

# Aligning Leadership Standards to the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*

A TOOLKIT

October 2016



The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) would like to thank Irv Richardson, Ed.D., for his time and expertise in developing this toolkit as well as the Iowa Department of Education and the Midwest Comprehensive Center for their expert contributions to the methodology presented in this toolkit. In addition, several of CCSSO's principal action group states provided helpful input and feedback on various drafts of this toolkit. Finally, we are thankful to Lisa Colón, Idaho's Teacher Certification and Professional Standards Commission Director, for her in-depth review of and feedback on this toolkit.

# Aligning Leadership Standards to the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL): A Toolkit*

October 2016

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**GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS**  
at American Institutes for Research ■



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## Introduction

At its November 2, 2015, meeting, National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) voted to adopt the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders* (PSEL), which were developed by NPBEA in collaboration with practicing educational leaders, representatives from leadership associations and educator preparation programs, and personnel from the CCSSO.

The PSEL represent the third iteration of leadership standards adopted by NPBEA. The first two versions were known as the *ISLLC standards* because they had been developed through the work of the Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC)—personnel from 24 states working to revise school leadership practices. Since the consortium no longer exists, NPBEA decided to change the name of the standards and no longer include ISLLC in the title of the standards. To help educators transition to the new name, the cover page of the PSEL states that the standards were formerly known as ISLLC standards.

According to NPBEA’s website, the PSEL “. . . sets a framework for excellence upon which leadership preparation programs can ensure that candidates are prepared to meet the complex demands of educational administration. Central to the new standards is a focus on student learning, upon which all the standards are based” (NPBEA, n.d.2).

Publication of the PSEL has prompted many state education agencies (SEAs), institutions that prepare school leaders, and district practitioners to revisit and review the leadership standards they currently use to inform and direct their work. Educators should review their current leadership standards and the PSEL with questions such as:

- How do the new PSEL standards differ from the standards currently in use?
- Do the new standards contain expectations for school leaders that are not in the leadership standards currently used?
- Are there areas represented in the current leadership standards that no longer need to be included?

To help answer these and other questions concerning how leadership standards currently used in states, leadership preparation programs, and districts compare to the PSEL, analysts follow a defined, methodical process known as “standards alignment” to compare one set of standards—in this case, the PSEL—to one or more different sets of standards.

The purpose of this toolkit is to provide interested professionals in SEAs, leadership preparation programs, and other organizations with a process for aligning their current leadership standards to the PSEL. The toolkit outlines a general process for determining the relationships between and among sets of standards. The toolkit does not provide information about the types of psychometric alignment required to provide statistical analyses between sets of standards. Such processes are well beyond the scope of this toolkit.

## About the Different Leadership Standards and Their Purposes

While this toolkit focuses on aligning leadership standards to the PSEL, a discussion about the various versions of leadership standards, their uses, and their intended audiences is appropriate. Because there are different leadership standards for the preparation of building-level leaders, district-level leaders, practitioners, and principal supervisors, the purposes of the various standards can be confusing. Recent changes to the names of the various standards add to the potential for confusion. Table 1 below relates current leadership standards to their respective stated purposes and intended audiences.

**Table 1. Leadership Standards: Purposes and Intended Audiences**

Title of Leadership Standards	Purpose	Intended Audience
<i>National Educational Leadership Preparation (NELP) Standards for Building Level Leaders (2016)</i> (formerly ELCC standards) <sup>1</sup>	To guide programs that prepare building-level leaders, particularly those programs seeking voluntary accreditation by CAEP	Programs that prepare building-level leaders
<i>NELP Standards for District Level Leaders (2016)</i> (formerly ELCC standards) <sup>2</sup>	To guide programs that prepare district-level leaders, particularly those programs seeking voluntary accreditation by CAEP	Programs that prepare district-level leaders
PSEL 2015 (formerly ISLLC standards)	To guide state systems of certification, induction and mentoring, evaluation, and professional development for school- and district-level leaders	State education agencies, districts, and individual school leaders
<i>Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards, 2015</i>	To guide state and district systems of support for principal supervisors who support building-level leaders	Educators who support, mentor, coach, and evaluate building principals

Educational leadership programs seeking accreditation through the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) use the NELP standards. There are two sets of standards for *preparing* school leaders—one for building-level leaders and another for district-level leaders. These preparation standards were formerly known as the ELCC standards, since they were originally developed by the Educational Leadership Licensure Consortium (ELCC).

The work of *practicing* educators and of many SEAs, therefore, should be guided by the 2015 PSEL standards (formerly the ISLLC standards).

<sup>1</sup> These standards are still in draft form and have not yet been formally adopted by the NPBEA.

<sup>2</sup> These standards are still in draft form and have not yet been formally adopted by the NPBEA.

In response to the need to support principals in their important school leadership work, CCSSO collaborated with practitioners to develop the *Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards, 2015*. These standards help to guide the work of *those who supervise principals*.

A chart showing the provenance of the various leadership standards is located in the Resources section of this toolkit.

The different leadership standards can also guide individuals as they progress through their careers as school leaders. When preparing for leadership roles, individuals seeking to become school principals can use the *National Educational Leadership Preparation Standards for Building Level Leaders* to ascertain the knowledge and skills they must acquire during their preparatory studies. Candidates for superintendent positions can use the *National Educational Leadership Preparation Standards for District Level Leaders* to guide their preparation.

Both building-level and district-level leaders can use the PSEL to guide the continuing development and refinement of their professional skills. Figure 1 below shows the standards that can be applied at different stages of school leaders’ careers.

**Figure 1. The Relationship Between Leadership Standards and School Leaders’ Career Development**

<b>Career Stage</b>	<b>Preparation →</b>	<b>Induction and Mentoring →</b>	<b>Ongoing Professional Development</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	Developing preparation curricula and internships, feedback to candidates, and licensure requirements	Coaching and evaluating school leaders and guiding school leaders’ professional development	Coaching and evaluating school leaders and guiding school leaders’ professional development
<b>Leadership Standards</b>	<i>National Educational Leadership Standards for Building Level Leaders</i> <i>National Educational Leadership Standards for District Level Leaders</i>	<i>Professional Standards for Educational Leaders</i>	<i>Professional Standards for Educational Leaders</i>

*Note.* The *Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards 2015* guides the work of those who supervise and coach school principals.

## The PSEL

The 2015 PSEL were developed to serve as a model of professional standards. The standards:

. . . communicate expectations to practitioners, supporting institutions, professional associations and policy makers and the public about the work, qualities and values of effective educational leaders. They are a compass that guides the direction of practice directly as well as indirectly through the work of policy makers, professional associations and supporting institutions. They do not prescribe specific actions, encouraging those in leadership and its development to adapt their application to be most effective in particular circumstances and contexts (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015; p. 4)

The PSEL are:

. . . organized around the domains, qualities, and values of leadership work that research and practice indicate contribute to students' academic success and well-being. Each standard features a title and a statement that succinctly define the work of effective educational leaders in that particular realm. A series of elements follow, which elaborate the work that is necessary to meet the standard. The number of elements for each standard varies in order to describe salient dimensions of the work involved (National Policy Board for Educational Administration 2015; p. 8).

The PSEL define policy standards that identify the “domains, qualities and values of leadership work.” The standards identify 10 separate domains of leadership practice, including (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015; p.3):

1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values
2. Ethics and Professional Norms
3. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness
4. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
5. Community of Care and Support for Students
6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel
7. Professional Community for Teachers and Staff
8. Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community
9. Operations and Management
10. School Improvement

Policy standards are sometimes referred to as *what standards* because they define what school leaders should know and be able to do. Knowing *what* a leader must do is different than defining *how well* those tasks must be done. Standards that articulate various levels of performance are known as *performance standards* and are often articulated in the form of a rubric or a continuum of professional practice.

## Uses of Leadership Policy Standards

States' general acceptance of the voluntary PSEL may result in the use of these standards for a variety of purposes, including preparation of school leaders, SEA review and approval of leadership preparation programs, licensure of school leaders, mentoring of school leaders, and the design of professional learning opportunities.

**Preparation Programs.** Some leadership preparation programs may use the PSEL to guide the development and refinement of programs that prepare school leaders. The expectations of leaders outlined in the PSEL inform the curricula and clinical experiences of preparation programs as well as the assessment of leadership candidates. Leadership preparation programs seeking accreditation through the CAEP are required to use NELP standards.

**Program Approval.** Some SEAs may use the PSEL, or adapted versions of the PSEL, to review and approve educational leadership programs. Approval reviews ensure that the curricula and clinical experiences in which leadership candidates engage help them to develop the knowledge and skills outlined in the standards.

**Evaluation of School Leaders.** Some SEAs and districts may use leadership standards to develop processes for evaluating school leaders. As mentioned previously, leadership standards help to define the *knowledge and skills* required of school leaders. When policy standards are used to evaluate school leaders, they must be accompanied by performance standards that help to define levels of leaders' performance. Developing evaluation systems requires attention to a variety of important issues, including accuracy, fairness, and the various systems' feasibility. These key issues can be found in the *Personnel Evaluation Standards* developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation.

**Professional Development and Systems of Support for School Leaders.** Leadership policy standards can help develop professional learning opportunities for school leaders. Standards can be used to create an inventory of professional learning tools available to school leaders and to ensure that leaders have opportunities to develop their professional competence in the areas represented by the standards.

**Licensure and Re-licensure of School Leaders.** SEAs also use leadership policy standards for the initial licensure and recertification of school leaders.

