Measuring Principal Effectiveness

Principal Evaluation System Concept Paper

Mike Miles, *revised 23 July 2023*

Measuring Principal Effectiveness

Principals are the key to reform. While effective teachers are prerequisite, a competent staff is not sufficient for a district trying to transform. Without effective principals, any large system will find it next to impossible to develop capacity and place a high-quality teacher in front of every child. In order to turn around, a struggling school needs an effective principal to coach teachers, provide useful instructional feedback, monitor the system for continuous improvement, and build a culture of excellence.

Being a principal in a district challenged by poverty is one of the most demanding jobs in the nation. And there may be no more important work for any group of people in society at this time. The urgency of the work requires a high level of responsibility *and* accountability for results.   This means that districts should invest heavily in the recruitment of first-rate principals and develop their capacity to transform schools. The urgency of the work also requires districts to accurately assess principal effectiveness, emulating those who get results and removing those who, over time, are deemed ineffective.

The stakes for our students are high and failure is not an option. Districts should be serious about this, and principals should know this going in. Any district that does not want to introduce real accountability in the system (for superintendents, principals, and teachers) will continue to work sub-optimally and will be unable to transform.

As different principals will experience different levels of success (or failure), the evaluation of principals should be similarly differentiated. HISD's evaluation system for principals hopes to accurately measure a principal's effectiveness and compensate him or her appropriately.

> *We still won't get to where we need to go unless we're prepared to do three difficult, but essential, things: rebuild our entire K–12 system on a **platform of accountability** [my emphasis]; attract more top-flight recruits into teaching; and use technology very differently to improve instruction.*
>
> *Joel Klein, "The Failure of American Schools," Atlantic Monthly, June 2011*

Results matter

Broadly, principals also need to demonstrate leadership and vision, and they must be prepared to make tough decisions. These attributes will be assessed, using the principal's evaluation rubric. Operationally, a school leader's main purpose is to improve the quality of instruction and raise student achievement. At the end of the day, it is increased student proficiency that matters most and encapsulates all of the performance measurements of an effective principal.

To accurately assess principal effectiveness, we will have to clearly describe what success looks like, monitoring the system consistently and regularly, coach principals on-the-job and provide the support principals need to become effective instructional leaders.

HISD's evaluation of principals will rely on a combination of performance measurements and student achievement results. This document outlines each metric and the varying levels of success.
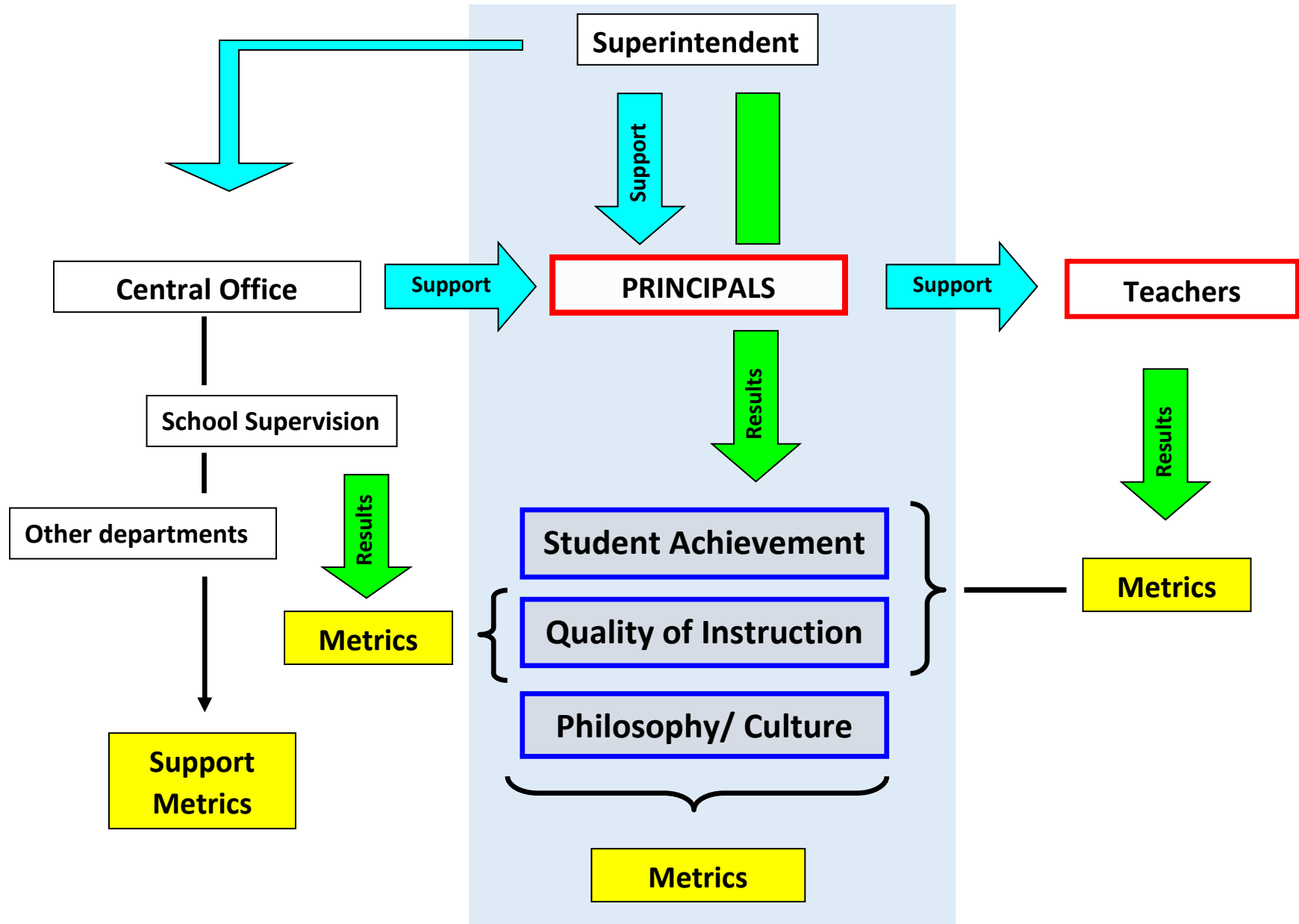
Support

A rigorous evaluation system will only take root (and will only be fair) if there is a great deal of support for those being evaluated. Indeed, the difference between a culture of accountability and a culture of fear is the support provided for people to attain rigorous, but achievable goals. If principals are the key lever for reform, then the entire system should be designed to support the principals in improving instruction and helping principals coach and develop their teachers. (See the Support-Results Diagram on page 4.)

The difference between a culture of accountability and a culture of fear is the support provided for people to attain rigorous, but achievable goals.

Thus, no aspect of the evaluation system for principals will be implemented without significant efforts to build the skill and capacity of our principals to be successful. Professional development will include job-embedded coaching that will help make our principals among the best in the nation.

Support – Results Diagram

Superintendent

Support

Central Office

Support → PRINCIPALS

Support → Teachers

School Supervision

Other departments

Results

Results

Results

Metrics

Support Metrics

Student Achievement

Quality of Instruction

Philosophy/ Culture

Metrics

Metrics

Leader Effectiveness and Development System (LEAD)

Definitions

The following definitions will be useful in understanding this document:

- *Leader Effectiveness and Development System (LEAD system)*: the District's name for the new evaluation system.

- *Metrics:* performance measurements or measurable outcomes used to assess principal effectiveness. There are three types of metrics used in the LEAD plan:

  - **Performance metrics** – those measurable indicators that describe how well a principal does his/her job. They focus on leadership, developing staff, and improving the quality of instruction. Forty percent of a principal's annual evaluation is based on performance metrics.
  - **Student achievement metrics** – student achievement results related to proficiency levels, academic growth, and student performance on state and nationally normed assessments.
  - **Progress-monitoring metrics** – performance measurements that are assessed during the year and that are aligned with the other metrics. These metrics provide feedback to principals and help them gauge their progress.

