

Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards





Supporting Educator Effectiveness through Development

On April 3, 2020, the Nebraska State Board of Education (SBOE) approved revisions to the Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Framework, now referred to as the ***Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards***. This document was last revised in 2017. The SBOE approved the revisions with one amendment—the words district and state content standards were added to the Staff Support and Development standard for principals.

In January 2011, the SBOE authorized the drafting of possible performance standards for teachers and principals. At that time, the stakeholder and drafting committees' development of Effective Practices and Example Indicators was informed by the profession's national standards. For teachers, these included the 2010 Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards and the Framework for Teaching developed by Charlotte Danielson. For principals, these included the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) 2008 policy standards. In addition, standards developed by other states served as a valuable resource.

Beginning in January of 2019, stakeholder committees and standards revision committees were convened to inform statewide conversations and decisions about the shift in how Nebraska supports and develops teachers and principals to ensure each student has equitable access to effective teachers and principals. Decisions were again informed by the profession's national standards. For teachers, these included the 2013 *Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC)* standards, the *Framework for Teaching* developed by Charlotte Danielson, and the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model. For principals, these included the National Policy Board for Educational Administration's 2015 *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL)*, and the 2017 *Competency Standards for Learner-Centered, Personalized Education* by the Jobs for the Future and Council for Chief State School Officer (CCSSO) organizations. In addition, standards developed by other states served as a valuable resource.

The ***Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards*** are the framework that provides a common language for what it means to be an effective teacher or effective principal in Nebraska. This common language will help guide local districts, educational service units, institutions of higher education, and state and local policymakers as they strive together to ensure Nebraska's continuing commitment to improving educational equity for all children.

SUPPORTING EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH DEVELOPMENT

Each student deserves equitable access to effective teachers and principals who hold a genuine belief that each child can learn and grow. Teachers are the single most important school-based factor affecting student achievement (McCaffrey et al., 2003), and school leadership is second only to teaching among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn in school (Gates et al., 2019). A shift in how Nebraska supports and develops teachers and principals is essential to ensuring each student has what they need at the right moment, at the right level, and with the right intensity.

The determination of student needs must be rooted in the collection and analysis of multiple sources of relevant data. Meaningful use of data leads to systematic educational decisions, ensuring all students have the opportunity to achieve at high levels (Datnow & Park, 2015). Most importantly, the disaggregation of data to analyze and address the needs of specific student groups is essential to providing equitable access to each student. The enhanced usage of student, teacher, and principal data to make decisions about student needs must be a collective effort among the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), local educational agencies (LEAs), Educational Service Units (ESUs), Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs), and other educational organizations.

The **Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards** provide an enhanced focus on equitable opportunities for each student. These opportunities become visible through a common language of expectations, a better understanding of the knowledge and skills needed for effective teachers and principals, a commitment to staff support and development, and a focus on family and community engagement.

Statewide Common Language

The **Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards** provide a foundation for communicating expectations for Nebraska's teachers and principals and a framework for the alignment of statewide initiatives for the NDE, LEAs, ESUs, and EPPs, and other educational organizations. With the changing landscape in educational roles and responsibilities, courageous and necessary shifts toward consistency in expectations within Nebraska will translate to equitable opportunities for each student.

Knowledge and Skills for Effective Teachers and Principals

The **Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards** provide a foundation for the communication of the knowledge and skills effective teachers and principals in Nebraska must demonstrate. This communication will clarify districts' expectations for their teachers and principals, allowing teachers and principals to continue to learn and grow professionally throughout their careers. In addition, this communication will increase the transparency of expectations within the NDE, ESUs, EPPs, and other educational organizations, translating into increased alignment of expectations for teachers and principals and equitable opportunities for each student.