Since policy standards are used in the context of the areas listed above, SEAs, leadership preparation programs, and providers of professional learning share a compelling interest in knowing how the policy standards they are currently using compare to the 2015 PSEL.

The next section of this toolkit explains a process for aligning policy standards to PSEL 2015 to help determine the similarities and differences of states' or districts' existing leadership policy standards to the PSEL.

# A Process for Aligning Standards

## Steps in the Alignment Process

The work of aligning standards should be done by employing a systematic method of comparing sets of standards. The general steps below are the steps for aligning standards that are explained and illustrated in this toolkit. The standards alignment process outlined in this toolkit is adapted from the process and methodology developed and implemented by the Midwest Comprehensive Center at AIR and the Iowa Department of Education (Ludwig & Thompson, forthcoming).

Step One: Determine the purpose(s) for which the alignment will be used

Step Two: Determine the level of rigor needed to support the identified purpose(s)

Step Three: Review the general format and organization of the sets of standards to be aligned to determine the units to compare

Step Four: Organize the alignment work

Step Five: Compare corresponding units of the two sets of standards

Step Six: Analyze and summarize similarities and differences between the two sets of standards

Step Seven: Apply the analysis of the alignment to the purpose(s)

In 2016, the West Virginia Department of Education completed an alignment of its current requirements for principals—the *West Virginia Standards of Professional Practice for School Principals* (PPSP) with the PSEL. After aligning the two sets of leadership standards, the SEA convened a group of principals, superintendents, and other stakeholders to make recommendations for revising West Virginia’s expectations for principals. These recommendations, if approved, will be incorporated into the expectations for leadership preparation programs in West Virginia and will be used to explore possible revisions to the state’s principal evaluation system. ***The alignment process used by the West Virginia Department of Education will be used as a practical example throughout this document to illustrate the alignment process explained in this toolkit.***<sup>3</sup>

## Step One: Determine the purpose(s) for which the alignment will be used

### Defining the Purpose(s) of the Standards Alignment

The first step in aligning two or more sets of leadership standards is to determine the reason(s) for completing the alignment and its intended uses.

An SEA might wish to determine how its current state leadership standards compare to the PSEL. One reason for such a comparison might be to ensure that the state’s current leadership standards address the skills and understandings represented in the PSEL.

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<sup>3</sup> West Virginia Department of Education. (2016). *West Virginia standards of professional practice for school principals*. Manuscript submitted for state approval. Text from the draft PPSP is used in this toolkit with the permission of the West Virginia Department of Education.

The committee developing the NELP standards needed to assure programs that the standards they developed for preparation programs for building-level and district-level leaders would dovetail with the PSEL. To ensure this, the committee developed an alignment of the NELP standards to the PSEL.

New Jersey’s SEA used the 2008 ISLLC standards to guide its school leadership work. When the PSEL were published, New Jersey conducted a cross-walk to determine gaps between the new PSEL and the former 2008 ISLLC standards.

**Guiding questions for determining the purpose of an alignment:**

- Why is it important to know the similarities and differences among the sets of leadership standards that have been identified?
- What question(s) will be answered with a completed alignment of the identified sets of standards?
- Once completed, how will the alignment be used?

**Action:**

List the purpose(s) for which the standards alignment will be used.

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## **Step Two: Determine the level of rigor needed to support the identified purpose(s)**

Policy standards for school leaders are typically developed through a consensus process involving many different stakeholders. The authors who actually craft the standards work diligently to ensure that the wording of the standard and its accompanying elements conveys the meaning and intentions of the standards development group. When aligning different sets of standards, those who complete the alignment review may not know the basic purpose(s) of the standards development initiative and must interpret the meaning of the standards based on the language of the standards.

Ideally, reviewers working to align two sets of standards should be familiar with standards in general and particularly familiar with the leadership standards they aim to align. They should be able to discern the knowledge and skills outlined in sets of leadership standards and to determine appropriate actions that school leaders should take based upon the relevant knowledge and skills.

If you are undertaking an alignment that requires greater rigor, consider enlisting two or three reviewers who have diverse perspectives from which they view the leadership standards. For example, you might pair a school leader and an educator who teaches in a leadership preparation program in order to conduct the alignment. A collaborative effort involving different perspectives toward the leadership standards can help to ensure a richer interpretation of their meaning and intent and will make the alignment more useful.

Often, a degree of subjectivity is involved when interpreting two sets of standards. The process of aligning standards requires that those who conduct the alignment make determinations regarding the meaning(s) of the standards and of the information that accompanies the standards.

The rigor with which an alignment is conducted depends upon the alignment's fundamental purpose(s). If the alignment will be used to determine differences among sets of standards in order to promote a general discussion of possible revisions to state standards, for example, the alignment might be completed by a single, knowledgeable reviewer. If, however, the alignment will be used to inform a request for vendor proposals to create and validate a statewide evaluation system for educational leaders, then an SEA would aim to ensure a more rigorous alignment process.

### **Strategies for Increasing Rigor**

The alignment process can be made more rigorous by increasing the number of its knowledgeable reviewers, defining degrees of alignment, and thoroughly documenting the alignment process and its results. Recommended strategies that may be employed to increase alignment rigor include:

**Employ additional, knowledgeable reviewers in the alignment work.** One way to increase the rigor of an alignment is to increase the number of reviewers conducting the alignment. Increasing the number of reviewers provides additional inferences about the meaning of the standards. These additional inferences can be compared and discussed to ensure greater confidence about the validity of the alignment work.

Comparing the inferences of two or more reviewers can provide information about “interrater agreement,” which is the extent to which two or more reviewers’ ratings agree. Typically, the higher the degree of interrater reliability among knowledgeable raters, the greater the validity of inferences about the work.

Once individual reviewers have completed their alignment work and reached consensus, their decisions can be corroborated by yet another knowledgeable reviewer. This reviewer provides an additional set of inferences to verify the decisions made by the initial reviewers.

**Define levels of alignment.** The rigor of an alignment can be increased by defining the extent to which the content from the two sets of standards matches. Sometimes, but not often, the language describing a domain in two sets of standards is identical. Identical wording makes it easy to develop inferences about the similarity of two sets standards. At other times, the domain or wording in one set of standards is not represented at all in the other set. Again, a lack of any corresponding wording makes it easy to infer there is no alignment. The rigor of an alignment can be increased by defining the level of match for wording that is similar to some extent, but not exactly the same.

Such definitions might be developed in the context of the criteria described below:

**An exact match**—The wording of one set of standards exactly matches the wording of the PSEL.

**A close match**—The skills and concepts outlined in one set of standards is equivalent to the PSEL, and the wording in the two sets of standards is synonymous but not identical.

**A partial match**—One of the skills outlined in the leadership standards is mentioned in the PSEL but not others; and/or the reviewer must infer the intended meaning of the standard or element.

**No match**—The standard contains none of the criteria necessary for an exact match, a close match, or a partial match.

**Document the individual reviewers’ inferences.** Rigor may be added to an alignment effort by supplementing reviewers’ ratings with written comments about their inferences and decisions. This helps to make reviewers’ decisions about inferences more explicit. Such documentation might look like the excerpt from West Virginia’s alignment work shown in Table 2 below:

**Table 2. Documenting the Ratings of Multiple Raters**

Professional Standards for Educational Leaders	West Virginia Standards of Professional Practice for School Principals	West Virginia Rater 1	West Virginia Rater 2	West Virginia Rater 3	Comments	Rating
2e. Lead with interpersonal and communication skill, social-emotional insight, and understanding of all students’ and staff members’ backgrounds	1c. The principal demonstrates effective skills including use of digital tools and applications	Partial	Partial	Partial	The PSEL and elements do not address the use of technology for communication purposes	Partial

and cultures						
9f. Employ technology to improve the quality and efficiency of operations and management						

The level of alignment rigor can be plotted along a continuum ranging from low rigor to high rigor. Table 3 outlines the strategies that may be used to increase the rigor of an alignment.

**Table 3. Continuum of Rigor**

	Low rigor	→	High rigor
Number of reviewers	Single reviewer		Additional reviewers
Degree of alignment	General		Articulated levels of match
Alignment documentation	Matrix showing alignment		Matrix showing interrater

**Guiding questions for determining required rigor:**

- Do the purpose(s) of the alignment work identified in Step One have high stakes or very important consequences for educational personnel?
- Do the purpose(s) of the alignment justify the time and expense of additional reviewers for the alignment work?
- How detailed must conclusions regarding alignment of the sets of standards be?
- How much documentation of the alignment process will be needed to ensure confidence in the validity of the reviewers’ inferences?
- How many raters should be involved in the alignment work?

**Action:**

1. Determine the level of rigor required based upon the purpose(s) of the alignment.

The level of rigor required is:

\_\_\_ Low            \_\_\_ Medium            \_\_\_ High

Therefore, the alignment will require:

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of reviewers

\_\_\_\_\_ Additional reviewer(s) to triangulate the initial review

\_\_\_\_\_ General alignment OR \_\_\_\_\_ articulated levels of match

\_\_\_\_\_ A matrix showing alignment OR a matrix showing interrater agreement and comments

### **Step Three: Review the general format and organization of the sets of standards to be aligned to determine the units to compare**

To align a set of standards to the PSEL, analysts must review and become familiar with the general format of each set of standards to determine which units are comparable and should be included in the alignment work. The standards identified by the PSEL and West Virginia's PPSP provide useful illustrations of the process.