- *Annual evaluation rating*: the overall assessment of a principal's effectiveness based on the principal's performance and achievement metrics *during one year*. A principal receives an evaluation rating annually. It is possible for an annual evaluation rating to be lower than the overall effectiveness level.

- *Overall effectiveness level*: the effectiveness level on the LEAD scale to which a principal will be assigned based on the average of the last two annual evaluation ratings.[1] There are six effectiveness levels:

Prog I	Prog II	Prof I	Prof II	Exemp. I	Exemp. II
51 - 57	58 - 65	66 - 73	74 - 81	82 - 89	90 - 100

  For HISD's LEAD plan, the levels denote varying degrees of effectiveness. The goal for "progressing" principals is to reach proficiency.

- *Compensation level:* the effectiveness level at which a principal is paid. The compensation level will usually match the overall effectiveness level. However, if a principal's effectiveness level declines, he may be compensated at a higher level since his

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[1] If the principal is in his first year with the District or of this evaluation system, the effectiveness level will be based on just one annual evaluation rating.

effectiveness must decline two years in a row before his compensation is decreased by one level.

- *Principal performance rubric*: the evaluation *instrument* that outlines principal performance standards. The rubric accounts for 10% of a principal's evaluation rating.

Effectiveness areas

The purpose of the LEAD plan is to improve principal effectiveness in raising student achievement and improving the quality of instruction. The evaluation system must also be able to assess the principal's ability to grow and maintain teacher effectiveness in order to narrow opportunity gaps and prepare students for a Year 2035 workplace and world. The information derived from the evaluation system will be used to align professional development, principal recruitment and retention, and principal compensation.

We will use the following four areas to assess principal effectiveness:

- **Student achievement outcomes**. We will use data from district, state, or national assessments such as STARR, DIBELS, NWEA, AP exams, or district-level assessments.

- **Principal performance**. Principal performance includes an assessment of the school's quality of instruction as assessed by an independent review of the instruction in a school. The performance score also includes the Principal's score on the Executive Leadership Rubric (Appendix A) and on the School Systems Review (Appendix B).
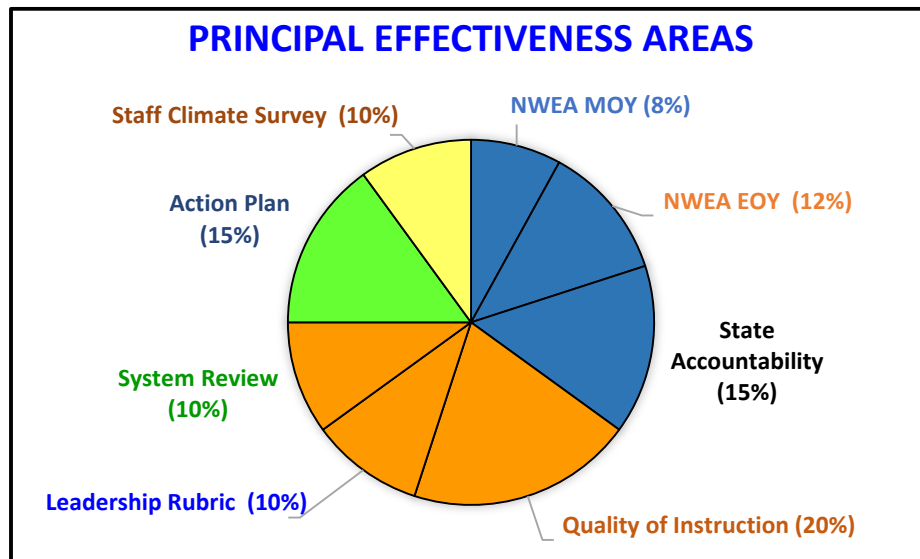
  [For the 2023-2024 school year, the principal will not be scored on the Executive Leadership Rubric nor the School Systems Review. Instead, those possible points will be added to the quality of instruction and to SPED compliance.]

- **School climate and culture survey.** We will use a district-developed climate and culture survey that will be administered twice a year.
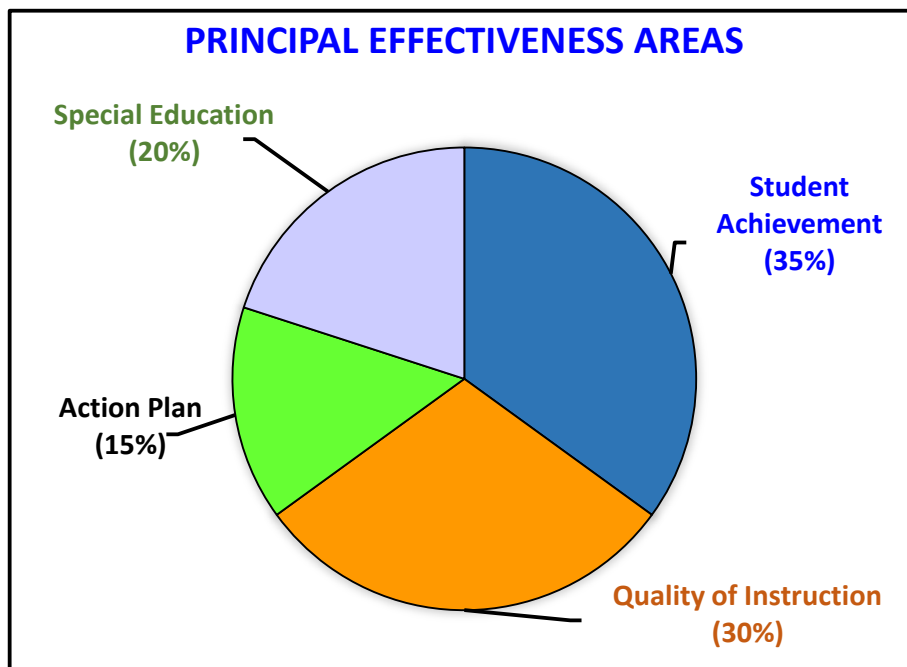
  [For the 2023-2024 school year, this metric will be replaced by a special education metric. Ten percent (10%) of a principal's evaluation will be tied to improvement in the NWEA MAP assessment scores of the school's students with special needs. See details on page 12.]
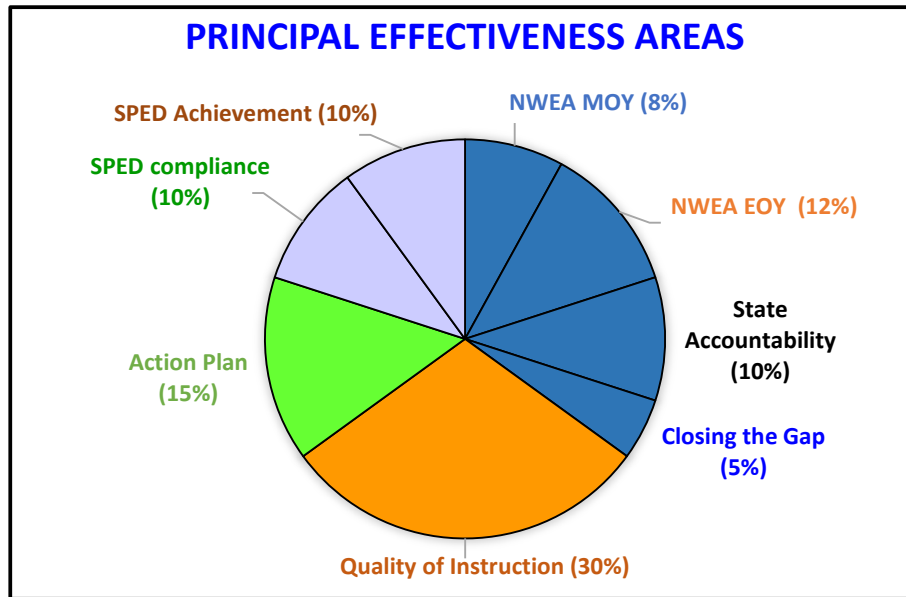
- **School action plan.** This performance metric is based on the school's accomplishment of specific and measurable goals in the School Action Plan.