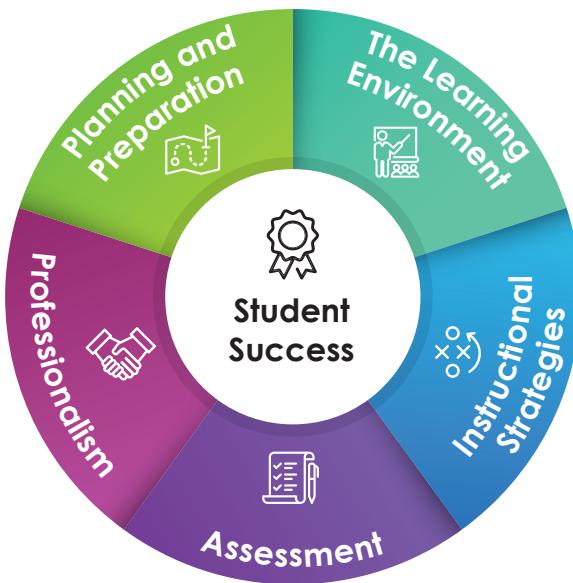
Staff Support and Development

The **Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards** provide a foundation for the establishment of a system of support and development for educators. When teachers and principals feel supported and have opportunities to grow within the profession, they are more likely to stay in education (Krasnoff, 2014). Consistent guidelines for effective teaching and school leadership will enhance communication and feedback, which leads to improved education for all students. Using common standards to collect and disaggregate data about teacher and principal performance will allow LEAs to make informed decisions on professional learning needs and placement of teachers and principals based on specific strengths and growth areas, thus improving the equitable opportunities for each student.

Family and Community Engagement

The **Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Standards** provide a foundation for the expectations of family and community involvement. By optimizing family and community involvement, LEAs welcome cultural differences, gain multiple perspectives, enhance opportunities for student and parental involvement, and align community initiatives with school initiatives; thus, improving equitable opportunities for each student.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR TEACHERS



Planning and Preparation 	<p>The teacher plans using district and state content standards, district-supported curriculum, instructional materials, and strategies, evidence-based resources, data, and community context to address the needs of each student in achieving rigorous learning goals.</p>
Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Through collaboration with colleagues, prioritizes district and state content standards to ensure vertical alignment and appropriate pacing of curriculumb. Utilizes high quality instructional materials within a locally determined curriculum to implement coherent units, lessons, and activities that reflect high expectations and enable each student to achieve district and state content standards, learning goals, and instructional objectivesc. Supplements locally determined curriculum and district-supported high quality instructional materials by evaluating and selecting resources to support specific student needs, while maintaining challenging, yet engaging learning experiencesd. Uses all students' abilities, cultural norms, and personal, family, and community experiences to prepare for differentiated, relevant, and rigorous instructione. Engages in collaborative school-wide learning communities that meet to reflect on professional practice, examine student data, and identify strategies directly applicable to improving instruction and learningf. Uses multiple sources of relevant data to tailor culturally responsive learning experiences that address students' academic, physical, social-emotional, and mental health needs, with specific attention toward equitable opportunities and outcomes for all student groups

The Learning Environment 	<p>The teacher creates and maintains a learning environment that promotes student engagement and fosters positive relationships, inclusivity, social-emotional development, and academic growth and achievement.</p>
Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Builds and sustains a relationship with each student that results in an accessible learning environment of trust, mutual respect, and support b. Promotes recognition of each student's diverse personal experiences and builds upon those experiences to increase academic success c. Creates and maintains a collaborative learning environment that supports each student's diverse academic, social-emotional, linguistic, and physical strengths and needs d. Establishes, communicates, and maintains high expectations, effective routines, procedures, and clear standards of conduct to create a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment for all students e. Maintains a learning environment that encourages students to reflect on and take ownership of their own learning behaviors and academic progress
Instructional Strategies 	<p>The teacher implements evidence-based, district-supported instructional strategies to ensure student growth and achievement.</p>
Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implements a range of evidence-based, district-supported strategies to ensure each student achieves district and state content standards, learning goals, and instructional objectives b. Uses a variety of evidence-based, district-supported resources and multimodal instructional tools to engage students in rigorous learning experiences c. Identifies, implements, and evaluates evidence-based, district-supported instructional strategies that are responsive to each student's abilities, cultural norms, and personal, family, and community experiences d. Reflects on classroom observations and assessment data and differentiates instruction by adjusting the pace of instruction, focus of instruction, and method of delivery to address each student's strengths and needs e. Engages students in constructing new and meaningful learning through problem-solving, critical and creative thinking, purposeful discourse, and inquiry aligned with locally determined curriculum and district-supported high quality instructional materials f. Models cultural competence and responsiveness by implementing and sustaining evidence-based, district-supported curriculum, instructional materials, and strategies that confront and eliminate institutional bias and student marginalization

