

## Strategic Direction Management Report

Core Initiative: 2. Effective Principal in Every School

### *What we will do*

We are going to make sure that we have a highly effective principal at the head of every school, To do that, we will improve our recruiting system to be more aggressive in recruiting talented individuals into principals positions, starting with our own internal pipeline of best performing teachers and assistant principals and supplemented by strong external candidates. We will also provide all of our principals with the ongoing supports, careful evaluations, and individualized professional development they need while also placing all the necessary tools at their disposal to lead their schools into becoming the best in the nation.




### *Why we will do it*

There is a broad consensus among educational experts that having an effective principal at the head of every school is of utmost importance to assuring student success. The more challenging and/or underprivileged the student population in the school, the more this is true. In HISD, we have ample evidence of this, as there is broad variation in the on-track-to college-readiness rates of our elementary, middle, and high school students, even among schools with very similar poverty levels.

### *What we will report*


The following *Strategic Direction Management Report* answers the question: Is HISD acting on the priorities identified in the strategic plan with fidelity? It measures HISD's accomplishments and risks for each Key Strategies in support of the overall Core Initiative.

The *Strategic Direction Management Report* is produced Quarterly. Color indicators are used to as an indication of whether administration is on track to accomplish a Key Strategy's quarterly goals. A "Green" indicator ● means the district has made acceptable progress with respect to budget, scope and timeliness. A "Yellow" indicator ● means the district has identified risk with respect to one or more aspects. A "Red" indicator ● means progress has stopped or has a significant deficiency. As the Strategic Direction builds a foundation towards achieving the district's goals over a multi-year period, not all Key Strategies will have information to communicate in a given period.

 Green indicates acceptable progress
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2.1 Design and implement a rigorous, fair principal appraisal system	
<b>Main Element</b>	<b>Progress</b>
2.1.1 Develop a comprehensive principal appraisal system that includes multiple performance measures (e.g., student performance, school safety, teacher support), integrates feedback from teachers and principals' supervisors, and identifies principals' individual needs	

### Accomplishments

In this period we held an initial kickoff meeting with the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). We collected feedback from various constituencies on the appraisal rubric. We initiated the identification of task force members and pilot implementation participants.



### Planned for Next Period

In the next period we plan to finalize the principal appraisal rubric that will be used in the pilot implementation program. We will also hold the first task force meeting. In addition, we will solidify the work plan and timeline for full development and implementation of the new principal appraisal system.

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2.2 Implement quality assurance standards and recommended practices to guide principals' decision-making, with high expectations and clear accountability.	
Main Element	Progress
2.2.1 Develop standards and recommended practices to guide principals' decision-making	
2.2.2 Align practices and policies (e.g., principal's evaluation, job description, training, career path preparation) with the new model of standards for principal decision-making	

### Accomplishments

In this period we accomplished the task of initiating a draft document that describes quality assurance standards and recommended practices that will be used by principals to guide them in their day-to-day decision-making at the campus level.




### Planned for Next Period

In the next period we plan to complete the draft of standards and recommended practices, vet the draft document through various constituencies and present a final draft of the standards and practices for review by the Superintendent's Cabinet.

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2.3 Strengthen recruiting and staffing policies and practices to attract top talent	
Main Element	Progress
2.3.1 Create a high-quality leadership preparation program to prepare, recruit, and select best-in-class talent internally (e.g., teachers, assistant principals) in order to create an exceptional pool of candidates to fill school vacancies	
2.3.2 Strengthen HISD's recruiting practices to attract top principal talent from sources external to HISD	
2.3.3 Create systems to ensure ongoing effectiveness of HISD recruitment programs	

### Accomplishments




In this period we accomplished the task of initiating a partnership with the University of Texas Collaborative Urban Leadership Program (UTCULP) that will yield a pipeline of 24 individuals who will be ready to serve in district-wide leadership positions. We continued the partnership with the Rice Entrepreneurial Education Program (REEP) to cultivate the pipeline of individuals who complete that leadership program. We continued recruitment efforts by traveling to external events at the National Association of Bilingual Educators (NABE), Texas Association of Secondary School Principals (TASSP), Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA), University of Michigan, University of Texas, Lamar University and Prairie View A&M University. We developed new standards and a new selection process for principals and assistant principal/deans. We conducted a Leadership Summit on December 11, 2010, in an effort to continue to attract internal candidates for district leadership positions. We conducted a search and received Board approval to purchase a talent acquisition system that will add us in attracting, recruiting, hiring and retaining the best school leaders for HISD.