The following chart describes the effectiveness areas for the principal evaluation we will use after the\2023-2024 school year:

PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS AREAS

- Staff Climate Survey (10%)
- NWEA MOY (8%)
- Action Plan (15%)
- NWEA EOY (12%)
- System Review (10%)
- State Accountability (15%)
- Leadership Rubric (10%)
- Quality of Instruction (20%)

The following chart describes the effectiveness areas for the 2023-2024 school year:

PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS AREAS

- Special Education (20%)
- Student Achievement (35%)
- Action Plan (15%)
- Quality of Instruction (30%)

PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS AREAS

[The remainder of this document addresses only the 2023-2024 components and evaluation system.]
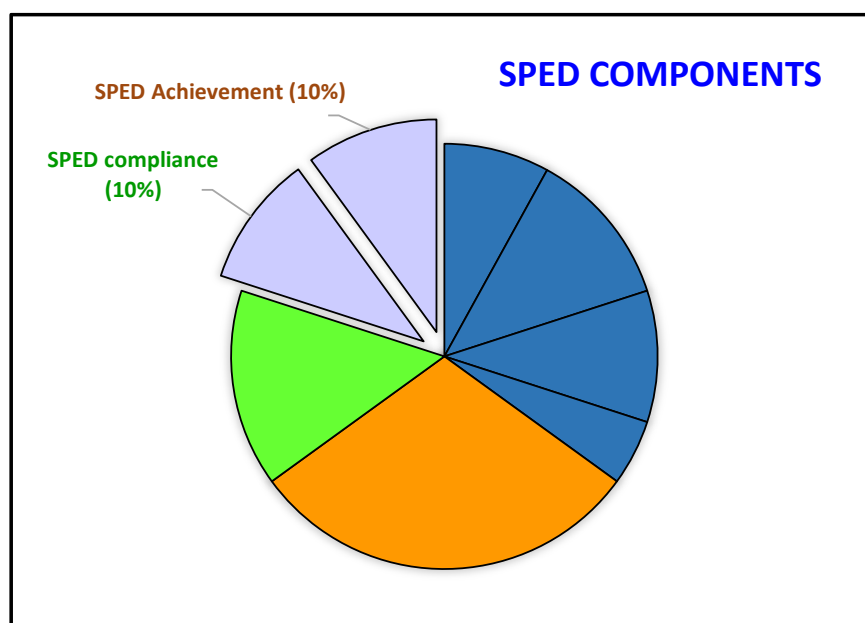
The Effectiveness Components

There are four effectiveness areas. Two of those areas – student achievement and SPED performance – have subcomponents. The **student achievement area** comprises four components:

1. Student achievement growth in the first semester in reading, math, and science as measured by the NWEA MAP assessments taken in the middle of the year (MOY)
2. Student achievement annual growth as measured by the NWEA MAP assessments taken at the end of the year (EOY)
3. The school's overall state accountability score
4. And the school's "closing the gap" score as measured by the STARR exam and calculated by the State

SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT COMPONENTS

NWEA MOY (8%)
NWEA EOY (12%)
State Accountability (10%)
Closing the Gap (5%)
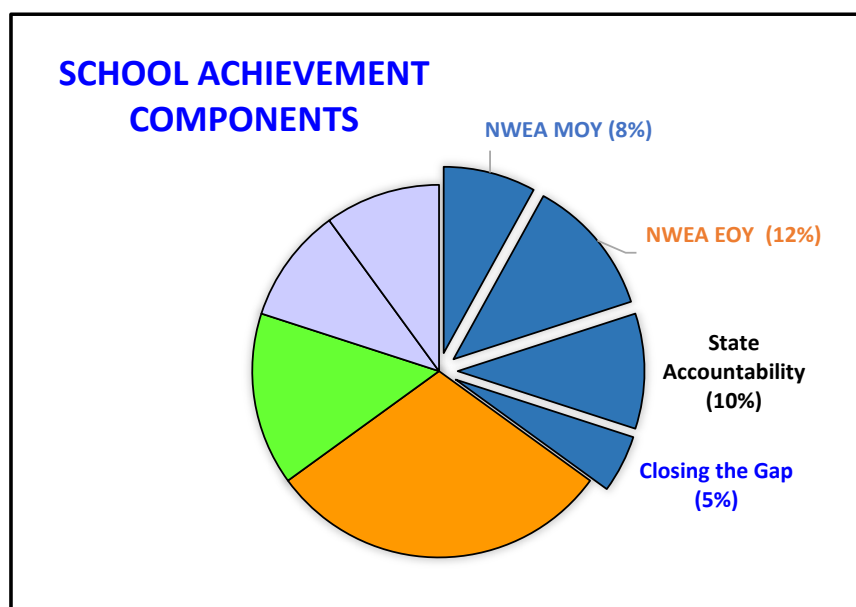
The Special Education performance area comprises two components:

1. The academic achievement growth of Special Education students as measured by the NWEA MAP assessment in reading and math
2. The school's special education compliance score as measured by the HISD SPED rubric and evaluated by Unit level SPED teams
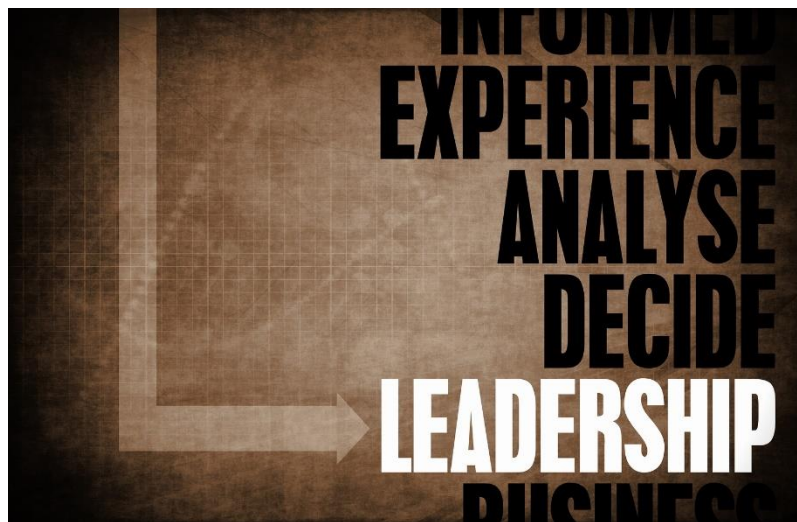

SPED COMPONENTS

SPED Achievement (10%)
SPED compliance (10%)

A description of each component follows.

Student Achievement Data	
Student achievement: MOY	8% of the principal's evaluation rating is based on the mid-year academic growth of the school's students. - HISD will use the NWEA MAP assessments in reading, math, and science to determine academic growth. - A growth score is derived by comparing a student's MOY results with his/her end-of-year results from the previous year. New students or others who do not have an EOY score would compare their MOY results with the BOY results.[2] - For the 2023-2024 school year, we will use the BOY results instead of the EOY results from the previous year.
Student achievement: EOY	12% of the principal's evaluation rating is based on the end-of-year academic growth of the school's students. - HISD will use the NWEA MAP assessments in reading, math, and science to determine academic growth. - A growth score is derived by comparing a student's EOY results with his/her end-of-year results from the previous year. New student or others who do not have a prior EOY score would compare their EOY results with the BOY results. - For the 2023-2024 school year, we will use the BOY results instead of the EOY results from the previous year.
School's overall accountability score	- Texas Education Agency calculates an "overall rating" (A through F) and "overall score" for accountability. TEA uses performance on the state STARR exams to calculate these scores. - HISD will use the school's overall score from the State for this component. 10% of a principal's score will be tied to these data.
School's closing the gap score	- Texas Education Agency calculates a "closing the gap" score for its accountability framework. TEA uses performance on the state STARR exams to calculate these scores. - HISD will use the school's closing the gap score from the State for this component. 5% of a principal's score will be tied to these data.

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[2] Comparing a student's MOY result with their previous EOY results prevent "sandbagging" at the beginning of the year.