Assessment 	<p>The teacher systematically uses a balanced assessment system that includes formative, interim, and summative assessments to measure student progress and to inform ongoing planning, instruction, and reporting.</p>
Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Utilizes formative, interim, and summative assessments that align to district and state content standards, learning goals, and instructional objectives b. Uses a variety of district-supported classroom-based assessments that confront and eliminate institutional bias and student marginalization, meet all students' developmental needs, and ensure each student has the opportunity to demonstrate understanding c. Uses formative, interim, and summative assessments and the resulting data to inform instruction, monitor student progress over time, and provide meaningful feedback to each student d. Analyzes formative, interim, and summative assessment data, individually and with colleagues, to ensure alignment to instruction e. Provides students with constructive, specific, and frequent feedback during and after instruction to enable students to assess, adjust, monitor, and reflect on their own progress toward learning goals f. Accurately documents and clearly communicates assessment data about student progress over time to relevant stakeholders
Professionalism 	<p>The teacher exhibits a commitment to professional ethics and the school's vision, mission and goals, participates in professional growth opportunities to support student and self learning, and contributes to the profession.</p>
Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Adheres to school policies, procedures, and regulations and models ethical behavior and integrity in accordance with the established standards of the district b. Develops and sustains productive and appropriate relationships through communication with students, colleagues, administrators, families, and the larger community in an effort to support and enhance each student's academic success and well-being c. Actively pursues opportunities for professional growth and leadership development both as an individual and as a member of a learning community d. Reflects on professional practices to support and improve student learning and maintains high expectations for self in lesson preparedness e. Advocates for and contributes to the shared mission, vision, and continuous improvement of the school and professional community f. Collaborates to enhance culturally responsive interactions with students, families, colleagues, and the larger community to share responsibility for the growth of student learning, development, and achievement g. Communicates with and protects the established rights and confidentiality of students, families, colleagues, and the larger community

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR PRINCIPALS



Vision for Learning 	<p>The principal, as an instructional leader, embodies and inspires all members of the educational community to collectively embrace and actualize the shared vision, mission, and goals of the school and district for high-quality teaching and learning that results in improved student growth and achievement, reduction of opportunity gaps, and enhanced student and staff well-being.</p>
Indicators:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Leads all constituent groups within the school community in the analysis of multiple sources of relevant data to drive the creation of the vision, mission, and goals of the school, and ensures alignment with district, state, and federal policies Establishes high expectations for the well-being and performance of self, students, and staff and widely communicates how the vision, mission and goals of the school align with those expectations Leads all members of the educational community in a systematic review of the vision, mission, and goals of the school and adjusts based on the changing needs of the students and the learning community Promotes teaching practices based on sound instructional theory and pedagogy, research on student learning and development, alignment to the vision, mission and goals of the school, and the needs of each student and staff member Ensures each student's instructional experience is based on intentional and district-supported use of high quality instructional materials and aligned to innovative and impactful programming personalized to the interests and needs of individual students and groups of students Implements a systematic plan, using multiple sources of relevant data, to ensure alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment processes based on instructional priorities and student and staff development and support needs Models behavior that demonstrates the belief that all students and staff members can reach their full potential with meaningful access to educational resources they need at the right moment, at the right level, and with the right intensity

Continuous Improvement 	<p>The principal, as an instructional leader, leads a continuous improvement process that results in improved student growth and achievement, enhanced student and staff well-being, and greater school effectiveness.</p>
Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In collaboration with the educational community, develops, implements, monitors, and revises a school improvement plan that is aligned with district, state, and federal guidelines and goals b. Adopts a systems perspective and promotes coherence among improvement efforts in all aspects of school organization, programs, and services to align with the school's vision, mission, and goals c. Implements a school-wide documented professional learning plan that is developed based on staff input, aligned to the school's continuous improvement processes, and evaluated and adjusted based on participant feedback and student outcome data d. Manages the process of change within the school, communicating the need and process for change so that it is fully understandable, consistent, and transparent, and utilizing the collective efforts of all members of the educational community e. In collaboration with the educational community, aligns the school's curriculum and high quality instructional materials to district and state content standards to ensure cultural responsiveness and high expectations for student learning f. Creates and sustains strategic partnerships with diverse groups of community leaders, keeping them informed and seeking their perspectives on issues affecting the school g. In collaboration with the educational community, monitors the achievement of each student group and other sources of data to make informed decisions about student learning, teacher effectiveness, and school improvement h. Coordinates collaborative school-wide learning communities that meet to reflect on professional practice, examine student data, and identify strategies directly applicable to improving instruction and learning i. Monitors the effectiveness of family and community engagement efforts and regularly uses results to inform school improvement efforts

Staff Support & Development 	<p>The principal, as an instructional leader, develops and supports the professional capacity and practice of personnel to maximize student learning opportunities and outcomes that align with district and state content standards and the school's vision, mission, and goals.</p>
Indicators:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Builds a climate of trust, responsiveness, and equity in decision making that is based on the needs and voices of each staff member b. Implements a performance evaluation system for teachers and instructional support staff based on a common instructional language and effective teaching practices c. Observes instructional staff formally and informally and provides specific, actionable, and timely feedback to improve instructional practice, and takes action to provide each instructional staff member with the supports and development needed d. Leads efforts for the development and implementation of differentiated learning and growth opportunities in the areas of professional knowledge, skills, and practice for individual teachers and staff members e. Engages in ongoing professional dialogue with instructional staff to ensure high quality instructional materials and evidence-based, district-supported strategies are fully implemented as intended, resulting in increased student growth and achievement f. Develops and implements a systematic recruitment and retention plan that includes analysis of multiple sources of data to ensure equitable access to effective educators for each student g. Mentors emerging staff leaders to build leadership capacity within the school community

Operations & Management



The principal manages the organization, operations, and resources of the school to provide a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment for all students and staff.