#### **Format and Organization of the PSEL**

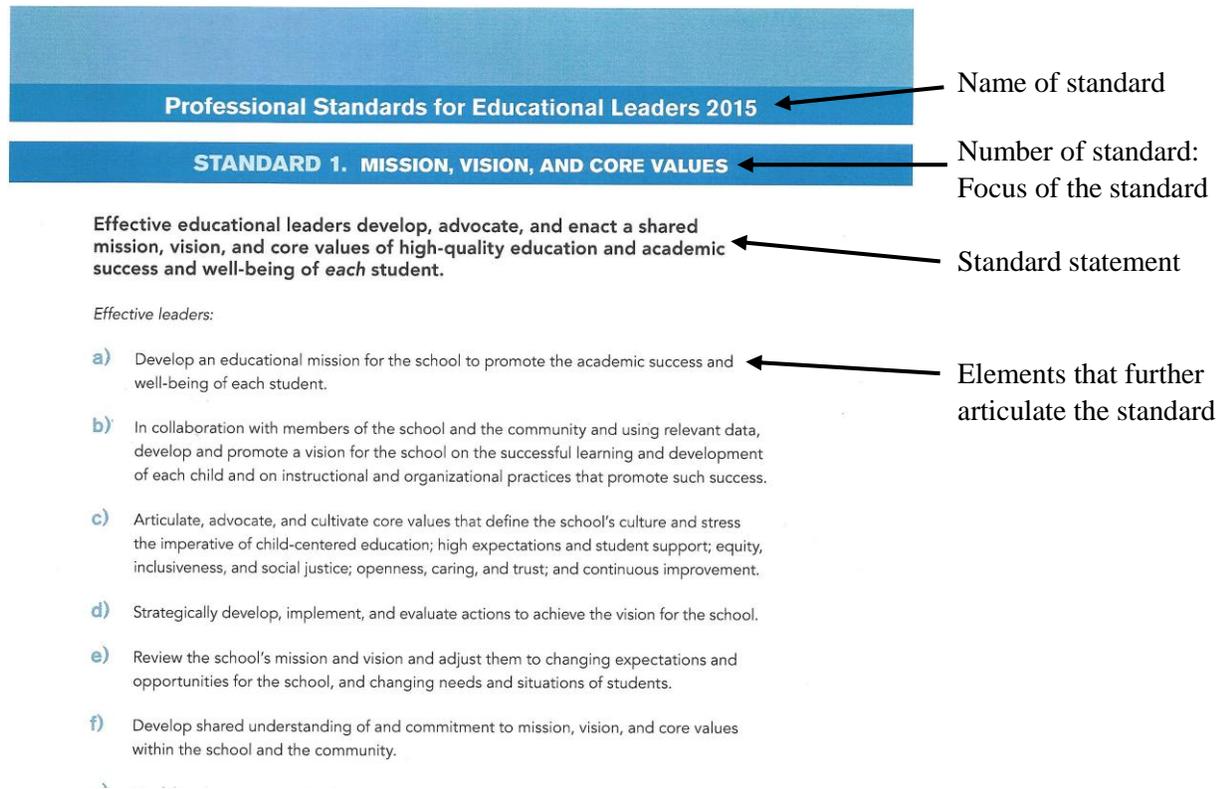
The PSEL document contains seven pages of introductory text about the Standards. The introductory text explains that the standards are intended for use by school leaders, including principals and assistant principals, as well as district-level leaders. The text surrounding a set of standards may be helpful in determining the intended uses of a set of standards and other important information.

The PSEL document explains the organization and formatting of the standards on page 8:

The PSEL are organized around the domains, qualities, and values of leadership that research and practice indicate will contribute to students' academic success and well-being. Each standard features a title and a statement that succinctly defines the work of effective educational leaders in that particular realm. A series of elements that elaborate the work necessary to meet the standard follows. The number of elements for each standard varies in order to describe salient dimensions of the work involved. It does not imply relative importance of a particular standard.

The 10 discreet standards that compose the PSEL appear on pages 9–18 of the document. Figure 2 below illustrates PSEL Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values. The format of the standards includes the name of the standard, followed by its number and a description of its focus, a statement about the standard, and a series of behavioral elements related to the standard. There are 83 elements of leadership behavior under the 10 standards that compose the PSEL.

**Figure 2. PSEL Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values**



### Format and Organization of West Virginia's PPSP

West Virginia's PPSP begins with an explanation of the principal's role. Following this introduction to the principal's role are nine standards. Each standard includes indicators that further articulate the standard. There are 66 additional statements about the standards.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The PPSP may be found at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/p5800.pdf>. A copy of the standards is included in the Resources section of this toolkit.

### Figure 3. Example of West Virginia’ PPSP Format: Standards 5.1 and 5.2

**§126-165-5. Standards of Professional Practice for School Principals.**

5.1. Role. The effectiveness of the school principal, next to that of the classroom teacher, is the single most significant influence on student achievement. Principals who have interpersonal and collaborative skills combined with technical expertise in instructional leadership can dramatically elevate the overall effectiveness of a school. Each school has its own unique culture, level of expectation, priorities, procedures and programs that come together to positively or to negatively influence student learning. It is the role of the school principal to elevate the quality of operations and to align the efforts of staff so they coalesce to support the learning and well-being of each student. Certainly, this is a challenging and complex expectation. The nine standards and functions outlined in this policy are a descriptive guide to help leaders move in this direction. Central to the nine standards is the premise that principals can no longer be expected to do the complex work of moving the school forward by themselves and with little assistance and authority. First, there must be quality, school-specific support services and resources from the district office; services and resources that are based on the student data and professional needs of the school. Second, there must be an increase in the leadership of teachers; teacher leaders who promote and instill a sense of collective accountability and who engage staff in on-going collaborative discussions on how to improve school and classroom practice to improve student learning. This culture of cooperation and results will not develop by itself. This must be organized, valued, nurtured by the principal with appropriate supports from the central office including time for teachers to meet, structures for collaboration and quality professional development. Third, principals and teachers must be given appropriate flexibility to make school-based decisions about the research-based processes and strategies to improve school and classroom practice. If these conditions are put in place, then principals can be the leader of a team of leaders empowered to create those conditions that enhance the learning of all students in the school.

Introductory Paragraph

5.2. Standards.

Standard statement

5.2.1. Demonstrates Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills.

- a. The principal models professional, moral and ethical behaviors that engender trust and respect among staff, students and the community.
- b. The principal builds networks and fosters a sense of teamwork and collaboration across the school and community.
- c. The principal demonstrates effective communication skills including use of digital tools and applications.
- d. The principal frames problems and make decisions to promote the long-term best interest of students.
- e. The principal anticipates, addresses and resolves conflict.
- f. The principal develops the leadership capabilities of others and delegates appropriately.
- g. The principal models a positive attitude and recognizes individual and collective accomplishments.

Standards explaining the standard

### Determining Comparable Units to Align

The PSEL and the PPSP contain broad, general standards supported by specific indicators of desired behavior that can be compared to one another to determine similarities and differences.

The PSEL and the PPSP are notably different in terms of the educators to whom they apply. The PSEL are intended for use by all school leaders, including principals, assistant principals, and district-level leaders. The West Virginia standards address only the leadership tasks of school principals. Because the PSEL addresses a wider range of school leadership roles, these standards may contain additional leadership responsibilities not found in standards intended specifically for school principals.

When reviewing different sets of standards to be aligned (in this case, the PSEL and the PPSP), it is necessary to determine which units in the standards are comparable. That is, each standard in one particular set of standards must be examined to infer the domain of leadership it describes and the extent to which it corresponds to a similar domain in the other set of standards.

## Selecting Anchor Standards

Since West Virginia’s PPSP will be compared with the PSEL, the latter will be used as anchor standards against which the PPSP will be compared. If it was necessary to know which of the PSEL’s elements were similar to those of the PPSP, then the PPSP would represent the comparison’s anchor standards.

### Guiding questions for determining units to compare:

- Which set of standards should be used as anchor standards?
- What is the general format of each set of standards to be aligned, and what are their components?
- What units (e.g., elements) from each set of standards are comparable and should be aligned?

### Actions:

1. The anchor standards for this alignment work will be

\_\_\_\_\_.

2. The following units will be aligned:

Standards	<i>will be aligned to</i>	<b>PSEL</b>
	<i>will be aligned to</i>	<b>Standards</b>
	<i>will be aligned to</i>	<b>Elements of each standard</b>

## Step Four: Organize the Alignment Work

Once the alignment’s purpose(s) and level of required rigor have been identified, and after the general format of the standards to be compared has been reviewed, the work must be organized in a systematic approach to the task. Because aligning sets of standards requires reviewers to make and document numerous individual comparisons, the project should be organized as a process for documenting the work that can be followed by all participants.

Organization of the standards alignment is initiated by outlining all of the steps needed to complete the procedure. A Gantt chart can help to outline the steps over time (see Figure 4 below). On the y-axis on the left side of the chart, steps that need to be completed for the alignment are listed. The x-axis represents the time required to complete the alignment work.

**Figure 4. Sample Gantt Chart of the Overall Alignment Process**

Task/Activity	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Determine the purpose(s) for the alignment work				
Discuss and determine what level of rigor will be required				
Recruit reviewer(s) to complete the alignment work				
Review the format of the standards to be aligned with the PSEL to determine corresponding parts to be aligned				
Create a matrix to record the alignment work				
Have reviewer(s) complete alignment work				
Have an additional reviewer triangulate the work of the initial reviewers				
Analyze and summarize the similarities and differences between the sets of standards				
Apply the analysis of the alignment to the purpose(s).				