Principal Performance	
Quality of Instruction	• The quality of instruction is the most heavily weighted single component because it is the most important factor in raising student achievement and thus for teacher and principal effectiveness. It accounts for 30% of the principal's evaluation rating. • A principal will receive up to 100 points for the quality of instruction (and then that score is converted to the equivalent out of 30 points). 75 points will be a composite of the spot observations of teacher instruction conducted by an independent review team from the feeder pattern. The team will make four unannounced visits to the school and conduct at least 10 spot observations during each visit (a minimum of forty total). [A draft spot observation form can be found at Appendix D.] • The Executive Director of the feeder pattern will assign up to an additional 25 points based on the day-to-day coaching and general, informal observations of the quality of instruction in a school. • To prevent score inflation, an Executive Director may only award 40% of the schools 20 to 25 points out of 25. He/she may only award an additional 40% of the schools 14 to 19 points. For a truly exceptional feeder pattern, the Executive Director may seek a waiver of this distribution from the Division Superintendent.

Special Education Performance	
Special Education Achievement	• 10% of the principal's evaluation rating is based on the end-of-year academic growth of the school's students with special needs. • HISD will use the NWEA MAP assessments in reading, math, and science to determine academic growth. • A growth score is derived by comparing a student's EOY results with his/her end-of-year results from the previous year. New student or others who do not have a prior EOY score would compare their EOY results with the BOY results. • For the 2023-2024 school year, we will use the BOY results instead of the EOY results from the previous year.
Special Education Compliance	• Another 10% of the principal's evaluation rating will be based on the "special education compliance rubric." The rubric will include 1) the degree to which ARD meetings are accomplished on time, 2) the quality of the IEPs, and 3) quarterly progress monitoring of student IEPs.

School Action Plan	
School Action Plan	• Principals will create a school action plan every year by the first of May. They will create one by September 8 this first year. • The School Action Plan has aligned goals and measurable indicators of success. It is worth 15% of a principal's evaluation rating. • All teachers will also receive the same school action plan score as the principal. • Success on the Action Plan will be evaluated by the Executive Director and/or a team from outside of the school. • The Executive Director will assess the degree of accomplishment of the six most important "indicators of success" for the school's Action Plan. These indicators are specific and measurable metrics. • The School Action Plan will receive up to 100 points (and then be converted to 15 points for the evaluation rating). • Each indicator will receive up to 15 points for accomplishment/implementation. [Each Action Plan will start with a score of 10.]

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	• The Executive Director will also apply a "degree of difficulty coefficient" to the Action Plan as a whole. A rigorous Action Plan (one in which the goals are very challenging) will have its score multiplied by 1.2. The average Action Plan will be multiplied by 1.0, and an Action Plan that is not very rigorous will be multiplied by .8. • To prevent score inflation, an Executive Director may only award 40% of the schools a score greater than or equal to 85 out of 100. He/she may only award an additional 40% of the schools a score between 70 and 85. For a truly exceptional feeder pattern, the Executive Director may seek a waiver of this distribution by the Division Superintendent.

Congruence metric

After calculating the evaluation rating for a principal using the component scores described above, the District will also apply a "congruence value." The congruence value score is derived by comparing the average teacher evaluation rating in a school with the school's achievement score.

This metric assumes that there is a correlation between teacher effectiveness and student achievement. This metric helps ensure that the principal will evaluate teachers accurately and avoid inflating scores or grading too hard. The congruence value is the amount of points added to or subtracted from the principal's evaluation rating based on how congruent the average effectiveness rating is to the school's achievement score.

Average Teacher Evaluation Rating

Unsat	Prog. I	Prog. II	Prof. I	Prof. II	Exemp. I	Exemp. II
10 - 18	19 - 29	30 - 42	43 - 57	58 - 71	72 - 85	86 - 100

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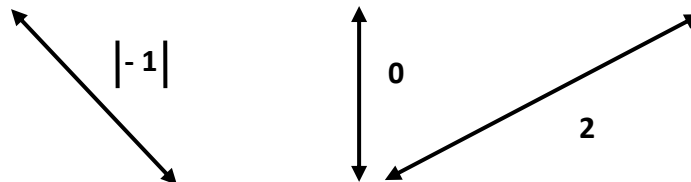
Unsat	Prog. I	Prog. II	Prof. I	Prof. II	Exemp. I	Exemp. II
3.5 - 6.6	6.7 - 10.5	10.5 - 15.0	15.1 - 20.2	20.3 - 25.1	25.2 - 30.0	30.1 - 35

School Student Achievement Score

The congruence metric is derived by taking the absolute value of the difference between the average teacher evaluation rating and the school's student achievement score (from the principal's evaluation). The diagram above shows average teacher evaluation ratings and achievement scores for three different schools. The absolute values of the three congruence measurements are 1, 0, and 2. The goal would be to get as close to "0" as possible. The chart below can then be used to determine the number of points added to or subtracted from the principal's evaluation rating.

Congruence metric	Congruence value (amount added or subtracted)
0	+5
1	+2
2	-4
3	-6
4 or higher	-8

Effectiveness level

Principals will receive an evaluation rating every year. The evaluation rating is the sum of the component scores described above (plus the congruence value). A principal may earn up to 100 points. (And an additional bonus of 5 points for congruence.)

Prog I	Prog II	Prof I	Prof II	Exemp. I	Exemp. II
51 - 57	58 - 65	66 - 73	74 - 81	82 - 89	90 - 100

A principal's effectiveness level is an average of her last two evaluation ratings. For example, if a principal earned 70 points (a Proficient I evaluation rating) in the 2023-2024 school year, and 79 points (a Proficient II evaluation rating) in 2024-2025, her average score would be 74.5 points. This would equate to an effectiveness level of Proficient II.

Principals remain at their effectiveness level until the average evaluation rating score over the last two years is within the range of the next higher effectiveness level. Beginning in the 2025-2026 school year, should a principal's average evaluation rating score fall below her effectiveness level for two consecutive years, she may be moved to the next lower level.[3]

Principals who have an evaluation rating and are moved to a school in order to help the school improve, may keep the evaluation rating they earned at the previous school for two additional years.

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[3] Nothing in this document prohibits the District from removing a principal per policy and law, or grants property rights beyond what is provided for in State law.

Target Distribution

As with the teacher evaluation system, the LEAD effectiveness levels will be subject to a target distribution. However, unlike the teacher system, we anticipate most of the principals being proficient or distinguished right from the start of the LEAD system. However, proficiency will not be a given, and principals will have to earn that designation.

The evaluation system must give very similar chances of success for all principals regardless of the school that they lead. The system would not be fair if only high school principals could become distinguished or if principals of small schools could not hope to reach a distinguished effectiveness level.

Additionally, the evaluation system would not serve the purpose of determining principal effectiveness or principal development if over time all principals received a distinguished evaluation rating or if there were little to no differentiation between ratings.

Just as with the teacher evaluation system, the method of linking cut-points to a "target distribution" is an elegant solution to this problem of ensuring equal rigor across the system. The first step is to establish a target distribution of the principal effectiveness levels.

The method of linking cut-points to a "target distribution" is an elegant solution to this problem of ensuring equal rigor across the system.

Our premise is that a high percentage of proficient or distinguished principals should be correlated to significant improvements in student achievement across the District. While we hope to have more than 80 percent of the principals at the proficient level or higher someday, current student achievement data suggest that the percentage of proficient and distinguished principals is lower. The target distribution below reflects where leaders hope principal proficiency levels will be by the end of the 2023-2024 school year. [A principal would have to earn an Exemplary I effectiveness level for at least one year before earning an Exemplary II effectiveness level regardless of the evaluation rating. So, no principal will have an effectiveness level of Exemplary II at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.]