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**Planned for Next Period**

In the next period we will continue to work with the University of Texas and Rice University to support the leadership preparation programs at each institution. We will also attend additional external recruitment events sponsored by the Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA) and the National Association of Black School Educators (NABSE). In addition, we will begin working with core teams to implement a district-wide Talent Acquisition system.

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2.4 Establish a comprehensive instructional leadership program to develop and retain top talent	
Main Element	Progress
2.4.1 Define leadership pathways/ladders for HISD staff and administrators to become principals, and for principals to advance into higher leadership roles	
2.4.2 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of HISD's current supports to principals	
2.4.3 Provide ongoing professional development to principals who are already working in HISD, tailored to individual need while also addressing key topics in principal development (e.g., coaching of teachers, mentoring, APs, and data-driven decision-making)	
2.4.4 Provide new principals with a high-quality, three-year mentorship program	

### Accomplishments

In this period we worked with external partners to provide additional opportunities for current employees to participate in new or current credentialing and certification programs that would lead to principal certification. Interested employees were notified. Recruitment or information sessions were held with HISD Alternative Certification Program's Principal Academy for Collaborative Engagement (PACE), Texas A & M University, Sam Houston State University, University of Texas, Rice University, Prairie View A & M University, University of Houston, and Lamar University. We are continuing to add to the number and variety of partners providing credentialing and certification services.

Additionally, we conducted research before proceeding with Main Element 2.4.2. We worked with the district's Procurement Office to determine the potential cost for hiring an external researcher to design and conduct the survey to assess the strengths and weaknesses of HISD's current supports to principals. Based on cost projections and funding concerns, we have begun conversations with HISD's Research and Accountability Department to develop and conduct the survey. Survey results will inform the conceptualization, design and delivery of future principal training. Additionally, Research and Accountability will complete the annual HISD Board-mandated principal survey of central office departments in the

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spring. These results, along with the results described in 2.4.2 will be used to develop ongoing professional development for current principals. Currently, plans are underway to provide a variety of training for current staff. These include Staff Documentation and Investigations training, district-wide master schedule training and cognitive coach training.

We have also begun the three-year mentorship program. First-time assistant principals and deans are enrolled in a “grow-your-own” leadership development model that includes coaching, learning seminars and job-embedded professional development. Chief School Officers, School Improvement Officers and key central office staff are coaching and guiding new administrators through structured professional development team meetings. First-time campus principals are also participating in learning seminars, coaching sessions with School Improvement Officers and have also been assigned a mentor.

### **Planned for Next Period**


In the next period we will work in conjunction with the Research and Accountability Department to roll out the survey assessing strengths and weaknesses. The three-year mentorship program will continue. Staff Documentation and Investigations training will be concluded. We will have identified task force members and pilot participants who will help define the competency model, and provide feedback and input into the model for leadership pathways and ladders.

Main Element 2.4.2 will be on schedule now that we have a working agreement with Research and Accountability Department to complete the survey. This may be best strategy since this department is already tasked with completing the annual survey of principals. Findings from both surveys will inform future support and development strategies.



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2.5 Create a safe and secure environment conducive to learning in all schools	
<b>Main Element</b>	<b>Progress</b>
2. 5.1 Create a central data source to track and monitor safety violations/breaches	

### Accomplishments

In this period we conducted research to identify the characteristics of a central database that can best meet the needs of the district.

### Planned for Next Period

In the next period we will share our findings with key constituencies. Schools will continue to use utilize the Safe Schools Department on issues that pertain to Safe Schools Choice Options (SSCO). The Safe Schools Department acts as an advocate, utilizing police reports from HISD Police and data from Federal and State Compliance to monitor schools to reduce miscoding of safety violations.


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2.6 Create a healthy environment conducive to learning in all schools	
<b>Main Element</b>	<b>Progress</b>
2.6.1 Support positive behaviors in schools	
2.6.2 Increase healthy options for HISD students	

### Accomplishments

In this period we posted bullying information on the HISD Safe Schools website. Additionally, ongoing communication and training have occurred with schools, parents, community groups in collaboration with the Parent Involvement Department, Curriculum Instruction and Assessment Department, and Professional Development Services. HISD has also created systems to manage emergency illness of students and staff. We provide communicable disease surveillance, control and monitoring.

### Planned for Next Period

In the next period, we will form a consortium of individuals representing HISD Police, Risk Management and Safe Schools to conduct safety audits at all HISD schools. We will also continue to cultivate partnerships with other health care providers in the greater Houston area.

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