### Create a matrix to organize the work

A matrix is essential for making comparisons among sets of standards. Creating a matrix using word processing or spreadsheet software has the added advantage of the ability to modify the matrix to include additional levels of analysis. The alignment work will be easier if a matrix that includes only the standards and supporting units to be aligned is constructed. When the New Jersey SEA wanted to identify changes between the 2008 ISLLC standards and the PSEL, for example, project staff organized the requisite alignment work in a chart similar to that shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4. New Jersey SEA’s Organization of Alignment Activity**

2015 Educational Leader Standards	2008 ISLLC Standards	Summary: Newly Added	Summary: Removed
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<p>Standard 1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.</p>	<p>Standard 1: An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Core Values</li> <li>2. Instead of being shared by all stakeholders, it must address the success and well-being of each student</li> <li>3. Promote continuous improvement is seen in Standard 10 and replaced here by plan strategically</li> <li>4. Model the Mission, Vision and Core Values</li> </ol>	
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To compare the NELP’s *Standards for District Level Leaders* to the PSEL, staff members working to align the two sets of standards created a chart with the 10 PSEL standards entered in a row across the top of the chart and each of the seven NELP standards for district leaders entered in the chart’s first (far left) column. See Figure 5 below.

**Figure 5. Comparison of NELP Standards with PSEL Standards**

2016 NELP District Level Standards Leadership candidates who successfully complete a district-level educational leadership preparation program understand and demonstrate the capability to promote the success and well-being of each student, teacher and leader by applying the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary for/to/through:	2015 PSEL Standards: Effective Educational Leaders...									
	<b>Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values:</b> Develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student	<b>Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms</b> Act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness</b> Strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment</b> Develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 5: Community of Care and Support for Students</b> Cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.	<b>Standard 6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel</b> Develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student’s academic success and well-being	<b>Standard 7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff</b> Foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 8: Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community</b> Engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 9: Operations and Management</b> Manage school operations and resources to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 10: School Improvement</b> Act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.
Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values (1) a shared mission and vision; (2) a set of core values; (3) and continuous and sustainable district and school improvement.		2.3. Place children at the center of education and accept responsibility for each student’s academic success and well-being. (Implicit in all standards)					7.3. Establish and sustain a professional culture of engagement and commitment to shared vision, goals, and objectives pertaining to the education of the whole child; high expectations for professional work; ethical and equitable practice; trust and open communication; collaboration, collective efficacy, and continuous individual and organizational learning and improvement.			

A basic matrix set up for comparing the PSEL standards and West Virginia’s PPSP might look like the following:

**Figure 6. Example of a Standards Comparison Matrix**

<b>PSEL</b>	<b>PPSP</b>
1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values	
2. Ethics and Professional Norms	
3. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness	
4. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	
5. Community of Care and Support for Students	
6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel	
7. Professional Community for Teachers and Staff	
8. Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community	
9. Operations and Management	
10. School Improvement	

If it is determined that the alignment will require greater rigor, additional columns for each rater’s work and comments might be included in the matrix. A row from such a matrix might look like this:

**Figure 7. A Standards Comparison Matrix Incorporating Rater Work and Comments**

<b>PSEL</b>	<b>PPSP</b>	<b>Rater 1</b>	<b>Rater 2</b>	<b>Rater 3</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Final Rating</b>
1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values						

When using word processing or spreadsheet software, additional rows and cells can be inserted for each unit of the standards being aligned. An expanded matrix that includes the PSEL elements might look like Figure 8 below:

**Figure 8. Matrix of PSEL Standard 1 and Accompanying Elements**

PSEL	PPSP	Rater 1	Rater 2	Comments	Final Rating
Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values: Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.	5.2.2. Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission				
a) Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student.					
b) In collaboration with members of the school and the community and using relevant data, develop and promote a vision for the school on the successful learning and development of each child and on instructional and organizational practices that promote such success.					
c) Articulate, advocate, and cultivate core values that define the school’s culture and stress the imperative of child-centered education; high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; openness, caring, and trust; and continuous improvement.					
d) Strategically develop, implement, and evaluate actions to achieve the vision for the school.					
e) Review the school’s mission and vision and adjust them to changing expectations and opportunities for the school, and changing needs and situations of students.					
f) Develop shared understanding of and commitment to mission, vision, and core values within the school and the community.					
g) Model and pursue the school’s mission, vision, and core values in all aspects of leadership.					

**Guiding questions for organizing the alignment process:**

- What are the steps needed to initiate and complete the alignment?
- How will the matrix used by reviewers be organized?
  - What information should be included in each row?
  - What columns are needed to document reviewers’ work?

**Actions:**

1. Place the steps needed to complete the alignment work into the Gantt chart shown in Figure 9 below, and include an estimate of the time to complete each task.

**Figure 9. Organization and Timing of Alignment**

Task/Activity	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4

2. Label the rows with the names of the units to be compared, and label the columns of the matrix.

PSEL	Standards to be aligned to PSEL: _____				
Standards					
Elements					

## Step Five: Compare Corresponding Units of the Two Sets of Standards

When comparing the different language in two sets of standards, the person(s) completing the alignment must infer the focus of the standards and indicators based on the wording. Sometimes standards or elements are written with a single focus and contain a single knowledge focus or a single action. For example, PSEL Standard 6 represents a singular focus, action, and purpose.

*Standard 6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel. Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.*

In this standard, the educational leader is responsible for *developing the professional capacity and practice of school personnel*.

The action in this standard is to *develop*. The focus of this development is *school personnel’s professional capacity and practice*.

Not all standards have a clear, single focus. For example, PSEL Standard 8 is more complex: “Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community. Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually-beneficial ways to promote each students’ academic success and well-being.”

In Standard 8, the action is to *engage*, but there are two entities that must be engaged—families and community. In addition, leaders must engage these two audiences in ways that are *meaningful, reciprocal and mutually-beneficial*.

When the knowledge or leadership skills expressed by a standard or element have been identified, a comparison with corresponding units in the other set of standards can be made to determine if they are contained in that corresponding element. How specific the alignment must be depends upon the defined level of its rigor.

Begin the alignment process with PSEL Standard 1. Review the standard and the accompanying elements to discern the general domain of leadership represented by the standard. PSEL Standard 1 addresses leaders’ abilities to “develop, advocate and enact a shared mission, vision and core values of high quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.” So the standard is about the leaders’ abilities develop, advocate and enact a shared school mission, vision and a set of core values.

With a clear sense of the leadership area represented by PSEL Standard 1, the remaining set(s) of standards to be aligned may be compared against a corresponding standard. Using the PPSP as an example, its standards can be reviewed to ascertain which, if any, address similar areas of leadership defined in the PSEL. In this context, the PPSP standard that addresses an aspect of school leadership similar to that identified by PSEL Standard 1 is PPSP Standard 2: Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission.

**Figure 10. PPSP Standard 2**

- |   |
|---|
| <p>2. Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The principal collaboratively sustains a learning-centered vision, mission and goals that reflect student needs in a changing nation and world.</li> <li>b. The principal works with staff to incorporate district, state and national priorities into the school's vision, mission and goals.</li> <li>c. The principal develops a sense of urgency for change and a commitment to actions necessary to bring about that change.</li> <li>d. The principal uses the school's vision, mission and goals to collaboratively build a focused and coherent set of strategies for school improvement.</li> <li>e. The principal works with staff to evaluate the alignment of school initiatives with the mission and goals and revises and/or eliminates activities as necessary.</li> <li>f. The principal sustains commitment to the vision, mission and goals by communicating progress and celebrating success.</li> </ul> |
|---|

PPSP Standard 2 would be placed in the matrix across from PSEL Standard 1 to indicate that the domain of leadership represented by the two standards is similar, or “aligned.”

**Figure 11. Alignment of PSEL Standard 1 and PPSP Standard 2**

PSEL	PPSP
1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values	2. Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission

A highly rigorous alignment between the two standards would require analysts to more closely define and examine the knowledge and skills represented in each set of standards. For example:

In PSEL Standard 1, the actions are to: (a) *develop*; (b) *advocate*; and, (c) *enact* a shared mission, vision and core values.

In PPSP Standard 2, the action is to *create* a clear and focused learning mission.

In PSEL Standard 1, the adjective *shared* before mission, vision, and core values leads us to infer that a leader must work with others to develop, advocate, and enact a mission, vision, and set of core values. PPSP Standard 2 addresses only a leader’s need to create a clear and focused learning mission.

Individual reviewers must decide whether the two standards are sufficiently close in focus to qualify as being aligned or if the standards only partially align because one standard contains actions not described in the other. Sometimes, the elements or statements under a standard can help to clarify the meaning and intent of the standard.

Continue the alignment work by determining the focus of each PSEL standard and then reviewing the PPSP to discern whether there is a corresponding West Virginia standard that focuses on a similar area or domain of leadership.