Principal Target Distribution
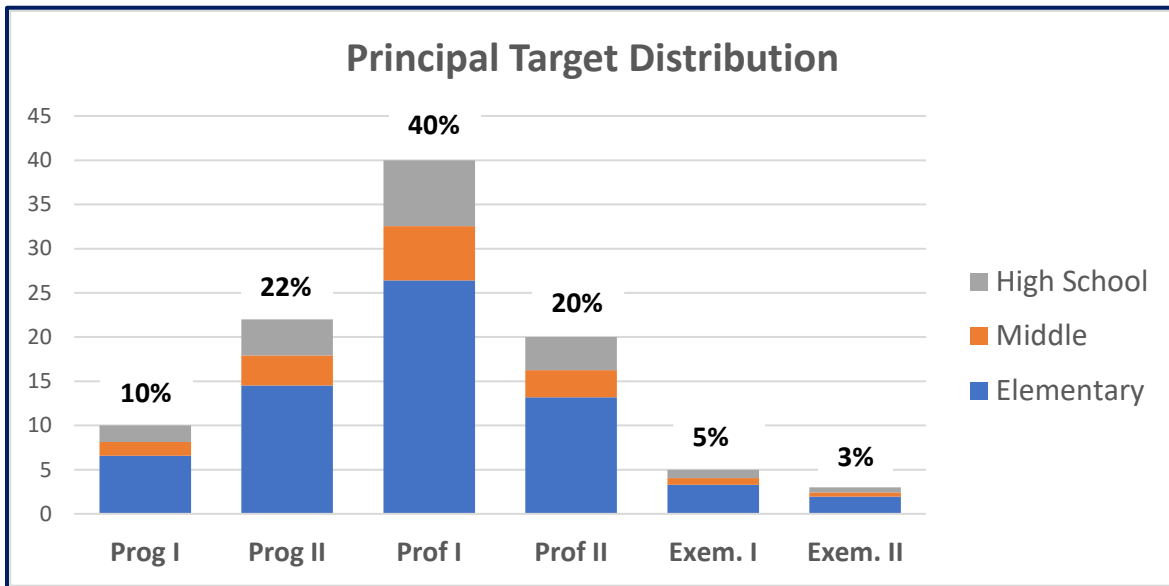
Note that the District anticipates 68% of the principals receiving a Proficient I or higher effectiveness level at the end of the first year of this evaluation system (end of the 2023-2024 school year). Also, every category of school principal – elementary, middle, and high – has the same target distribution. For example, 40% of the elementary principals will receive an effectiveness level of Proficient I. This is the same percentage for middle school and high school principals.

After establishing the target distribution, the district will then set the cut-points for each evaluation component so that the actual distribution of principal scores will approximate the target distribution. The district may adjust the initial cut-points after each evaluation cycle. Cut-point adjustment is necessary to ensure the evaluation of principals remains rigorous and fair. Cut-point adjustment will also ensure that no evaluation component is "too easy" or "too hard" relative to the other factors of being an effective principal. This process is key to making the entire evaluation system more fair, accurate, and valid.

[While we believe that most principals will grow in their effectiveness over time and that the target distribution outlined above will accurately reflect principal proficiency within the next couple of years, it is possible that the current group of principals is not as proficient and, as a result, may receive a higher percentage of Progressing scores at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.]

Compensation

The principalship is one of the hardest jobs in all of education. It should be compensated well. At the same time, we will differentiate principal compensation, paying more for those whose school demonstrate higher levels of instructional quality and achieve greater student academic growth.

The following chart is a draft of the base salary compensation that will begin in the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year. It will be tied to a principal's evaluation rating received at the end of the 2023-2024 school year.

Principal Base Compensation

	Prog. I	Prog. II	Prof. I	Prof. II	Exemp. I	Exemp. II
Elementary	$110,000	$120,000	$130,000	$140,000	$150,000	$160,000
Middle	$115,000	$125,000	$135,000	$150,000	$165,000	$180,000
High School	$130,000	$140,000	$150,000	$165,000	$180,000	$195,000

	Novice
Elementary	$115,000
Middle	$120,000
High School	$135,000

Assistant Principal Base Compensation

	Prog. I	Prog. II	Prof. I	Prof. II	Exemp. I	Exemp. II
Elementary	$80,000	$90,000	$100,000	$110,000	$120,000	$130,000
Middle	$85,000	$95,000	$105,000	$120,000	$135,000	$150,000
High School	$90,000	$100,000	$110,000	$125,000	$140,000	$155,000

	Novice
Elementary	$85,000
Middle	$90,000
High School	$95,000

Additionally, principals and assistant principals will be eligible for three stipends:

1. **Size of the school**

Size of School Stipend -- Principal					
Elementary		**Middle**		**High**	
Size	**Stipend**	**Size**	**Stipend**	**Size**	**Stipend**
0-500	$1,000	0-400	$1,000	0-800	$1,000
501-599	$3,000	401-699	$3,000	801-1149	$3,000
600-899	$6,000	700-999	$6,000	1150-1499	$6,000
900-1199	$8,000	1000-1399	$8,000	1500-1999	$8,000
1200+	$10,000	1400+	$10,000	2000+	$12,000

Size of School Stipend -- Assistant Principal					
Elementary		**Middle**		**High**	
Size	**Stipend**	**Size**	**Stipend**	**Size**	**Stipend**
0-500	$500	0-400	$500	0-800	$500
501-599	$1,500	401-699	$1,500	801-1149	$1,500
600-899	$3,000	700-999	$3,000	1150-1499	$3,000
900-1199	$4,000	1000-1399	$4,000	1500-1999	$4,000
1200+	$5,000	1400+	$5,000	2000+	$6,000

2. **Experience**

Experience Stipend	
Administrative Experience	**Amount**
Asst Principal/ Principal (4 or more years of experience anywhere)	$2,000
Principal (3 or more years of experience anywhere)	$4,000
District Principal (4 or more years of experience in HISD)	$6,000

3. Working in a high-needs school

High-needs School Stipend		
Position	NES School	other D or F
Principal	$10,000	$8,000
Asst. Principal	$10,000	$8,000

Additional information

- For the 2023-2024 school year Principals and APs will be compensated based on the salary schedule agreed upon by the previous administration. School leaders new to the District will be placed on the salary schedule using the same methodology as was used previously, except for those leading NES schools.

- Principals receiving an Unsatisfactory rating at the end of the 2023-2024 school year will not have their contract renewed.

- A principal's effectiveness level will be based on an average of the last two evaluation ratings. For the 2024-2025 school year, compensation will be tied to the effectiveness level associated with the one evaluation rating derived during the 2023-2024 school year.

- Not counting the 2023-2024 school year and after two years in a row of less than expected performance (a lower evaluation rating) or an evaluation rating over one year that would drop the principal two effectiveness levels, a principal may be moved to the next lower level.

- For the first three years of this evaluation system, novice principals (who have never held a principalship) and novice assistant principals will be placed at the "Novice" level. After three years of implementation of this system, novice principals and assistant principals will be placed at the Progressing II level.

- Experienced principals new to the district will be placed at either the Progressing II level or the Proficient I level as determined by the Executive Director and Senior Executive Director of the Unit.

- K-6 schools will be considered elementary schools

- K-8 schools will be considered middle schools.

- 6-12 schools will be considered high schools.

Appendix A: Executive Leadership Rubric

Executive Leadership Rubric

Mike Miles

17 July 2018

Reinforces district culture and philosophy

Ineffective		Partially Effective		Effective		Highly Effective
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
The leader takes steps to understand the District philosophy and culture. However, the leader displays beliefs or values that run counter to the District's. The leader does little to make sense of District beliefs and actions for staff. He relies on the District or others to assess the level of staff support for and adherence to the beliefs and philosophy of the District. Core Beliefs are not established or are not emphasized. Some actions of the staff are inconsistent with the District philosophy.		The leader takes steps to understand the District philosophy and culture. The leader attempts to make sense of District beliefs and actions for staff, however some staff members adhere to the former culture. The leader relies on the District or others to assess the level of staff support for and adherence to the beliefs and philosophy of the District. With input from staff, the leader creates Core Beliefs in his department that complement or reinforce District philosophy. These beliefs are not reinforced, and they are not reflected in staff actions. Some actions of the staff are inconsistent with the District philosophy.		The leader takes steps to understand the District philosophy and culture. The leader makes sense of District beliefs and actions for staff. He relies on the District or others to assess the level of staff support for and adherence to the beliefs and philosophy of the District. With input from staff, the leader establishes Core Beliefs in his department that complement or reinforce District philosophy. He purposefully and frequently reinforces Core Beliefs in multiple ways and in different venues. Actions of the staff are consistent with the District philosophy.		The leader takes steps to understand the District philosophy and culture. When necessary he argues persuasively to change or modify the District philosophy to better align with District goals. The leader makes sense of District beliefs and actions for staff. He assesses the level of staff support for and adherence to the beliefs and philosophy of the District. With input from staff, the leader establishes Core Beliefs in his department that complement or reinforce District philosophy; purposefully and frequently reinforces Core Beliefs in multiple ways and in different venues; conducts exercises or activities to expand understanding of them; shares examples of staff actions that exemplify the Beliefs; tracks staff understanding and adherence to Core Beliefs. Actions of the staff are consistent with the District philosophy.

