

Feedback and the Role of Principal Supervisors

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Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at AIR

The mission of the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) is to foster the capacity of vibrant networks of practitioners, researchers, innovators, and experts to build and sustain a seamless system of support for great teachers and leaders for every school in every state in the nation.

Growing School Leadership



Research confirms what we know:

- Principals influence student achievement
- Principals influence teacher decisions
- Principals roles have changed, with more responsibilities for instructional oversight layered upon responsibilities for school management.
- Principal workforce annual turnover rate hovers at 20 percent, nationally.

Clifford, Sherratt & Feters, 2012; Hallinger, P., & Heck, R., 1998; Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D., 1999; Leithwood, K., Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K., 2004; Wallace Foundation, 2011; May & Supovitz, 2011; Fuller & Hollingsworth, 2014; Branch, Hanushek & Rivkin, 2012; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; Grissom, Kalogrides & Loeb, 2012; Branch, G., Hanushek, E. and Rivkin, S., 2012; Hallinger, P., & Heck, R., 1998; Goldring, E., Huff, J., May, H., & Camburn, E., 2007; Hallinger, P., & Heck, R., 1998; Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Fuller, E. J., Greene, J., Maynard, R., Redding, S., 2008; Grissom, J., Kalogrides, D., & Loeb, S., 2012; Grissom, J. A., & Loeb, S., 2011; Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D., 2008; Leithwood, K., & Jantzi, D., 1999; Leithwood, K., Louis, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K., 2004; Nettles, S. M., & Herrington, C., 2007; Wahlstrom, K., Seashore-Louis, K., Leithwood, K., & Anderson, S., 2010; Wallace Foundation, 2007; Herman, R., Dawson, P., Dee, T., Fuller, E. J., 2014; Center for Great Teachers and Leaders, 2016; Murphy, Louis & Smylie, 2017; National Policy Board for Education Administration, 2015; Prociw & Ederle, 2016; Young & Perrone, 2016; The Wallace Foundation (undated); The Wallace Foundation, 2013; Mendels, 2012; Burress, 2017; Goldring & Taie, 2014; Li, 2015; Gates, Ringel, Santibanez, Guarino, Ghosh-Dastidar & Brown, 2006; Loeb, Kalogrides & Horng, 2010; Branch, Hanushek & Rivkin, 2008; Clifford, Condon, Greenberg, Williams, Gerdeman, Feters & Baker, 2012; Snodgrass, 2018

Growing School Leadership: The Standards

ISLLC standards (2008)	PSEL standards (2015)
Vision and mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission, vision and core values • School implementation
School culture and instructional program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum, instruction and assessment • Community of care for students • Professional capacity of school personnel • Professional community for teachers and staff
Operations and management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community of care for students • Professional capacity of school personnel • Operations and management
Collaboration with community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement of families and community
Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics and professional norms • Equity and cultural responsiveness
Advocacy to improve contexts of schooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity and cultural responsiveness • Engagement of families and community

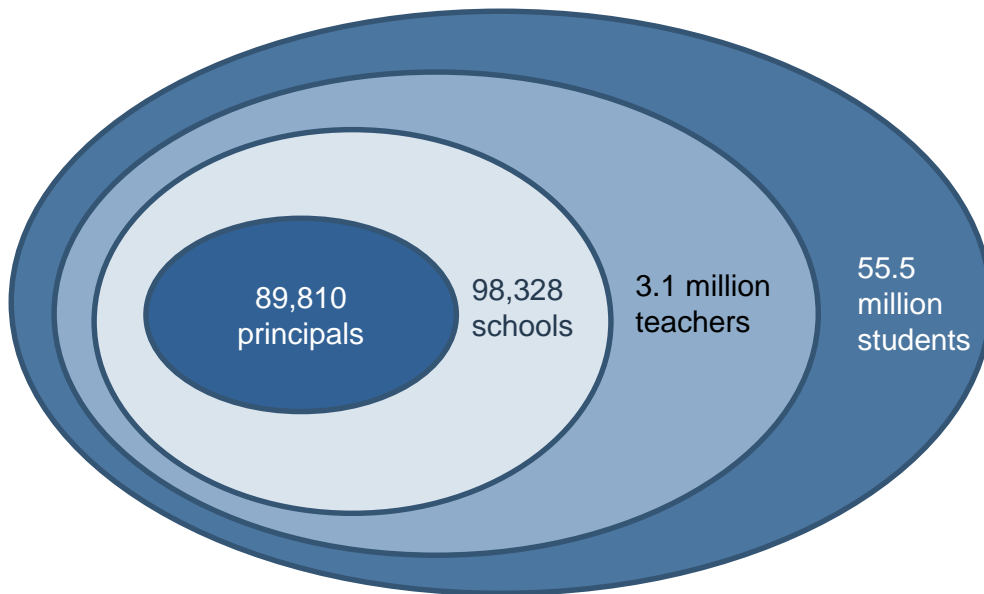
The ***Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*** (2015) reflect the increasing role of principals in:

- Working with teachers on curriculum, instruction and assessment; and
- Creating conditions for equity and equitable distribution of teachers.