A completed review of PSEL and PPSP at the standard level might look like the following:

**Figure 12. Alignment of Standards: PSEL and PPSP**

PSEL	PPSP
<b>Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values:</b> Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.	<b>Standard 2. Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission</b>
<b>Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms:</b> Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>There is no corresponding PPSP standard</b>
<b>Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness:</b> Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>There is no corresponding PPSP standard</b>
<b>Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment:</b> Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 3. Facilitates Rigorous Curriculum. Engaging Instruction and Balanced Assessments</b>
<b>Standard 5: Community of Care and Support for Students:</b> Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.	<b>Standard 4. Builds and Sustains Positive Learning Climate and Cohesive Culture</b>
	<b>Standard 6. Acts as a Student Advocate and Creates Support Systems for Student Success</b>
<b>Standard 6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel:</b> Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 5. Promotes Continual Professional Growth and Retention of Quality Staff</b>
Standard 7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff: Effective educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>There is no corresponding PPSP standard</b>
<b>Standard 8: Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community:</b> Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 8. Connects to Family and the Larger Community</b>
<b>Standard 9: Operations and Management:</b> Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 7. Manages Operations to Promote Learning</b>
<b>Standard 10: School Improvement:</b> Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.	<b>Standard 9. Effects Continuous Improvement</b>
There is no corresponding PSEL standard	<b>Standard 1 Demonstrates Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills</b>

The work can be summarized by noting that seven of the PSEL standards focus on leadership domains that are generally similar to eight of West Virginia’s PPSP standards.

In addition, it can be seen that PSEL Standard 5 addresses content that is similar to two PPSP standards and that PPSP Standard 1: Demonstrates Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills, has no corresponding PSEL standard.

After the standards have been reviewed and decisions have been made regarding alignment of the standards’ content, continue the process by reviewing individual elements in PSEL standards and then searching for corresponding statements in the PPSP.

This review of the standards statements and their elements can be organized by expanding the PSEL standards matrix to include the elements for each standard. An expanded matrix that includes the elements for each PSEL standard would look like Figure 13 below.

**Figure 13. Matrix of PSEL Standards and Accompanying Elements With Corresponding PPSP Standards**

PSEL	PPSP [Or Your State Standards]
<p><b>Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values:</b> Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of <i>each</i> student.</p>	<p><b>Standard 5.2.2. Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission</b></p>
<p><b>Elements for PSEL Standard 1:</b></p>	
<p>a) Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student.</p>	
<p>b) In collaboration with members of the school and the community and using relevant data, develop and promote a vision for the school on the successful learning and development of each child and on instructional and organizational practices that promote such success.</p>	
<p>c) Articulate, advocate, and cultivate core values that define the school’s culture and stress the imperative of child-centered education; high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; openness, caring, and trust; and continuous improvement.</p>	
<p>d) Strategically develop, implement, and evaluate actions to achieve the vision for the school.</p>	
<p>e) Review the school’s mission and vision and adjust them to changing expectations and opportunities for the school, and changing needs and situations of students.</p>	
<p>f) Develop shared understanding of and commitment to mission, vision, and core values within the school and the community.</p>	
<p>g) Model and pursue the school’s mission, vision, and core values in all aspects of leadership.</p>	

Using a process that is similar to the process employed to examine the content of the standards, PSEL Element 1.a (“Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student”) can be examined. See Figure 14 below.

**Figure 14. Comparison of PSEL Element 1a With PPSP Standard 5.2.2 and Standard Statement 6a**

PSEL Element 1a	PPSP Standard 5.2.2 and Standard 6	Comments
<p><b>Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values:</b> Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.</p>	<p><b>Standard 5.2.2. Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission</b></p>	
<p>a) Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student.</p>	<p><b>Standard 6, Statement<sup>5</sup> a:</b> The principal acts as a steadfast advocate for the achievement and well-being of all students and cultivates this advocacy in others.</p>	<p>The PSEL element speaks to a school leader developing an educational mission for the school. Statement “a” for Standard 6 implies a school mission of achievement and well-being. Additionally, the West Virginia statement contains the additional responsibilities of “cultivating advocacy in others.”</p>

This statement requires that an educational leader have the ability to develop an education mission for the school with a focus on the students’ academic learning and their well-being. We then review the standards and statements in the West Virginia leadership standards to discern which standards or statements, if any, under Standard 2, or any other standards focus on the development of an educational mission that focuses on students’ academic success and well-being.

A review of the West Virginia statements that accompany the standards reveals that statement 1a has a similar focus. Note that the statement includes an additional responsibility of “cultivating this advocacy in others”; consequently, the content of the two standards is slightly different. Depending upon the purpose of the alignment and how rigorous it must be, the reviewer may wish to add a column or insert a comment to identify this difference.

Continuing this process for the additional elements in PSEL Standard 1 will result in a matrix that looks like Figure 15 below.

<sup>5</sup> The West Virginia standards do not provide a moniker for the sentences under their standards; so, we use “statement” here.

**Figure 15. Comparison of PSEL Standard 1 With Similar West Virginia PPSP**

PSEL Standard 1 With Elements	Corresponding PPSP Standards
<p><b>Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values:</b> Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of <i>each</i> student.</p>	<p><b>2. Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission</b></p>
<p>a) Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student.</p>	<p><b>Standard 6, statement (6a):</b> The principal acts as a steadfast advocate for the achievement and well-being of all students and cultivates this advocacy in others.</p>
<p>b) In collaboration with members of the school and the community and using relevant data, develop and promote a vision for the school on the successful learning and development of each child and on instructional and organizational practices that promote such success.</p>	<p><b>1b</b> The principal builds networks and fosters a sense of teamwork and collaboration across the school and community.  <b>2a</b> The principal collaboratively sustains a learning-centered vision, mission and goals that reflect student needs in a changing nation and world.  <b>3f</b> The principal uses benchmark and summative assessment data to guide and modify school programs, allocate resources, assign staff and alter time to improve student achievement.  <b>4a</b> The principal works with stakeholders to identify core beliefs and values that create a student-centered learning-focused school.  <b>9e</b> Protect teachers’ and other staff members’ work and learning from disruption.  <b>5.21</b> Demonstrates Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills.</p>
<p>c) Articulate, advocate, and cultivate core values that define the school’s culture and stress the imperative of child-centered education; high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; openness, caring, and trust; and continuous improvement.</p>	<p><b>4a</b> The principal works with stakeholders to identify core beliefs and values that create a student-centered learning-focused school.  <b>4c</b> The principal implements activities to assess, develop and sustain a cohesive student-centered learning-focused culture.  <b>4d</b> The principal establishes and communicates high expectations for both students and staff and implements programs and policies to support these expectations.  <b>6c</b> The principal creates an environment and implements practices that value and protect diversity and promote social justice.</p>
<p>d) Strategically develop, implement, and evaluate actions to achieve the vision for the school.</p>	<p><b>2d</b> The principal uses the school's vision, mission and goals to collaboratively build a focused and coherent set of strategies for school improvement.</p>
<p>e) Review the school’s mission and vision and adjust them to changing expectations and opportunities for the school, and changing needs and situations of students.</p>	<p><b>2e</b> The principal works with staff to evaluate the alignment of school initiatives with the mission and goals and revises and/or eliminates activities as necessary.</p>
<p>f) Develop shared understanding of and commitment to mission, vision, and core values within the school and the community.</p>	<p><b>2f</b> The principal sustains commitment to the vision, mission and goals by communicating progress and celebrating success.</p>
<p>g) Model and pursue the school’s mission, vision, and core values in all aspects of leadership.</p>	<p><b>4b</b> The principal models, communicates and promotes core beliefs and values.</p>

Relative to PSEL elements b and c, Figure 15 shows that more than one PPSP statement focused on similar aspects of developing a mission. While 15 PPSP standard statements and two standards aligned with elements of PSEL Standard 1, moreover, only four of the statements could be found in PPSP Standard 2: Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission. It is important to note that the content of the entire set of standards—not just those standards that are similar in nature—must be aligned. To do this, it should be noted that appropriate content might be included in a standard that may initially appear to be unrelated.

To complete the alignment, continue reviewing each PSEL element. Then review the standards and statements from PPSP to determine which standards and statements incorporate similar concentrations on leadership.

Note again that some PSEL elements may contain numerous statements that address similar aspects of school leadership. Other elements may not have any standards or statements that address school leadership behaviors. In addition, some statements from PPSP may align appropriately to more than one PSEL element.

If the alignment effort requires greater rigor, the relevant matrix might be expanded to include the assessments of different raters and their comments regarding similarities and differences between standards. Listing the descriptive statements from each set of standards and including associated reviewers' comments will help make the alignment more transparent, since readers will see a side-by-side comparison of the relevant standards and elements. If such a comparison is not considered necessary, the matrix may be simplified to include only the standards and the identifying numbers or letters for statements that align across standards. For example:

### **PSEL Standard 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values**

Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of *each* student.

- a. Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student. [*Corresponds to PPSP Standard and Statement 6a*].

### **Guiding questions to compare corresponding units of the two sets of standards:**

- Will individual raters who complete the alignment document their decisions with comments or explanations?
- Will there be points in the alignment work for individual raters to discuss and compare their work and to determine if their inferences are similar?

### **Actions:**

1. Reviewers should align one standard and then discuss their decisions and ratings (if applicable).
2. Reviewers should align one PSEL element and then discuss their decisions and ratings (if applicable).

## Step Six: Analyze and Summarize Similarities and Differences Between the Two Sets of Standards

When the sets of standards have been compared at both standard and element levels, alignment between the two sets of standards can be analyzed. After completing an analysis of alignment between the PSEL and West Virginia's PPSP, for example, it will be possible to develop some statements and conclusions about the alignment between the two sets of standards. The nature of the statements will depend upon the purpose(s) of the alignment effort.

Such statements might be like the example below:

At the standards level, three PSEL standards do not have corresponding PPSP standards. They include:

Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms

Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness

Standard 7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff

These three PSEL standards are accompanied by an additional 16 elements. Thirteen of these 16 elements are addressed in the statements under the nine PPSP standards.