Makes effective decisions

Ineffective		Partially Effective		Effective		Highly Effective
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The leader attempts to make decisions that are in the best interest of the Department. Her decisions, however, have a negative impact on the department's or district's work. The leader does not consider the impact of her decisions on the rest of the organization. She pushes decisions to other leaders, thereby avoiding accountability or responsibility. The leader avoids making the tough decisions or makes decisions that are inconsistent with the District's philosophy or beliefs.		The leader attempts to make decisions that are in the best interest of the Department. Some decisions, however, have a negative impact on the department's or district's work. Sometimes, the leader does not consider the impact of her decisions on the rest of the organization. She understands the decision-making structure and knows which decisions are hers to make and which decisions belong to others. The leader sometimes pushes decisions to other leaders, thereby avoiding accountability or responsibility. The leader sometimes avoids making the tough decisions or makes decisions that are inconsistent with the District's philosophy or beliefs.		The leader makes decisions that are in the best interest of the District and advance district goals. Her decisions effectively solve problems or positively impact the work of the department or District. She understands how decisions impact both her department and the work of others in the organization. She understands the decision-making structure and knows which decisions are hers to make and which decisions belong to others. The leader makes the decisions that are hers to make and accepts responsibility for those decisions. Decisions are made in a timely manner. The leader is able to make the tough decisions to accomplish the department's and District's mission. Decisions reinforce the District's philosophy and beliefs and demonstrate consistency of word and deed.		The leader makes decisions that are in the best interest of the District and advance district goals. Her decisions effectively solve problems or positively impact the work of the department or District. The leader understands how decisions impact both her department and the work of others in the organization. She understands the decision-making structure and knows which decisions are hers to make and which decisions belong to others. The leader makes the decisions that are hers to make and accepts responsibility for those decisions. At the same time, she distributes decision-making authority or arrives at other decisions through consensus depending on the situation and leadership capacity of her team (D1 – D5 decision-making). Decisions are made in a timely manner. The leader is able to make the tough decisions to accomplish the department's and District's mission. Decisions reinforce the District's philosophy and beliefs and demonstrate consistency of word and deed. The leader's decisions appropriately balance short term and long-term benefits and costs.

Leads change

Ineffective		Partially Effective		Effective		Highly Effective
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
Overall, the leader is tied to the status quo and is generally resistant to change. When implementing new initiatives or directives from the District, the leader relies on district communications and rationale. The leader has difficulty making sense of change for the staff. He does not build a case for change and does not implement change in a way that minimizes resistance and garners support. The leader is not comfortable with ambiguity and is discouraged by things out of his control.		The leader looks for ways to improve the department. He is receptive to new ideas, but is slow to implement change. When implementing new initiatives or directives from the District, the leader relies on district communications and rationale. He has difficulty implementing change in a way that minimizes resistance and garners support. The leader tries to be supportive of change, but has difficulty making sense of change for the staff. The leader is not comfortable with ambiguity and is discouraged by things out of his control.		The leader continually looks for ways to improve the department. He is receptive to new ideas and change. He is a responsible change agent, building acceptance to changes in proper stages. He articulates sound rationale for change and implements change in ways that minimize resistance and garners support. He trains staff on change theory and uses a change model. Communications are clear and well-timed, actions are transparent. When faced with partial information, the leader reserves judgment, and helps others reserve judgment. The leader is comfortable with ambiguity, is adaptable, and not discouraged by things out of his control.		The leader is not satisfied with the status quo. He challenges the way things have always been done, seeking more effective ways to accomplish goals and improve the department. He trains staff on change theory and uses a change model. He explains the rationale for change and makes sense of changes. He effects change in ways that secure staff cooperation and advance the goals of the department. The staff views change and continuous improvement as necessary elements of dynamic organizations. Communications are clear and well-timed, actions are transparent. The leader expands access to information and provides opportunity for input and feedback. He seeks out the voices of the loyal opposition. When faced with partial information, he reserves judgment, and helps others reserve judgment. The leader is comfortable with ambiguity, is adaptable, and not discouraged by things out of his control.

Maximizes human potential

Ineffective		Partially Effective		Effective		Highly Effective
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
The work environment is stressful, or people work in a climate of fear. Employees feel that they have very little control over work events. The leader follows a strict hierarchy of decision-making and establishes very narrow operational parameters for staff. The leader over-relies on directives versus collaborative decision-making. There are few opportunities for growth. The leader creates an "us versus them" mentality among staff members. The leader does not inspire people to do their best work.		The leader creates an environment in which workers are able to have some control over work events. However, the leader follows a strict hierarchy of decision-making and establishes very narrow operational parameters for staff. The leader over-relies on directives versus collaborative decision-making. He provides some opportunities for growth, but only to a smaller subset of staff members. He demonstrates personal conviction toward the success of students and employees of the organization. He celebrates successes of the department, but does not inspire people to do their best work.		The leader creates an environment in which workers are able to exert influence and have reasonable control over work events. He provides clear direction and sets parameters, but staff members have wide latitude to accomplish operational objectives. He provides opportunities for growth and sets expectations to maximize effectiveness. The leader takes deliberate actions to motivate the staff and rallies them to reach shared aspirations. He demonstrates personal conviction toward the success of students and employees of the organization. He shows enthusiasm for what the department is doing – he is an advocate. The leader recognizes others for good performance and leadership.		The leader creates an environment in which workers are able to exert influence and have reasonable control over work events. He puts the right people in the right places in the organization. He provides opportunities for growth and sets expectations to maximize effectiveness. Staff members challenge themselves, are not afraid to take risks, and take advantage of growth opportunities. The leader continually motivates the staff to reach higher goals and is able to secure the staff's commitment. Staff members feel supported and challenged and strive to do their best work. He models the way and demonstrates personal conviction toward the success of the employees and the Department. He shows enthusiasm for what the department is doing – he is an advocate. The leader helps people realize their best hopes and moves them away from their worst fears.

Works well as part of a high-functioning team

Ineffective		Partially Effective		Effective		Highly Effective
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The leader understands the operational expectations and goals of the other departments. However, she is unwilling to see an issue from the perspective of another leader. She has to be told or persuaded to work collaboratively with other leaders and other departments and does not volunteer inter-departmental or system-wide solutions to problems. The leader does not try to build relations with other leaders in the organization. In team meetings, the leader is passionate about her position, but rarely entertains others' interests and ideas, and is unwilling to change her position. The leader has poor relations with Board members. He is not politically savvy and does not consider the political climate when taking action.		The leader understands the operational expectations and goals of the other departments. While she may appreciate the perspective of other leaders, she does not work collaboratively to help the other departments. The leader meets with other leaders, but rarely authors inter-departmental or system-wide solutions to problems. The leader builds relations with other leaders in the organization. In team meetings, the leader is passionate about her position, but rarely entertains others' interests and ideas, and is unwilling to change her position. The leader has positive relations with Board members. However, he is not politically savvy and does not consider the political climate when taking action.		The leader understands the operational expectations and goals of the other departments. She attempts to understand the perspective of the other leaders within the organization. The leader works well with other leaders and collaborates to solve inter-departmental or system-wide problems. The leader builds strong, professional relations with other leaders in the organization. In team meetings, the leader is persuasive, but dispassionately entertains others' interests and ideas, and is willing to change her position if doing so will benefit the goals of the District. The leader understands the political climate and operates effectively in it. He cultivates positive relations with School Board members and external stakeholders.		The leader understands the operational expectations and goals of the other departments. She is a student of systems thinking. She takes active steps to grow her perspective regarding the work of the other departments and the District's systems. The leader works well with other leaders and collaborates to solve inter-departmental or system-wide problems. She establishes and/or participates in processes to resolve issues that intersect more than one department. The leader builds strong, professional relations with other leaders in the organization. In team meetings, the leader is persuasive, but dispassionately entertains others' interests and ideas, and is willing to change her position if doing so will benefit the goals of the District. The leader understands the political climate and operates effectively in it. He cultivates positive relations with and builds support for the District's mission among School Board members and external stakeholders.

