Kentucky NxG Superintendent Effectiveness Standards Pilot
by the KY Dept. of Education and KY Assn of School Administrators
NxG New Superintendent Leadership Series, 2012-13

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

To that end, Kentucky's Commissioner of Education, Dr. Terry Holliday, sanctioned KASA's proposal to develop and pilot a set of superintendent effectiveness standards, beginning with the new superintendent training cohort of 2012-13. The pilot KY NxG Superintendent Effectiveness Standards are intended to serve as:

- a framework for understanding the many complex elements of the work of superintendents while helping practitioners focus on the most important aspects of the job
- a road map for the on-going professional growth and effectiveness of Kentucky's superintendents from career entry (required training for new superintendents) through career exit
- a basis upon which support for new superintendents can be individualized based on demonstrated competency in particular standards and indicators
- the basis upon which the new superintendent's support team can make a determination about successful completion of the state's induction program

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

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

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

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

Standards include:
1. Strategic Leadership
2. Instructional Leadership
3. Cultural Leadership
4. Human Resource Leadership
5. Managerial Leadership
6. External Development Leadership
7. Micropolitical Leadership

Standard 1: Strategic Leadership

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

PRACTICES: The superintendent practices effective strategic leadership practices when he or she demonstrates the following:

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

ARTIFACTS

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

Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

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

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

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

PRACTICES: The superintendent demonstrates effective instructional leadership practices when he/she demonstrates the following:

    a. Leads with a clear, high profile focus on learning and teaching grounded in high expectations and goals;
    b. Models learning for staff and students;
    c. Communicates high expectations for student achievement to staff and stakeholders;
    d. Challenges staff to reflect deeply on and define the knowledge, skills, and concepts essential for ensuring every student graduates from high school globally competitive, ready for college and career, and prepared for a productive life in the 21st Century; and
    e. Establishes and sustains a system that operates as a collaborative learning organization through structures (including effective, high performing professional learning communities) that support improved instruction and student learning at all levels.

ARTIFACTS:

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

Standard 3: Cultural Leadership

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

PRACTICES: The superintendent practices effective cultural leadership when he or she:
   a. Communicates strong ideals and beliefs about schooling, teaching, and professional learning communities with all stakeholders and then operates from those beliefs;
   b. Builds community understanding of what is required to ensure that every public school student graduates from high school globally competitive for work and post-secondary education and prepared for life in the 21st Century;
   c. Creates a school system (and not a "system of schools") in which shared vision and equitable practices are the norm;
   d. Builds trust and promotes a sense of well-being between and among staff, students, parents, and the community at large;
   e. Systematically and fairly acknowledges failures and celebrates accomplishments of the district;
   f. Visibly supports and actively engages in the positive, culturally-responsive traditions of the community;
   g. Creates opportunities for both staff involvement in the community and community involvement in the schools; and
   h. Creates an environment in which diversity is valued and promoted.

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

Standard 4: Human Resource Leadership

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

PRACTICES: The superintendent practices effective human resource leadership when he or she demonstrates the following:

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

ARTIFACTS:

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

Standard 5: Managerial Leadership

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

PRACTICES: The superintendent practices effective managerial leadership when he or she demonstrates the following:

a. Applies and assesses current technologies for management, business procedures, and scheduling;
b. Creates collaborative budget processes to align resources with the district vision and strategic plan through proactive financial leadership using a needs assessment process;
c. Identifies and plans for facility needs;
d. Assesses and reassesses programs and resource allocation and use for relevancy and impact as the organization changes;
e. Collaboratively develops and enforces clear expectations, structures, rules and procedures for effective and efficient operations;
f. Creates processes to build consensus, communicate, and resolve conflicts in a fair and democratic way;
g. Assures a system of communication that provides for the timely and responsible exchanges of information among school and district staff and stakeholder groups;
h. Assures scheduling process and protocols that maximize staff input, address diverse student learning needs, and provide individual and ongoing collaborative planning time for every teacher;
i. Creates processes for the storage, security, privacy and integrity of data;
j. Collaboratively develops and enforces clear expectations, structures, rules and procedures for ensuring the safety of students and staff; and
k. Develops, implements, and monitors emergency plans in collaboration with appropriate local, state, and federal officials.

ARTIFACTS:

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

Standard 6: External Development Leadership

SUMMARY: A superintendent, in concert with the local board of education, designs structures and processes that result in broad community engagement with support for and ownership of the district vision. Acknowledging that strong schools build strong communities, the superintendent proactively creates, with school and district staff, opportunities for parents, community members, government leaders, and business representatives to participate with their investments of resources, assistance, and good will.

PRACTICES: The superintendent practices effective external development leadership when he or she demonstrates the following:
   a. Develops collaborative partnerships with the greater community to support the 21st Century learning priorities of the school district and its schools;
   b. Implements processes that engage stakeholders in shaping and then supporting significant (nonnegotiable) achievement and instructional goals for the district and its schools;
   c. Creates systems that engage the local board and all community stakeholders in a shared responsibility for aligning their support for district goals for students and school success;
   d. Designs protocols and processes that ensure compliance with federal, state and district mandates;
   e. Develops and implements proactive partnerships with community colleges, universities, professional associations, and other key professional development organizations to provide effective training and development opportunities for school district employees;
   f. Develops and implements proactive partnerships with community colleges and universities to ensure all students have access to college courses while in high school and that barriers to enrollment in the course are eliminated;
   g. Communicates the schools' and district's status and needs to the local board, all community stakeholders, and media to garner additional support for meeting district goals;
   h. Builds relationships with individuals and groups to support the district's learning-teaching agenda and its potential for individual school and district improvement.

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

Standard 7: Micropolitical Leadership

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

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

PRACTICES: The superintendent practices effective micropolitical leadership when he or she demonstrates the following:

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

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

Resources

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