership, align your role with key objectives, and better understand important factors in superintendent leadership.

To learn more about the program click [here](#).



Chris Meadows, Magoffin County Schools

The glue that holds all relationships together, including the relationship between the leader and the led is trust, and trust is based on integrity.

– Brian Tracy

Conclusion

Our hope is this program manual brings new tools and resources to your attention, and that these will help enhance your leadership role, increase your excitement and energy about the onboarding program and your role as a new superintendent or as an ILP team member. Most importantly, we hope it brings clarity to the roles and responsibilities of each ILP team member.

The Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents brings you together with expert leaders, experienced superintendents, other colleagues from universities, the Kentucky Department of Education, education agencies, and business partners who support public education.

This program manual, as a companion tool to the onboarding program, will aid you in exploring the essence of effective leadership of your school district, high performance teams, developing your ILP, continuing to define your philosophy as a leader, and aligning your role with key objectives for the program and your school district.

We hope you will find it helpful in preparing and nurturing a new generation of highly regarded school superintendents in Kentucky as they create schools of the future and prepare all of our children and youth to graduate life-ready for successfully living and working in a global society.

People who
work together
will win,
whether it be
against complex
football defenses
or the problems
of modern
society.

– Vince
Lombardi

Acknowledgments

First, to our families, thank you for your constant support and encouragement. You spent countless hours wondering where we were, with whom we were spending our time, how that time was being utilized, and why it was necessary to bury our minds and thoughts in so many books and resources. Even so, you never questioned us. You loved us unconditionally and provided the reassurance and belief that we could accomplish anything.

We also thank our boards for understanding how this program would impact us as leaders, but most importantly, those we serve in our communities. We are grateful for the investment you made in our development as transformational leaders. To our support teams, thank you for being our learning partners. Your understanding and support was essential to our success. The school leaders, faculty, children, and communities we serve have and will benefit from our professional learning experience.

We give our heartfelt gratitude to the new superintendents, mentors, executive coaches, and board member liaisons who provided valuable feedback as participants in the new superintendent onboarding program. They, along with the future superintendents of Kentucky, are the heart and soul of this work.

To the Kentucky Association of School Administrators and the program staff, we appreciate you for embracing our work and allowing us to apply our professional learning and knowledge to move the Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents from the implementation phase to the continuous improvement phase.

Finally, we thank the Ed.D. leadership team at Northern Kentucky University, our professors and members of our superintendent cohort. Together, they gave us permission to think and learn differently while giving us the opportunity to create new knowledge and apply it to the organizations for the benefit of those we serve. Professors Mark Wasicsko, Ted Hodgson, and Michael Chirichello, your leadership has given us the capacity to translate vision into reality. We are grateful. This book is the outcome of our work.

Leadership is the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations.

– Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner

The Leadership Challenge®

About the Authors



Rhonda Caldwell, Ed.D. is the CEO of the Kentucky Association of School Administrators in Frankfort, Kentucky. She is one of Kentucky's foremost education leaders with many years of service to public education.

She has served in various leadership capacities with the American Association of School Administrators, American Society of Association Executives, Governor's Community Engagement/Preschool Task Force, Kentucky Society of Association Executives, Kentucky's Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents, Kentucky Minority Superintendent Intern Program, and as a registered lobbyist to the Kentucky General Assembly.

Caldwell co-authored this training manual, *A Guide to Kentucky's Executive Leadership Series for Onboarding New Superintendents*, as part of her doctoral thesis. She received her doctorate in education leadership from Northern Kentucky University in 2015.

Caldwell is a Certified Association Executive (CAE), a title held by less than five percent of association executives nationwide. She has received various state and national awards, including The University Council of Education Administration's Excellence in Education Leadership Award, the Oasis Award, and was selected for the Education Delegation to China (2009) and has studied the Finland (2012) and Ontario (2014) education systems. In 2018, she was selected one of 25 participants in the AASA National Women's Consortium. She has designed, grown, and/or implemented over 10 substantial programs during her tenure at the Kentucky Association of School Administrators, and holds certified master status to implement The Leadership Challenge® statewide.



Ronald Anthony Strong, Ed.D. is recognized across Kentucky for his leadership in school administration. His willingness to serve placed him in the position of president of both the Kentucky Association of School Superintendents and the Council for Better Education. In addition to those statewide positions, he served on the board of directors for the Kentucky Education Professional

Standards Board and the Kentucky Association of School Administrators.

From 2004-2018 he led two districts as superintendent in northern Kentucky. Since his retirement he has taken a position with Compass Municipal Advisors, LLC. In northern Kentucky he continues to serve as an advocate for public education. Strong was considered a leader among superintendents and continues in his new role to help mentor new superintendents.

Strong is a known presenter at state and national conferences and is recipient of numerous leadership awards from the Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, Kentucky Family, Career and Community Leaders in America, and Kentucky Future Farmers of America. He also received the 2018 Distinguished Service award for KASA. His passion is for developing and growing administrators so that all districts will always have a pool of candidates ready for leadership. Strong holds a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership degree from Northern Kentucky University.

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APPENDIX

Implementation Tools

Attendance Affidavit for New Superintendent Training

https://kasa.informz.net/kasa/data/images/AFFIDAVIT_updated.pdf

Code of Ethics, Kentucky Association of School Administrators

<https://kasa.informz.net/kasa/data/images/Links/Code%20of%20Ethics%20revision%202012.pdf>

Important Due Dates for Superintendents, Kentucky Department of Education

<https://www.education.ky.gov/Documents/Important%20Due%20Dates%20for%20Superintendents.pdf>

Individual Leadership Plan Rubric

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/New%20-%20ILP_Rubric%202026-7%20-%20Draft%208.logo.pdf

KRS 156.111, Kentucky Superintendents Training Program and Assessment Center (Kentucky Revised Statue 2014)

<https://apps.legislature.ky.gov/law/statutes/statute.aspx?id=43529>

Mentor Quarterly Report Template

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/Form_Mentor_Qtrly_Report_FY26.pdf

Participation Policy for New Superintendent Training

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/Supt_Assessment_attendance_policy_062026.pdf

Pre-program Self-Assessment Survey

<https://kasa.informz.net/survistapro/sn.asp?gid=3AD9674A-D295-4FEE-9BFF-4C738D625FFF>

Standards, Next Generation Effectiveness Standards for Kentucky School Superintendents

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/FY27_SuptEffectivenessStandards_June20206.pdf

Survey of Mentor Experience and Assistance Summary

<https://kasa.informz.net/survistapro/sn.asp?gid=FA012790-7244-4CEF-9319-6ADF4E1B2615>

Job Descriptions

Board Member Liaison

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/Job_Description_BoardMemberLiaison_062026.pdf

Director of Executive Coaching & Mentoring

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/Job_Descripton_ExecCoach_62026.pdf

Director of Faculty and Curriculum

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/Job_Descripton_DirectorFacultyandCurriculum_062026.pdf

Individualized Learning Plan Team Coordinator

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/Job_Description_ILPTeamCoordinator62026.pdf

Superintendent Mentor

https://assets.informz.net/kasa/data/images/Job_Description_Mentor_062026.pdf