Currently, seven states have adopted/adapted the PSEL standards and 37 have retained the ISLLC standards.

Center for Great Teachers and Leaders, 2016; Murphy, Louis & Smylie, 2017; National Policy Board for Education Administration, 2015

Growing School Leadership and ESSA



Public school statistics are provided only. Estimate on the number of public school and private/charter school principals is 114,330.¹

AIR and EDC, forthcoming; Meredith & Ruley, 2017

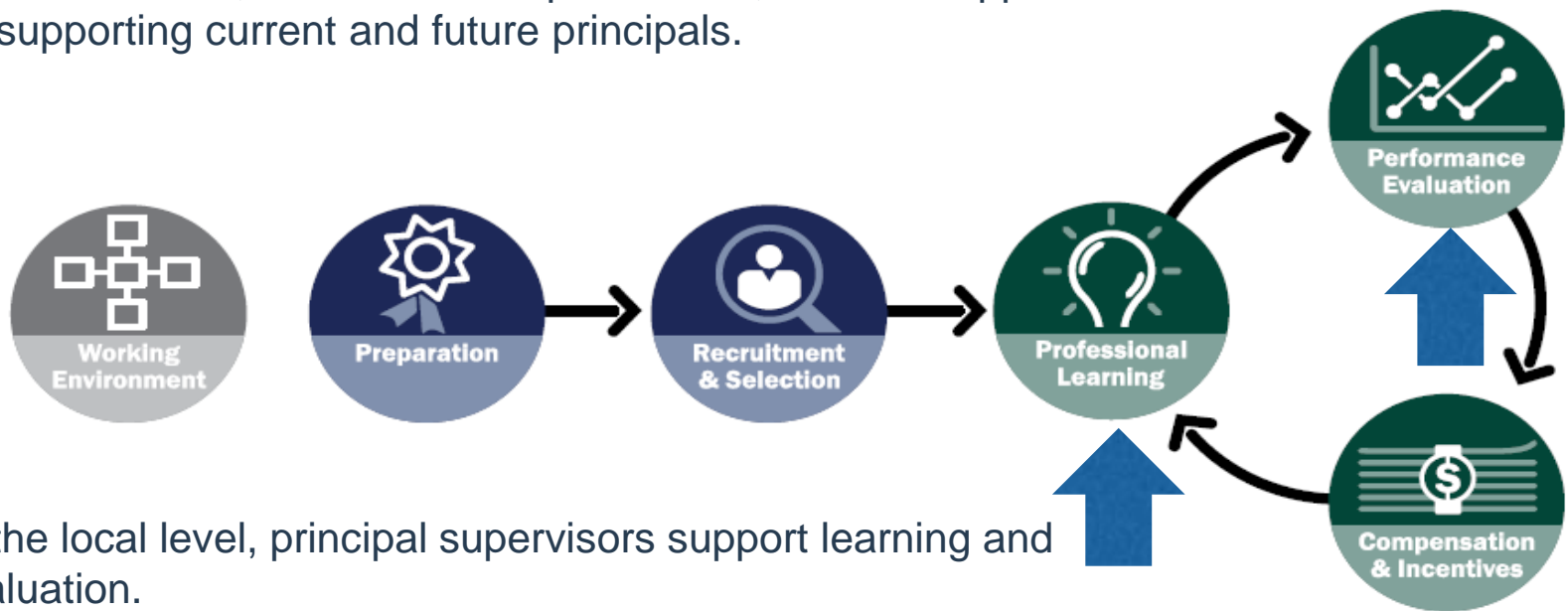
States view principal support as a top priority, relating principal support to state education agency success, school improvement and educational equity.

Our forthcoming analysis of State ESSA plans noted that:

- 34 of 35 states cite principals and school leadership as important local levers to teacher support, student support and ESSA plan success.
- 24 of 35 states will take the 3 percent set-aside for state-level support of school leadership.