Leadership score

	Points
Reinforces District culture and philosophy	
Makes effective decisions	
Leads change	
Maximizes human potential	
Works as part of a high-functioning team	
Subtotal	

Ineffective	Partially Effective	Effective	Highly Effective	Exemplary
0 - 12	**13 - 21**	**22 - 27**	**28 – 31**	**32 - 35**
Comments:				

Appendix B: System Assessment Rubric

System Assessment Rubric – Leadership

Weak			Proficient			Strong		
L	**M**	**H**	**L**	**M**	**H**	**L**	**M**	**H**
The leadership team in the school is identified only by title or position – there does not seem to be a coalition of people leading or supporting transformation or progress. Leadership skills and campus-specific behaviors for leaders have been identified; many of these specific traits and behaviors are included in the assistant principal, counselor, instructional coach, and teacher evaluation systems. However, assessment of leadership capacity is done perfunctorily. There is very little training or coaching on leadership traits or characteristics. The principal provides few opportunities for staff members to assume leadership positions or is not intentional about providing opportunities that will help individuals grow capacity or expand leadership density in the school.			A "guiding coalition" of teachers and other staff members support school transformation or progress. Leadership skills and campus-specific behaviors for leaders have been identified; many of these specific traits and behaviors are included in the assistant principal, counselor, instructional coach, and teacher evaluation systems. The principal is purposeful in training and coaching school staff on leadership. At the same time, poor leadership among people in leadership positions is addressed without delay. The principal provides opportunities for staff members to assume "leadership positions." He encourages staff member initiative and supports attempts to expand individual leadership capacity or leadership density in the school. The principal allocates resources specifically for the growth of leadership density in the school.			A "guiding coalition" of teachers and other staff members support school transformation or progress. Leadership skills and campus-specific behaviors for leaders have been identified; many of these specific traits and behaviors are included in the assistant principal, counselor, instructional coach, and teacher evaluation systems. The principal is purposeful in training and coaching school staff on leadership. This training is differentiated based on capacity and position. At the same time, poor leadership among people in leadership positions is addressed without delay. Staff members believe there are ample opportunities to assume "leadership positions" or to demonstrate leadership. The campus leaders encourage staff member initiative and support attempts to expand individual leadership capacity or leadership density in the school. At the same time, the principal is intentional about finding specific growth opportunities for budding leaders. The principal allocates resources specifically for the growth of leadership density in the school. He collaborates effectively with District departments, especially School Leadership, to support broader attempts to expand leadership density and align resources.		

System Assessment Rubric – Staff Capacity

Weak			Proficient			Strong		
L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M	H
Accurate, rigorous evaluations show that less than 50% of the staff are proficient or exemplary. Staff members struggle to teach the aligned curriculum. Teachers seem to be tied to old lesson plans, the textbook, or pet strategies, and do not use a variety of materials and strategies to teach. Lessons are relevant, but lack rigor and do not focus on concepts, critical thinking, or analysis. Teachers struggle to incorporate technology into lessons. Teachers expect students to grow academically and to graduate. Teachers are isolated and rarely collaborate with colleagues to share best practices and improve their instruction. Teachers avoid getting feedback and avoid rigorous evaluations. Teachers struggle to use data to improve instruction and do not accept accountability for student academic growth.			Accurate, rigorous evaluations show that between 50% and 75% of the staff are proficient or exemplary. Staff members are confident and teach the aligned curriculum. They are given wide latitude on how to teach. Teachers are knowledgeable in their specific content areas and are also students of education, expanding their knowledge and staying abreast of changes in the profession. Teachers are not tied to any resource or textbook, using a variety of materials and strategies to teach. Lessons are generally rigorous, and teachers attempt to focus on concepts, critical thinking, and analysis instead of straightforward facts and objectives. Lessons are relevant and teachers use strategies to engage all students. They incorporate technology into lessons. Teachers expect students to grow academically and to graduate. Teachers work in professional learning communities and collaborate with colleagues to share best practices and improve their instruction. Teachers seek feedback and support fair, accurate, and rigorous evaluations. Teachers use data to improve instruction and accept accountability for student academic growth. Teachers understand the need for change and continuous improvement. Leaders seek teacher input and participation, and teachers feel some ownership over the vision of the school and the success of the school.			Accurate, rigorous evaluations show that over 75% of the staff are proficient or exemplary. Staff members are confident and teach the aligned curriculum. They are given wide latitude on how to teach. Teachers are knowledgeable in their specific content areas and are also students of education, expanding their knowledge and staying abreast of changes in the profession. Teachers are not tied to any resource or textbook, using a variety of materials and strategies to teach. They challenge and stretch student thinking, focusing on concepts, critical thinking, and analysis instead of straightforward facts and objectives. Lessons are relevant and teachers use strategies to engage all students. They ensure students have opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned. To the extent possible, teachers differentiate instruction and personalize learning. They incorporate technology into lessons. Teachers have high expectations and prepare students for college or the workplace. They work in professional learning communities and collaborate with colleagues to share best practices and improve their instruction. They continually revise and adapt their teaching to meet contemporary needs. Teachers seek feedback and support fair, accurate, and rigorous evaluations. They use data to improve instruction and accept accountability for student academic growth. Teachers embrace change as part of a continuous improvement model. They take the initiative to solve problems and think of ways to improve the school. Leaders seek teacher input and participation, and teachers feel ownership over the vision and the success of the school. Teachers also support and mentor new teachers and take responsibility for creating a high-performance culture.		

System Assessment Rubric -- Culture

Weak			Proficient			Strong		
L	**M**	**H**	**L**	**M**	**H**	**L**	**M**	**H**
Leaders may have developed a vision; however, the staff does not act upon that vision. There is very little congruence between the stated or written priorities and what the staff believes the priorities should be. Leaders' plan to meet building goals does not address differences in beliefs or priorities among the staff. Teachers, lacking direction or agreement on the direction, act in disconnected ways. There is no identifiable and positive school culture that would support a unified vision.			Leaders have clearly articulated a vision for the school. Teachers generally share that vision and can describe what success looks like. There is a focused improvement/action plan that is aligned with the mission and that has measurable goals that are also prioritized. Leaders are intentional about ensuring everyone on the staff understands the school's priorities and teachers can name the top priorities. The plan is followed. The school's culture supports the vision and goals. The students in the school and the community members identify the culture of the building as one with high expectations for all students.			Teachers and leaders develop a vision for the school and act upon that vision. The vision is aligned with that of the district and community. There is a focused action plan with measurable goals that are also prioritized. Teachers have input into the action plan and take concrete steps to help implement the plan. There is great congruence between what the top priorities of the school are and what teachers believe they *should be*. The vision, goals, and plan are revisited regularly and often. When conflicts arise, the priorities are followed. The behavior of the staff continually reinforces the school's philosophy. Teacher leaders establish high expectations for staff and students and ensure new teachers and others understand and act upon the school's philosophy. The students in the school and the community members identify the culture of the building as one with high expectations for all students.		