There is only one standard outlined in the PPSP that does not have a corresponding PSEL standard; i.e., PPSP Standard 5.2.1: Demonstrates Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills. Five of the seven statements under PPSP Standard 1 are addressed in the standards and elements of the PSEL.

The PSEL includes 83 elements in its 10 professional standards. Twelve of these elements are not addressed in the PPSP.

If the purposes of the alignment require a greater level of analysis, the alignment matrix may be used to make the following statements:

The PSEL indicators for which there are no corresponding elements in the PPSP are:

**Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness.** Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote each student's academic success and well-being.

d. Develop student policies and address student misconduct in a positive, fair, and unbiased manner.

e. Confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status.

g. Act with cultural competence and responsiveness in their interactions, decision making, and practice.

**Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment.** Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote *each* student’s academic success and well-being.

- d. Ensure instructional practice that is intellectually challenging, authentic to student experiences, recognizes student strengths, and is differentiated and personalized.

**Standard 6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel.** Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote *each* student’s academic success and well-being.

- f. Empower and motivate teachers and staff to the highest levels of professional practice and to continuous learning and improvement.

- h. Promote the personal and professional health, well-being, and work-life balance of faculty and staff.

**Standard 8: Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community.** Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote *each* student’s academic success and well-being.

- d. Maintain a presence in the community to understand its strengths and needs, develop productive relationships, and engage its resources for the school.

- h. Advocate for the school and district, and for the importance of education and student needs and priorities to families and the community.

- i. advocate publicly for the needs and priorities of students, families, and the community.

**Standard 9: Operations and Management.** Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote *each* student’s academic success and well-being.

- i. Develop and manage relationships with feeder and connecting schools for enrollment management and curricular and instructional articulation.

- j. Develop and manage productive relationships with central office and school board.

**Standard 10: School Improvement.** Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote *each* student’s academic success and well-being.

- i. Manage uncertainty, risk, competing initiatives, and politics of change with courage and perseverance, providing support and encouragement, and openly communicating the need for, process for, and outcomes of improvement efforts.

**Guiding questions that may be asked when analyzing and summarizing similarities and differences between sets of standards:**

- What domains or areas of leadership were similar in the different sets of leadership standards?
- What domains in the PSEL were only partially addressed in the other set of leadership standards?

- What domains, if any, in the PSEL did not correspond to domains in the other set of standards?
- Did the standards being aligned to the PSEL contain domains or areas of leadership that were not present in the PSEL?
- What elements of the PSEL and the other set of leadership standards were similar?
- What elements in the PSEL were only partially addressed in the other set of leadership standards?
- Were elements found in the PSEL that had no corresponding leadership actions in the other set of standards?
- Were actions identified in the standards being aligned to the PSEL that were not identified in elements of the PSEL?

**Actions:**

1. Review the completed alignment matrix and summarize similarities and differences between the two sets of leadership standards.
2. Review the completed alignment matrix and summarize similarities and differences between elements of the PSEL and corresponding elements of the other leadership standards.

## Step Seven: Apply the Analysis of the Alignment to the Purpose(s)

The final step of the standards alignment process involves application of the completed analysis to the stated purpose(s) of the alignment effort. For example, West Virginia completed its alignment of the PPSP to the PSEL in order to recommend changes to its state standards and to ensure that all domains and elements contained in the PSEL were included in the revised PPSP.

### Guiding questions to apply the analysis of the alignment to the purpose:

- What implications do the alignment’s findings have relative to its purpose(s)?
- With whom should the completed alignment be shared?

### Actions:

1. List the steps needed to apply the alignment’s outcomes to its stated purpose(s):

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2. List the individuals and groups with whom the results of the analysis should be shared:

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## Conclusion

Personnel from state education agencies, stakeholders in educational leadership preparation programs and providers of professional learning for school leaders all might have an interest in learning how the professional leadership standards currently in use compare to NPBEA's 2015 Professional Standards for Educational Leaders.

Comparing sets of leadership can be done through a process of aligning the standards. This toolkit recommended and explained seven steps for organizing and completing such an alignment:

Step One: Determine the purpose(s) for which the alignment will be used

Step Two: Determine the level of rigor needed to support the identified purpose(s)

Step Three: Review the general format and organization of the sets of standards to be aligned to determine the units to compare

Step Four: Organize the alignment work

Step Five: Compare corresponding units of the two sets of standards

Step Six: Analyze and summarize similarities and differences between the two sets of standards

Step Seven: Apply the analysis of the alignment to the purpose(s)

Given the numerous inferences that must be made when discerning the meaning and intent of individual standards and how two sets of standards compare, alignment can be time- and labor-intensive. When completed in an organized and methodical manner, however, the alignment will give reviewers and other interested stakeholders a better sense of the areas of leadership represented by each set of standards and of the similarities and differences between the sets of standards.

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## Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015

### Standard 1: Mission, Vision and Core Values

Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of *each* student.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Develop an educational mission for the school to promote the academic success and well-being of each student.
- b) In collaboration with members of the school and the community and using relevant data, develop and promote a vision for the school on the successful learning and development of each child and on instructional and organizational practices that promote such success.
- c) Articulate, advocate, and cultivate core values that define the school's culture and stress the imperative of child-centered education; high expectations and student support; equity, inclusiveness, and social justice; openness, caring, and trust; and continuous improvement.
- d) Strategically develop, implement, and evaluate actions to achieve the vision for the school.
- e) Review the school's mission and vision and adjust them to changing expectations and opportunities for the school, and changing needs and situations of students.
- f) Develop shared understanding of and commitment to mission, vision, and core values within the school and the community.
- g) Model and pursue the school's mission, vision, and core values in all aspects of leadership.

### Standard 2: Ethics and Professional Norms

Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Act ethically and professionally in personal conduct, relationships with others, decision making, stewardship of the school's resources, and all aspects of school leadership.
- b) Act according to and promote the professional norms of integrity, fairness, transparency, trust, collaboration, perseverance, learning, and continuous improvement.
- c) Place children at the center of education and accept responsibility for each student's academic success and well-being.
- d) Safeguard and promote the values of democracy, individual freedom and responsibility, equity, social justice, community, and diversity.
- e) Lead with interpersonal and communication skill, social-emotional insight, and understanding of all students' and staff members' backgrounds and cultures.

f) Provide moral direction for the school and promote ethical and professional behavior among faculty and staff.

### **Standard 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness**

Effective educational leaders strive for equity of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Ensure that each student is treated fairly, respectfully, and with an understanding of each student's culture and context.
- b) Recognize, respect, and employ each student's strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning.
- c) Ensure that each student has equitable access to effective teachers, learning opportunities, academic and social support, and other resources necessary for success.
- d) Develop student policies and address student misconduct in a positive, fair, and unbiased manner.
- e) Confront and alter institutional biases of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and low expectations associated with race, class, culture and language, gender and sexual orientation, and disability or special status.
- f) Promote the preparation of students to live productively in and contribute to the diverse cultural contexts of a global society.
- g) Act with cultural competence and responsiveness in their interactions, decision making, and practice.
- h) Address matters of equity and cultural responsiveness in all aspects of leadership.

### **Standard 4: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment**

Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that promote the mission, vision, and core values of the school, embody high expectations for student learning, align with academic standards, and are culturally responsive.
- b) Align and focus systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment within and across grade levels to promote student academic success, love of learning, the identities and habits of learners, and healthy sense of self.
- c) Promote instructional practice that is consistent with knowledge of child learning and development, effective pedagogy, and the needs of each student.

- d) Ensure instructional practice that is intellectually challenging, authentic to student experiences, recognizes student strengths, and is differentiated and personalized.
- e) Promote the effective use of technology in the service of teaching and learning.
- f) Employ valid assessments that are consistent with knowledge of child learning and development and technical standards of measurement.
- g) Use assessment data appropriately and within technical limitations to monitor student progress and improve instruction.

### **Standard 5: Community of Care and Support for Students**

Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of *each* student.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Build and maintain a safe, caring, and healthy school environment that meets that the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student.
- b) Create and sustain a school environment in which each student is known, accepted and valued, trusted and respected, cared for, and encouraged to be an active and responsible member of the school community.
- c) Provide coherent systems of academic and social supports, services, extracurricular activities, and accommodations to meet the range of learning needs of each student.
- d) Promote adult-student, student-peer, and school-community relationships that value and support academic learning and positive social and emotional development.
- e) Cultivate and reinforce student engagement in school and positive student conduct.
- f) Infuse the school’s learning environment with the cultures and languages of the school’s community.

### **Standard 6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel**

Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote *each* student’s academic success and well-being.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Recruit, hire, support, develop, and retain effective and caring teachers and other professional staff and form them into an educationally effective faculty.
- b) Plan for and manage staff turnover and succession, providing opportunities for effective induction and mentoring of new personnel.
- c) Develop teachers’ and staff members’ professional knowledge, skills, and practice through differentiated opportunities for learning and growth, guided by understanding of professional and adult learning and development.
- d) Foster continuous improvement of individual and collective instructional capacity to achieve outcomes envisioned for each student.