Growing School Leadership and ESSA

If we are to meet our national goals of educational equity and achievement, we need a comprehensive, coherent approach to supporting current and future principals.



At the local level, principal supervisors support learning and evaluation.

Graphic from George W. Bush Institute, 2016.
Information from AIR and EDC, forthcoming

Principal Supervisors: Who are they?

The Wallace Foundation, school districts and states recognize principal supervisors as an important link for leadership practice improvement.

Who are principal supervisors?

- Superintendents
- Assistant superintendents
- Area superintendents
- Charter management board members
- Others



Concoran, Casserly, Price-Baugh, Walston, Hall & Simon, 2013

Principal Supervisors: What do they do?

Act

- Instigate conversations with principals about achieving scale
- Push principal thinking
- Celebrate success (and challenges)

Check

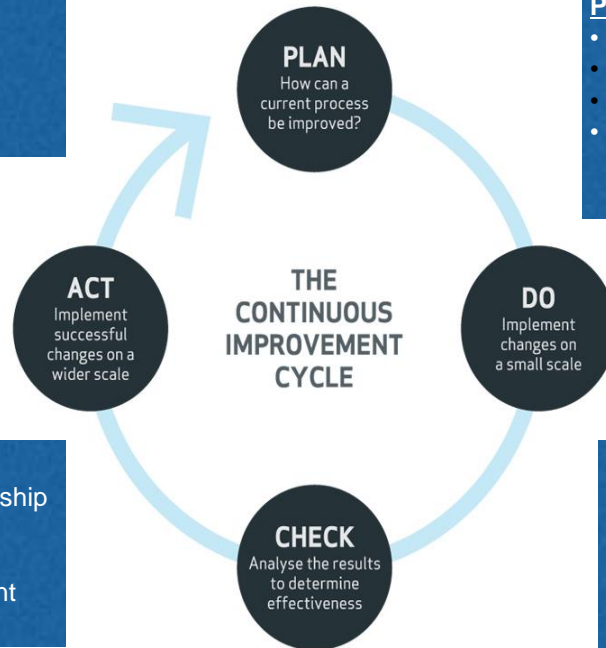
- Formatively, frequently gather data on leadership practice quality
- Provide actionable feedback
- Facilitate principal reflection and advancement
- Conduct summative evaluations

Plan

- Collaboratively set principal learning goals
- Work with principals on school improvement plans
- Plan leadership professional learning
- Support district improvement of leadership pipelines support

Do

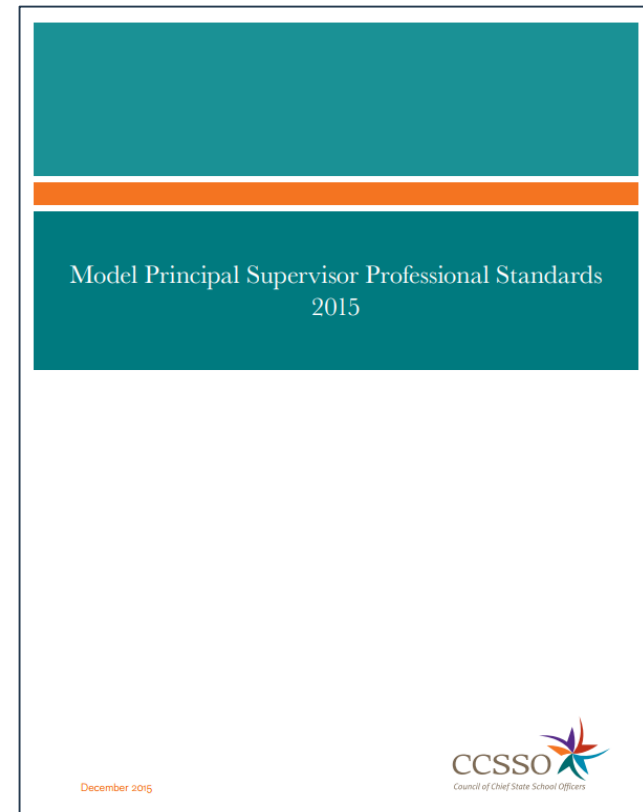
- Use leadership problems of practice as learning opportunities
- Provide professional development
- Arrange professional supports
- Give at-elbow support
- Help principals organize their time and resources



Clifford & Rowland, in press; Concoran, Casserly, Price-Baugh, Walston, Hall & Simon, 2013

Principal Supervisors: What do they do?