System Assessment Rubric -- Processes

Weak			Proficient			Strong		
L	**M**	**H**	**L**	**M**	**H**	**L**	**M**	**H**
Curriculum, assessment, and instruction are not aligned or there is not a process to tighten the alignment. Staff development is often ad hoc or bears only a loose relationship to the building action plan. Administrators overly rely on the latest program or initiative instead of practices to solve identified weaknesses. Building leaders and teachers collect data of student progress, but the data is not used to improve instruction. Special education is seen as a separate program and not all students have access to a rigorous curriculum. There is no process to develop good habits of mind among students.			Teachers receive training on key practices such as curriculum alignment, use of data, differentiated instruction, time on task, or direct instruction. There is a process to align curricula: teachers have explicit lists of what students have to know and be able to do, and assessments are closely tied to these learning objectives. There is a process in place to collect data/evidence of student progress and proficiency. Teachers use achievement data to improve instruction. All students have access to core proficiencies and a rigorous curriculum. Teachers and administrators take concrete steps to develop good habits of mind among students. Building leaders develop practices to expand parental involvement.			Staff development is closely aligned with building goals and priorities. There is careful and purposeful integration of the processes to define the curriculum, develop aligned assessments, and strengthen classroom instruction. There is a process in place to collect evidence of student progress and proficiency. Teachers work collaboratively and use achievement data to improve instruction. All students have access to a rigorous curriculum and instruction is differentiated or personalized to meet the needs of both struggling and advanced students. Students have opportunities to extend time and learning beyond the school day. Teachers meet regularly in professional learning communities to share best practices, monitor student progress, and design interventions. The staff takes concrete steps to develop good habits of mind among students and leadership density among the staff. The school develops practices to engage the community and expand parental involvement.		

System Assessment Rubric -- Implementation

Weak			Proficient			Strong		
L	**M**	**H**	**L**	**M**	**H**	**L**	**M**	**H**
The quality of instruction is inconsistent and/or poor. The range of instructional strategies is narrow, and the strategies are not the most appropriate or effective. The staff fails to implement the school's action plan. Administrators monitor instruction, but feedback is vague, or teachers do not adjust instruction based on feedback. Administrators evaluate teachers regularly; however, evaluations provide little useful information to improve classroom instruction. Poor performing teachers are not held accountable. Staff development is not tied to data about teacher areas for improvement.			The school gets results. The quality of instruction is proficient and improving. Teachers use a wide range of instructional strategies matched to the appropriate level of rigor and relevance. The staff effectively carries out the school's action plan. Administrators monitor instruction frequently and provide clear feedback on instruction. Teachers act upon the feedback they receive. Teachers are evaluated regularly, and evaluations are conducted with a rubric that outlines specifically what great teaching looks like. Administrators collect data on teacher performance. These data help plan staff development and strengthen teacher performance. Teachers adjust instruction based on new training and data.			The school gets results. Good quality instruction is pervasive. Teachers consistently draw on an extensive repertoire of instructional strategies that challenge all students to think critically. The staff effectively carries out the school's action plan. Key building actions are frequently checked against the goals for consistency. The staff holds itself accountable. Administrators monitor instruction frequently and provide clear feedback on instruction. Teachers welcome observations and feedback. Spot observations include specific feedback tied to the building priorities and staff development goals. Teachers are evaluated regularly, and evaluations are conducted with a rubric that outlines specifically what great teaching looks like. All teachers develop a specific improvement plan collaboratively with the administrators and work to fulfill the goals of that plan. Administrators collect data on teacher performance. Poor performing teachers are remediated. Use and effectiveness of key practices are measured. Data on achievement is collected and analyzed by building leaders. This data helps plan staff development and strengthen teacher performance. The building leadership is intentional about collecting and acting upon relevant feedback from parents and the community.		

Appendix C: Sample Culture and Climate Survey

HISD Staff Survey -- May 2021							
School:							
School's Beliefs and Priorities	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Total No. of responses**	**% Agree and Strongly Agree**
My actions support the District's Core Beliefs.							
The District's Core Beliefs will lead to success.							
The key actions my school is working on this year are focused on what is best for students.							
I understand my role in implementing the school's key actions.							
I have the support I need from school leadership to do my job well.							
My school leadership helps me understand recent changes in the school's focus.							
My school's priorities are very much aligned with what I think the priorities should be.							
Overall, my school is headed in the right direction.							
Overall, the District is headed in the right direction.							
Positive Culture and Environment	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Total No. of responses**	**% Agree and Strongly Agree**
I would recommend this school to others to work here.							
I usually look forward to working each day at this school.							
I believe I work in an environment of support and respect.							
Discipline is enforced consistently and effectively at my school.							
Unruly students are not permitted to disrupt the learning environment.							
The school I work in is clean, safe and free of physical hazards.							
I am satisfied with the recognition I receive for doing a good job.							
Morale is generally good at my school.							
I believe that our school is doing a good job keeping staff and students safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.							
I believe that my school is doing right by families and our community be serving our students in-person during the COVID-19 pandemic.							
Culture of Feedback and Support	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Total No. of responses**	**% Agree and Strongly Agree**
My school leadership helps me improve the quality of my instruction.							
The instructional feedback I get helps me improve the quality of my instruction.							
I have sufficient opportunities and encouragement to develop my leadership potential.							
The PD sessions at my school and at the District level help me improve instruction.							
My team experiences with colleagues (e.g., grade-level teams, PLCs) help me improve instruction.							
My school has an effective instructional leadership team.							

Quality of Instruction	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total No. of responses	% Agree and Strongly Agree
The quality of my instruction is good.							
We use data to improve instruction in my school.							
The LSAE model will help us significantly narrow achievement gaps.							
Student habits of success are improving.							
Students are learning how to learn.							
I consistently use the "HISD Ready" instructional practices							
What are the top three factors that influence your morale? *(check only one box for each column)*	Top Factor	Second Factor	Third Factor	Total			
Workplace environment and school culture							
Feeling appreciated and respected							
Student progress and success							
Student behavior or discipline							
Your relationship with colleagues							
Workload, working hours and schedule							
Your relationship with your immediate supervisor							
The degree to which you feel successful							
Salary and money issues							

Appendix D: Spot observations forms

HISD Spot Observation Form -- Core Subjects

revised1 June 2023

Teacher:		Date:	
Gr./ Subject:		Time in:	
Observer:		Time out:	

Area	Instructional Characteristics	Pts. Awarded
Lesson Obj. and DOL	Objective aligns to curriculum maps and assessments	(0-1)
	Obj. provides focus and coherence to the lesson	
	Obj. is specific enough to be taught in 1 lesson	
	DOL is tied directly to the lesson objective and curriculum	
	DOL can be accomplished in 5 to 10 minutes	
Purposeful Instruction	Instruction and activities support the objective	(0-3)
	Instruction is relevant and engaging and delivered in a way that maximizes understanding	
	Direct instruction is at grade level and rigorous	
	Transitions are smooth with no loss of instructional time	
	Lessons are adjusted based on classroom response data	
	The teacher requires the students to read, write, or think the entire lesson	
	A digital timer is used to guide pacing of the lesson	
Engage.	The teacher effectively uses multiple response strategies and uses an MRS every 4 min.	(0-3)
	There is 100% student participation	
	Teacher uses a variety of MRS strategies	
	Students annotate work when appropriate	
LSAE Model	Uses the LSAE model to differentiate instruction into four levels	(0-2)
	Separates students into appropriate groups for LSAE time	
	Work for each group is appropriately rigorous and tied to specific learning objectives	
	L's receive more direct instruction/extension of the lesson	
	Push-out occurs within 40 to 50 minutes of the start of the lesson	
	LSAE work includes minimum 500-word text or math story problems	
Classroom manage.	Classroom rules and procedures are clear, rehearsed frequently, and followed	(0-1)
	Students enter and leave the class in an orderly and safe manner	
	The teacher appropriately redirects students and keeps the focus on instruction	
	The teacher follows the school's discipline policies and procedures	

Other Notes:

(TOTAL PTS.)

Praise:

Question:

Polish:

Overall score for this spot observation:

Unsat. (1-3)	Progressing (4-5)	Proficient (6-7)	Proficient II (8-9)	Exem. (10)