- e) Deliver actionable feedback about instruction and other professional practice through valid, research-anchored systems of supervision and evaluation to support the development of teachers' and staff members' knowledge, skills, and practice.
- f) Empower and motivate teachers and staff to the highest levels of professional practice and to continuous learning and improvement.
- g) Develop the capacity, opportunities, and support for teacher leadership and leadership from other members of the school community.
- h) Promote the personal and professional health, well-being, and work-life balance of faculty and staff.
- i) Tend to their own learning and effectiveness through reflection, study, and improvement, maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

### **Standard 7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff**

Effective educational leaders foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Develop workplace conditions for teachers and other professional staff that promote effective professional development, practice, and student learning.
- b) Empower and entrust teachers and staff with collective responsibility for meeting the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of each student, pursuant to the mission, vision, and core values of the school.
- c) Establish and sustain a professional culture of engagement and commitment to shared vision, goals, and objectives pertaining to the education of the whole child; high expectations for professional work; ethical and equitable practice; trust and open communication; collaboration, collective efficacy, and continuous individual and organizational learning and improvement.
- d) Promote mutual accountability among teachers and other professional staff for each student's success and the effectiveness of the school as a whole.
- e) Develop and support open, productive, caring, and trusting working relationships among leaders, faculty, and staff to promote professional capacity and the improvement of practice.
- f) Design and implement job-embedded and other opportunities for professional learning collaboratively with faculty and staff.
- g) Provide opportunities for collaborative examination of practice, collegial feedback, and collective learning.
- h) Encourage faculty-initiated improvement of programs and practices.

### **Standard 8: Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community**

Effective educational leaders engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Are approachable, accessible, and welcoming to families and members of the community.
- b) Create and sustain positive, collaborative, and productive relationships with families and the community for the benefit of students.
- c) Engage in regular and open two-way communication with families and the community about the school, students, needs, problems, and accomplishments.
- d) Maintain a presence in the community to understand its strengths and needs, develop productive relationships, and engage its resources for the school.
- e) Create means for the school community to partner with families to support student learning in and out of school.
- f) Understand, value, and employ the community's cultural, social, intellectual, and political resources to promote student learning and school improvement.
- g) Develop and provide the school as a resource for families and the community.
- h) Advocate for the school and district, and for the importance of education and student needs and priorities to families and the community.
- i) Advocate publicly for the needs and priorities of students, families, and the community.
- j) Build and sustain productive partnerships with public and private sectors to promote school improvement and student learning.

**Standard 9: Operations and Management**

Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Institute, manage, and monitor operations and administrative systems that promote the mission and vision of the school.
- b) Strategically manage staff resources, assigning and scheduling teachers and staff to roles and responsibilities that optimize their professional capacity to address each student's learning needs.
- c) Seek, acquire, and manage fiscal, physical, and other resources to support curriculum, instruction, and assessment; student learning community; professional capacity and community; and family and community engagement.
- d) Are responsible, ethical, and accountable stewards of the school's monetary and nonmonetary resources, engaging in effective budgeting and accounting practices.
- e) Protect teachers' and other staff members' work and learning from disruption.
- f) Employ technology to improve the quality and efficiency of operations and management.
- h) Know, comply with, and help the school community understand local, state, and federal laws, rights, policies, and regulations so as to promote student success.

- i) Develop and manage relationships with feeder and connecting schools for enrollment management and curricular and instructional articulation.
- j) Develop and manage productive relationships with the central office and school board.
- k). Develop and administer systems for fair and equitable management of conflict among students, faculty and staff, leaders, families, and community.
- l) Manage governance processes and internal and external politics toward achieving the school’s mission and vision.

## **Standard 10: School Improvement**

Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote *each* student’s academic success and well-being.

*Effective leaders:*

- a) Seek to make school more effective for each student, teachers and staff, families, and the community.
- b) Use methods of continuous improvement to achieve the vision, fulfill the mission, and promote the core values of the school.
- c) Prepare the school and the community for improvement, promoting readiness, an imperative for improvement, instilling mutual commitment and accountability, and developing the knowledge, skills, and motivation to succeed in improvement.
- d) Engage others in an ongoing process of evidence-based inquiry, learning, strategic goal setting, planning, implementation, and evaluation for continuous school and classroom improvement.
- e) Employ situationally-appropriate strategies for improvement, including transformational and incremental, adaptive approaches and attention to different phases of implementation.
- f) Assess and develop the capacity of staff to assess the value and applicability of emerging educational trends and the findings of research for the school and its improvement.
- g) Develop technically appropriate systems of data collection, management, analysis, and use, connecting as needed to the district office and external partners for support in planning, implementation, monitoring, feedback, and evaluation.
- h) Adopt a systems perspective and promote coherence among improvement efforts and all aspects of school organization, programs, and services.
- i) Manage uncertainty, risk, competing initiatives, and politics of change with courage and perseverance, providing support and encouragement, and openly communicating the need for, process for, and outcomes of improvement efforts.
- j) Develop and promote leadership among teachers and staff for inquiry, experimentation and innovation, and initiating and implementing improvement.

National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2015). *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders 2015*. Reston, VA: Author.

## West Virginia Standards of Professional Practice for School Principals

5.1. Role. The effectiveness of the school principal, next to that of the classroom teacher, is the single most significant influence on student achievement. Principals who have interpersonal and collaborative skills combined with technical expertise in instructional leadership can dramatically elevate the overall effectiveness of a school. Each school has its own unique culture, level of expectation, priorities, procedures and programs that come together to positively or to negatively influence student learning. It is the role of the school principal to elevate the quality of operations and to align the efforts of staff so they coalesce to support the learning and well-being of each student. Certainly, this is a challenging and complex expectation. The nine standards and functions outlined in this policy are a descriptive guide to help leaders move in this direction. Central to the nine standards is the premise that principals can no longer be expected to do the complex work of moving the school forward by themselves and with little assistance and authority. First, there must be quality, school-specific support services and resources from the district office; services and resources that are based on the student data and professional needs of the school. Second, there must be an increase in the leadership of teachers; teacher leaders who promote and instill a sense of collective accountability and who engage staff in on-going collaborative discussions on how to improve school and classroom practice to improve student learning. This culture of cooperation and results will not develop by itself. This must be organized, valued, nurtured by the principal with appropriate supports from the central office including time for teachers to meet, structures for collaboration and quality professional development. Third, principals and teachers must be given appropriate flexibility to make school-based decisions about the research-based processes and strategies to improve school and classroom practice. If these conditions are put in place, then principals can be the leader of a team of leaders empowered to create those conditions that enhance the learning of all students in the school.

### 5.2. Standards.

#### 5.2.1. Demonstrates Interpersonal and Collaborative Skills.

- a. The principal models professional, moral and ethical behaviors that engender trust and respect among staff, students and the community.
- b. The principal builds networks and fosters a sense of teamwork and collaboration across the school and community.
- c. The principal demonstrates effective communication skills including use of digital tools and applications.
- d. The principal frames problems and make decisions to promote the long-term best interest of students.
- e. The principal anticipates, addresses and resolves conflict.
- f. The principal develops the leadership capabilities of others and delegates appropriately.
- g. The principal models a positive attitude and recognizes individual and collective accomplishments.

### 5.2.2. Creates a Clear and Focused Learning Mission.

- a. The principal collaboratively sustains a learning-centered vision, mission and goals that reflect student needs in a changing nation and world.
- b. The principal works with staff to incorporate district, state and national priorities into the school's vision, mission and goals.
- c. The principal develops a sense of urgency for change and a commitment to actions necessary to bring about that change.
- d. The principal uses the school's vision, mission and goals to collaboratively build a focused and coherent set of strategies for school improvement.
- e. The principal works with staff to evaluate the alignment of school initiatives with the mission and goals and revises and/or eliminates activities as necessary.
- f. The principal sustains commitment to the vision, mission and goals by communicating progress and celebrating success.

### 5.2.3. Facilitates Rigorous Curriculum, Engaging Instruction and Balanced Assessments.

- a. The principal demonstrates a commitment to student learning by prioritizing leadership time and efforts on those actions that will advance student learning.
- b. The principal creates a climate of accountability where all staff demonstrates a collective sense of responsibility for student learning.
- c. The principal organizes the school around a cohesive philosophy and research-based programs appropriate to the programmatic level of the school.
- d. The principal works with staff to encourage strategies that develop student self-direction and personal accountability for learning.
- e. The principal ensures a rigorous standards-based curriculum and engaging instruction in each classroom by providing processes of collegial discussion, observation, feedback and support.
- f. The principal uses benchmark and summative assessment data to guide and modify school programs, allocate resources, assign staff and alter time to improve student achievement.
- g. The principal assists staff in developing and using quality assessment practices to guide instructional decisions.
- h. The principal regularly monitors classroom instruction and collaboratively determines targets for improvement.
- I. The principal works with district and school staff to implement a coordinated system of enrichment and intervention for students whose academic growth is not progressing satisfactorily.
- j. The principal works with staff to continually assess how the school schedule, staff assignments and use of resources can be modified to improve learning.

k. The principal facilitates the acquisition and effective use of instructional resources and technologies that reflect current best practice.

#### 5.2.4. Builds and Sustains a Positive Learning Climate and Cohesive Culture.

- a. The principal works with stakeholders to identify core beliefs and values that create a student-centered learning-focused school.
- b. The principal models, communicates and promotes core beliefs and values.
- c. The principal implements activities to assess, develop and sustain a cohesive student-centered learning-focused culture.
- d. The principal establishes and communicates high expectations for both students and staff and implements programs and policies to support these expectations.
- e. The principal implements programs and processes to ensure the school is safe, orderly, well-maintained and conducive to learning.
- f. The principal works with staff to implement a school-wide coordinated approach for enhancing student character and good citizenship.
- g. The principal ensures that student extra-curricular and co-curricular activities are well-coordinated, equitable and add value to student learning, character and citizenship.