Indicators:

- a. In collaboration with the educational community, establishes, implements, and communicates the school's policies, protocols, and daily operations to promote the vision, mission, and goals of the school
- b. Creates, implements, and sustains a system of conflict resolution among all members of the educational community that aligns with the vision, mission, and goals of the school
- c. Promotes the school as a community center and resource for families and community members
- d. Maintains an organized data system and uses the system consistently to communicate actionable information about classroom and school improvement with the educational community
- e. In collaboration with the educational community, uses multiple sources of relevant data to ensure academic and social interventions, accommodations, and curricular and extracurricular activities are available to meet the strengths and needs of each student
- f. Informs the development of, complies with, and helps the educational community understand local, state, and federal regulations, policies, and laws that impact the learning environment
- g. Engages in responsible, ethical, and accountable budgeting and accounting practices
- h. Manages and monitors the school's site, facilities, services, and equipment to maintain a safe, clean, healthy learning environment
- i. Manages staff resources, assigning staff members to roles that optimize their professional capacity to address each student's strengths and needs

Culture for Learning

The principal, as an instructional leader, cultivates and nurtures an inclusive, caring, and supportive learning environment that promotes the academic success and well-being of each member of the educational community.

Indicators:

- a. Is consistently visible in the school and community, leads efforts to create and sustain a safe and healthy learning environment of respect and rapport based on clear guidelines for appropriate behavior, and addresses student and staff conduct in a positive, fair, unbiased manner
- b. Articulates a vision that defines a student-centered school culture, and creates and sustains school conditions that ensure equitable access to learning and development opportunities for each student, staff member, and self
- c. Implements a systematic process, using multiple sources of relevant data, to provide a layered continuum of support to meet the academic, physical, social-emotional, and mental health needs of each student
- d. Supports protocols and practices that provide collaboration time among staff, cultivating mutual respect, collegiality, and collective responsibility for meeting student and staff goals
- e. Promotes high expectations and mutual accountability, recognizes successes of students and staff, and uses multiple sources of relevant data to monitor the climate and culture of the educational community
- f. Models cultural competence and responsiveness and collaborates with the educational community to create, implement, and sustain systematic instructional protocols and practices that confront and eliminate institutional bias and student marginalization
- g. Recognizes diversity as an asset, and creates and sustains a learning environment in which all students, staff, and community members are known, accepted, valued, trusted and respected, and encouraged to be active and responsible members of the school community
- h. Utilizes and promotes the cultural, social, and intellectual resources of the community

**Professional
Ethics &
Advocacy**



The principal, as an instructional leader, exhibits a high level of professional ethics and advocates for policies of equity and excellence in support of the vision, mission, and goals of the school.

Indicators:

- a. Places students at the center of education and shares a collective responsibility for each student's academic success and well-being
- b. Proactively navigates the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural environment in which the school exists in support of the school's vision, mission, and goals
- c. Protects the established rights and confidentiality of students and staff
- d. Models ethical behavior, acting according to and promoting the professional norms of integrity, fairness, transparency, trust, collaboration, perseverance, reflective practice, and personal continuous improvement
- e. Holds self and others in the educational community accountable for adhering to established standards of integrity and ethical behavior and handles conflict resolution with professionalism
- f. Engages in purposeful, positive conversations and activities throughout the educational community to advocate publicly for the importance of education, the needs of students, staff, and self, and educational priorities
- g. Builds and maintains sound relationships with the educational community, including staff and students, based upon personal integrity, dignity, and mutual respect
- h. Assumes responsibility for professional growth and leadership development both as an individual and as a member of a learning community