- What do principal supervisors do?**
- Principal support
 - Dedicate time to helping principals grow
 - Coach and support individual principals and engage in effective professional learning strategies
 - Use evidence of principals' effectiveness to determine necessary improvements in principal practice
 - Engage principals in formal district principal evaluation processes
 - District support
 - Advocate for and inform the coherence of organizational vision, policies and strategies
 - Assist the district in ensuring schools are culturally/socially responsive for each student's success
 - Personal actions
 - Lead strategic change processes to elevate school performance
 - Engage in their own professional learning



CCSSO, 2015

Principal Supervisors: What can states and districts do to support principal supervisors?

The Wallace Foundation and Council of Great City Schools examined how 6 large, urban school districts were supporting improved principal supervision. They found districts were:

1. **Defining and communicating clearly the roles and responsibilities of principal supervisors**
2. **Giving supervisors access to good principal and school performance data**
3. **Narrowing principal supervisors' spans of control.**
4. Strategically selecting and placing supervisors, matching talent with principal and school profiles.
5. Providing supervisors professional development.
6. Establishing clear lines of communication.
7. Holding supervisors accountable and evaluating performance.
8. Engaging supervisors in new principal induction.
9. Committing district resources and engaging external partners.



Concoran, Casserly, Price-Baugh, Walston, Hall & Simon, 2013

Principal Supervisors: What can states and districts do to support principal supervisors?

Principal supervisor triad discussion

Scan the supervisor standards and talk about the following with members of your state:

1. How well do the supervisor standards fit with superintendent and assistant superintendent responsibilities in your state?
2. **What are you, as a state, doing now to support principal supervisors?**
3. **What are the challenges that you've experienced in efforts to support improved principal supervision?**
4. What can you do to begin or advance this work?



Concoran, Casserly, Price-Baugh, Walston, Hall & Simon, 2013

State strategies: Defining and communicating roles in Nevada

Nevada Model Principal Supervisor Standards

- The need to communicate principal supervision as an aspect of central office administrator support.
- The need to define standards in a way that aligns with the principal evaluation framework and reflects the direction and values of the state.
- A rubric for supervisor self-reflection and professional development planning.

1. **Supervisor time:** Supervisors dedicate their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders.
2. **Instructional leadership:** Principal supervisors coach and support individual principals and engage in effective learning strategies to help principals grow as instructional leaders.
3. **Educational equity and school culture:** Principal supervisors use evidence of principals' effectiveness to determine necessary improvements in practice.
4. **Improvement cycles:** Principal supervisors lead strategic change that continuously elevates the performance of schools.
5. **Principal evaluation:** Principal supervisors engage principals in the formal principal evaluation process.
6. **Professional learning:** Principal supervisors engage in their own development and continuous improvement.
7. **System-level educational equity:** Principal supervisors assist the district in ensuring the community of schools with which they engage are culturally and strategically responsive and equitable.
8. **System coherence:** Principal supervisors support principals in building coherence between the school and district.

State strategies:

Accessing good principal performance data in Minnesota

Building a statewide network to support principal observation in Minnesota

- Strong performance feedback to teachers by principals is a missing link.
- Principal evaluation framework and measures vary within the state.
- Principal supervisor lacked principal observation methods on key instructional leadership tasks, like leading post-observation conferences or data discussions.
- Minnesota is a large, relatively rural state, and supervisors are superintendents with limited time or time to drive.
- ***How can the state support good principal observation and feedback on key leadership tasks?***



State strategies:

Accessing good principal performance data in Minnesota

Building a statewide network to support principal observation in Minnesota

- Using Title II and grant funding, build a network of 10 principal supervisor trainers strategically located across the state.
- Provide training and pilot the *Instructional Feedback Observation* tool with principals and superintendents across the state.
- Use online video analysis and coaching platform to give at-desk, asynchronous feedback to principals.



State strategies: Narrowing the span of control

Districts investing in improving principal supervision recognize that the ratio between supervisor and principal has been too large, and principal supervisors' other tasks too great, to provide meaningful, consistent evaluation and professional learning.

They have worked to reduce the ***span of control*** of administrators in principal supervisors positions to provide focus and time for leadership support.

District	Ratio
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	1 to 16
Denver	1 to 20
Gwinnett County	1 to 25
Hillsborough County	1 to 30
Prince George's County	1 to 15

Concoran, Casserly, Price-Baugh, Walston, Hall & Simon, 2013

Next Steps and Questions

- State adoption or adaptation of principal supervisor standards
- Research on principal supervisory practices and processes
- Development of better principal evaluation tools
- Principal supervisor professional development and supervision
- Principal supervisor preparation or credentialing

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