#### 5.2.5. Promotes Continual Professional Growth and Attracts and Retains Quality Staff.

- a. The principal implements district processes for hiring and mentoring new staff that result in the recruitment and retention of highly qualified personnel.
- b. The principal implements effective processes for staff evaluation, reflection and feedback that are linked to student achievement and improved professional practice.
- c. The principal models professional inquiry, engages in professional growth and promotes the continual learning of all staff.
- d. The principal works with staff to analyze a variety of data, including data on instructional practices and student achievement, to establish the school's professional development targets.
- e. The principal works collaboratively to design and implement research-based approaches for professional growth, including digital age learning experiences, to address the school's professional development targets.
- f. The principal works with staff to organize, support and sustain teacher collaborative teams as the school's central vehicle for enhancing professional growth.
- g. The principal promotes teachers as leaders of professional practice and creates conditions that enhance their leadership success.

5.2.6. Acts as a Student Advocate and Creates Support Systems for Student Success.

- a. The principal acts as a steadfast advocate for the achievement and well-being of all students and cultivates this advocacy in others.
- b. The principal ensures that student achievement and well-being are the central focus of all school practices and decisions and works to develop this commitment among all the staff in the school.
- c. The principal creates an environment and implements practices that value and protect diversity and promote social justice.
- d. The principal creates support for programs and processes that address student physical and social-emotional needs by communicating their link to student academic success.
- e. The principal works with staff to effectively use the state data system to identify and diagnose students with physical and social-emotional needs.
- f. The principal ensures there are programs, services and timely interventions to address student physical and social-emotional needs including wellness, counseling and social services.

5.2.7. Manages Operations to Promote Learning.

- a. The principal works with district staff to evaluate operations and ancillary services to ensure they add value to student learning and well-being.
- b. The principal ensures that the school adheres to federal, state, and local policies and code.
- c. The principal develops, communicates and monitors effective procedures for carrying out the routines and management functions of the school.
- d. The principal follows district processes for obtaining, allocating, managing and monitoring the distribution of school fiscal resources.
- e. The principal ensures that current technology tools and applications are used to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.
- f. The principal works with district staff to provide efficient and effective transportation and child nutrition services.
- g. The principal ensures that school facilities are safe, well-maintained and used to maximize student learning.
- h. The principal ensures that the school has processes for the storage, security, privacy and integrity of data and information systems.

5.2.8. Connects to Families and the Larger Community.

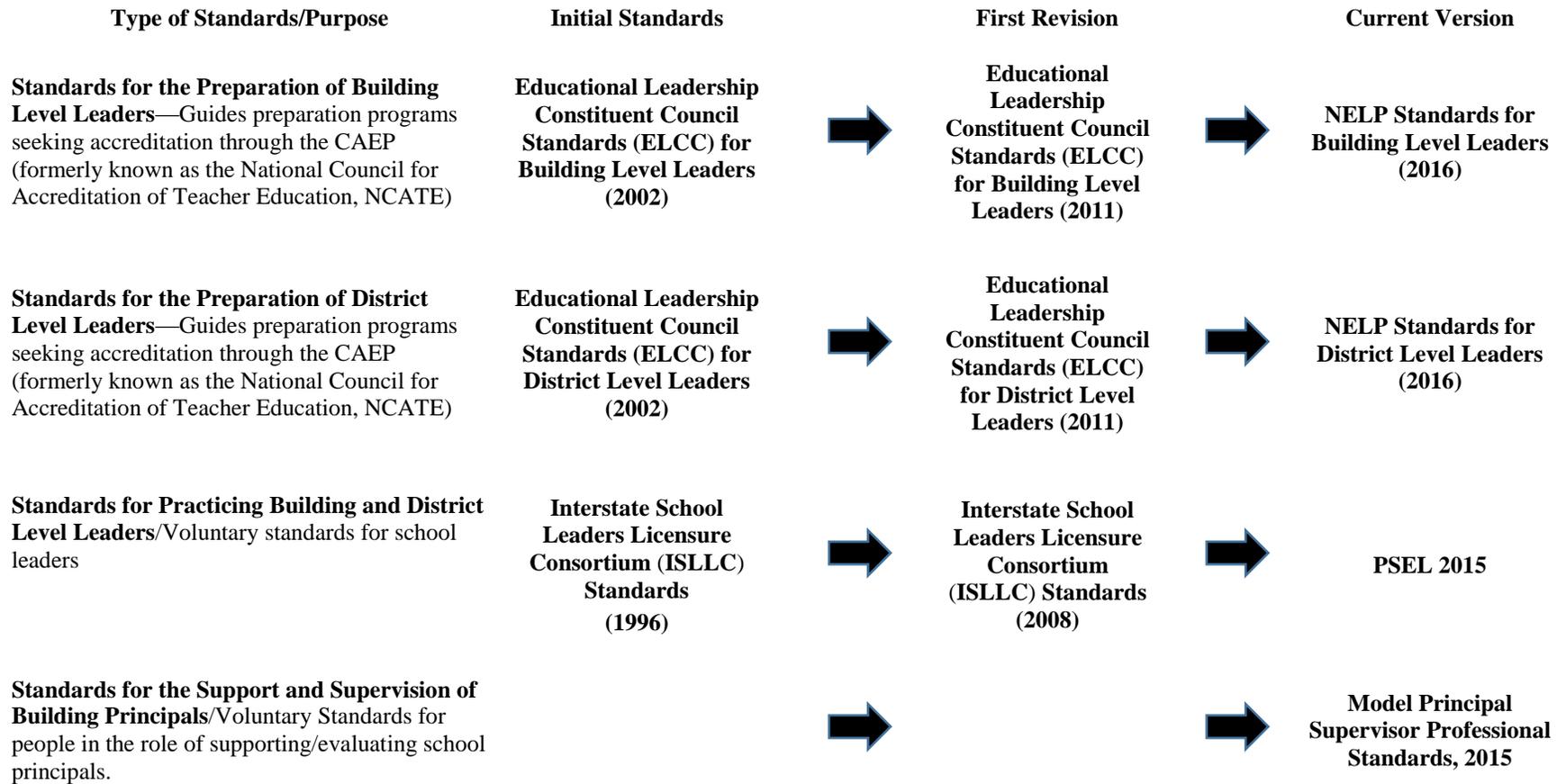
- a. The principal uses knowledge of demographics, culture and community needs to inform school decisions and develop school programs.
- b. The principal works with staff to create an inviting atmosphere and sense of partnership with families and the community.

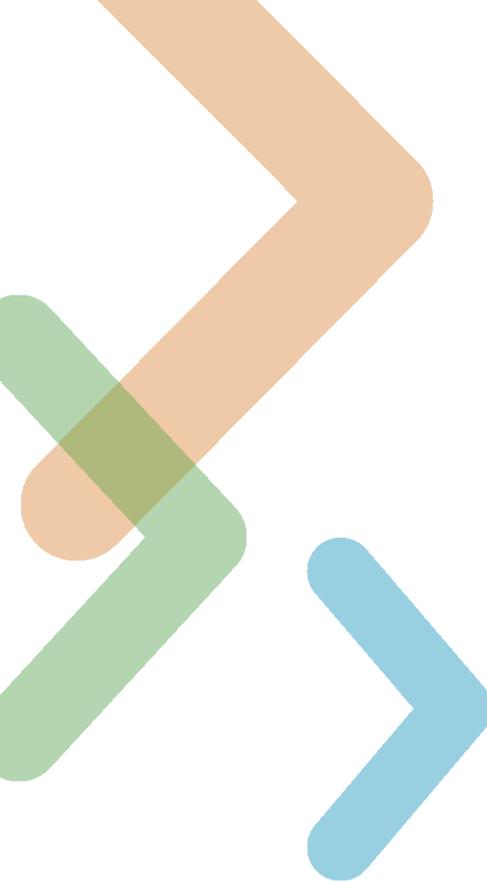
- c. The principal uses various communication systems and technologies to keep families and the community informed and involved.
- d. The principal works with the district staff to develop school processes for communicating with and responding to print, digital and other media.
- e. The principal works with staff and stakeholders to create family involvement programs and community partnerships that advance the school vision, mission and goals.
- f. The principal creates partnerships with community agencies and organizations to improve and align services to students and families.

#### 5.2.9. Effects Continuous Improvement.

- a. The principal exhibits interpersonal and organizational skills associated with leading and sustaining successful change.
- b. The principal challenges the status quo and searches for innovative ways of improving the school.
- c. The principal creates the expectation and provides the structure for all staff to participate in collaborative teams to advance student achievement and improve the school.
- d. The principal develops, supports and participates in the work of collaborative school team(s) that are accountable for school and classroom continuous improvement.
- e. The principal ensures that appropriate data is collected, accessible and used to guide school and classroom improvement efforts.
- f. The principal works with the school collaborative team(s) to develop, implement and revise a viable, coherent strategic plan that charts the collective course for school improvement.
- g. The principal ensures accountability for continuous improvement by working with teams to establish and monitor school and classroom performance targets and benchmarks.
- h. The principal energizes improvement efforts through communication and celebration of individual and collective success.

## Provenance of Leadership Standards





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This work was originally produced in whole or in part by the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders with funds from the U.S. Department of Education under cooperative agreement number S283B120021. The content does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Department of Education, nor does mention or visual representation of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the federal government.

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