DEFINITIONS FOR NEBRASKA TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Word	Definition
Achievement	The extent to which a learner has attained their short or long-term educational goals
Balanced Assessment System	The multiple measures (formative, interim, and summative) used to gather evidence of student learning relative to content area standards
Collective Responsibility	Responsibility of every member of a group without regard to an individual member's participation in decision making and his or her position or rank
Continuous Improvement	The general belief that improvement is not something that starts and stops, but it's something that requires an organizational or professional commitment to an ongoing process of learning, self-reflection, adaptation, and growth
Cultural Competence	An ability to learn from and respectfully relate to other cultural backgrounds, heritages, and traditions
Cultural Norms	The shared expectations and rules that guide behavior of people within social groups
Cultural Responsiveness	The understanding and consideration of the different cultural backgrounds of others
Data System	Systematic protocols for collecting and maintaining detailed, high quality, student- and staff-level data over time, and making these data accessible through reporting and analysis tools
Data-Informed	The collection and analysis of data to guide decisions that improve success
Developing	A principal or teacher who has not met the performance standard, but is aware of its importance and working to access high quality supports
Differentiated Instruction	Tailoring instruction to meet individual needs
Disaggregation of Data	Breaking down information into smaller subpopulations
District-Supported Curriculum	A curriculum that outlines the intended outcomes, content, experiences, assessments, and resources for measuring student learning, and it also includes the scope and sequence of what is taught
Diversity	Understanding that each individual is unique and recognizing individual differences
Educational Community	The various individuals, groups, businesses, and institutions that are invested in the welfare and vitality of a school and its community
Effective	Successful attainment of the performance standards for teachers or principals
Equitable Access	The notion that every student should have the same opportunity as any other student to be taught by a great teacher who is supported by a great principal
Equity	Educational equity means all students have meaningful access to the educational resources they need at the right moment, at the right level, and with the right intensity. Educational equity means high expectations for learning and student achievement. Educational equity allows students to discover and explore their passions and make meaningful connections within the context of their postsecondary interests. Equity requires that these opportunities and outcomes exist for all Nebraskans, including but not limited to, and unrestricted by race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, or political affiliation.
Ethics	Standards by which to judge conduct
Evidence-Based	Supported by one or more of strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates a rationale
Formative Assessment	The gathering of information or data about student learning during instruction that is used to guide improvements in teaching and learning
Growth	The change in achievement for an individual student or staff member between two or more points in time

Highly Effective	Exceeding beyond the established performance standards for teachers or principals
Inclusivity	The practice or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized
Ineffective	A principal or teacher who does not demonstrate attainment of the performance standards and does not actively seek support in filling deficiencies
Institutional Bias	A tendency for the procedures and practices of particular institutions to operate in ways which result in certain social groups being advantaged or favoured and others being disadvantaged or devalued
Instructional Leadership	The process of ensuring that good teaching routinely takes place in every classroom
Instructional Materials	The tools and resources that are used as part of a locally-determined curriculum
Instructional Theory	The foundation used to describe how to help people learn and develop, create conditions that boost the chance of learning, and improve instruction
Interim Assessment	A form of assessment that educators use to evaluate where students are in their learning progress and determine whether they are on track to performing well on future assessments
Layered Continuum of Support	Ensuring that every student receives equitable academic and behavioral support that is culturally responsive, matched to need, and developmentally appropriate, through layers that increase in intensity from universal (every student) to targeted (some students) to intensive (few students)
Learning Communities	Educators who convene regularly and frequently to engage in collaborative professional learning to strengthen their practice and increase student results
Marginalized	To relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group
Multimodal	A number of different sensory modalities
Opportunity Gap	The achievement gap that occurs when each student is not provided equitable opportunities to learn
Pedagogy	The method and practice of teaching, especially as an academic subject or theoretical concept
Pipeline	The structure to attract, prepare, support, develop, and retain teachers and principals
Professional Learning Plan	Established short- and long-term plans for professional learning and implementation of the learning
Recruitment and Retention Plan	An internal, organized work plan consisting of critical activities or steps to ensure timely placement and lasting retention of quality teachers and principals
Rigorous	Academically, intellectually, and personally challenging
School Community	Those individuals involved in the day-to-day operations of the school
School Improvement Plan	Documentation of a systematic on-going process involving the identification of schoolwide goals, and the planning, implementation, evaluation, and renewal of activities to meet those goals
Stakeholders	People who have an vital interest in the decisions made by the school
Standards	An established level of accomplishment that all teachers and principals are expected to meet or exceed
Student Groups	Any group of students who share a common background or interest, including those defined by ESSA (Economically disadvantaged students, Children with disabilities, English learners, African-American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino, White)
Summative Assessment	The evaluation of student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark
Systematic	Done or acting according to a fixed plan or system; methodical
Systems Perspective	A paradigm or perspective involving a focus on the whole picture and not just a single element
Vertical Alignment	Teaching is purposefully structured and logically sequenced so that students are learning the knowledge and skills that will progressively prepare them for more challenging, higher-level work

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EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS STAKEHOLDERS

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