



NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TEACHER & PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

*Adopted by the Nebraska State Board of Education
November 9, 2011*

Introduction to the Nebraska Teacher & Principal Performance Framework

State educational policymakers across the nation are embracing educator effectiveness reforms as one of the keys to improving teaching and learning. These reforms should be predicated on clear criteria that define effective practice for teachers and principals.

Developing Nebraska's Performance Framework. In January 2011, the Nebraska State Board of Education authorized the drafting of possible performance standards for teachers and principals. This process began with the formation of a forty-member committee drawn from thirteen of the state's educational stakeholder groups representing teachers, principals, higher education representatives, school board members, and parents. The purpose of this committee was to prepare a set of draft performance practices for consideration by the State Board.

The committee's development of Effective Practices and Example Indicators was informed by the profession's national standards. For teachers, these include the 2010 Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards and the Framework for Teaching developed by Charlotte Danielson. For principals, these include the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) 2008 policy standards. In addition, standards developed by other states served as a valuable resource.

The purpose of the Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Framework is to define effective practices in order to improve teaching and learning. The Practices address the roles of teachers and principals, defined as those educators whose primary task is working directly with students in a school setting. Local districts may wish to create Effective Practices for educational specialists not covered by the Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Framework.

Structuring the Performance Framework. Following the structure of Nebraska's curriculum standards, the Teacher and Principal Performance Framework is organized into two elements: a broad Effective Practice statement followed by several Example Indicators. The Indicators are designed to be examples that clarify and develop the Effective Practices; they are not an exhaustive list and can be enhanced by local districts as they use the Framework.

The Framework is designed to encompass a broad range of effective practices that characterize our state's best teachers and principals. In addition, embedded throughout the Framework are four essential themes: high expectations for student learning, a commitment to teacher and principal accountability for results, awareness of the individual circumstances of each student in light of the increasing diversity of our state's population, and the integration of technology.

A Guiding Framework. The Nebraska Teacher and Principal Performance Framework is intended to be a useful resource that provides a definition of effective practice to voluntarily guide local districts, institutions of higher education, and state and local policymakers as we strive together to ensure Nebraska's continuing commitment to improve educational achievement for all of our children. The State Board reaffirms its fundamental view that curriculum and instruction are best left to individual districts, and that the Nebraska Department of Education should serve as a resource for districts in that regard.

Nebraska's Performance Framework for Teachers

The Effective Practices:

(1) Foundational Knowledge

The teacher demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of content, pedagogy, students, and standards needed to provide each student with effective opportunities for learning, development, and achievement.

Example Indicators

The Teacher:

- a) Possesses a strong command of the content and related instructional strategies in the discipline(s) he or she teaches.
- b) Understands research-based instructional approaches, strategies, assessments, and interventions.
- c) Understands the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of students, how they learn, and how they differ.
- d) Understands the effect of cultural and societal influences on learning for each student.
- e) Understands how national, state, and local standards impact teaching.
- f) Understands the components of an effective curriculum.
- g) Accepts responsibility for the growth of student learning, development, and achievement.

(2) Planning and Preparation

The teacher integrates knowledge of content, pedagogy, students, and standards with the established curriculum to set high expectations and develop rigorous instruction for each student that supports the growth of student learning, development, and achievement.

Example Indicators

The Teacher:

- a) Develops coherent units, lessons, and activities that reflect high expectations and enable each student to achieve standards, learning goals, and instructional objectives.
- b) Designs and adapts lessons based on student progress, assessment results, and interests.
- c) Uses a variety of appropriate, research-based teaching strategies.
- d) Considers students' prior knowledge, abilities, and individual circumstances to ensure that instruction is differentiated, relevant to students, and rigorous.
- e) Integrates a variety of resources, including technology, to provide challenging, motivating, and engaging learning experiences.

(3) The Learning Environment

The teacher creates and maintains a learning environment that fosters positive relationships and promotes active student engagement in learning, development, and achievement.

Example Indicators

The Teacher:

- a) Establishes relationships that result in a positive learning climate of openness, mutual respect, support, and inquiry, and interacts with students in ways that demonstrate and promote recognition of diversity.
- b) Ensures a safe and accessible environment.
- c) Establishes, communicates, and maintains effective routines, procedures, and clear standards of conduct.
- d) Establishes a collaborative learning community built on trust and teamwork that is consistent with and supportive of the full development of students as individuals.
- e) Establishes high expectations that cultivate each learner's self-motivation and encourage pride in his/her genuine accomplishments.
- f) Values individual students, their families, neighborhoods, and communities; acknowledges their experiences and builds upon those experiences to increase academic success.

(4) Instructional Strategies

The teacher uses effective instructional strategies to ensure growth in student achievement.

Example Indicators

The Teacher:

- a) Uses a range of developmentally appropriate instructional strategies and resources that are targeted to meet learning goals.
- b) Modifies, adapts, and differentiates instruction and accommodations based on data analysis, observation, and student needs.
- c) Communicates effectively with students to promote and support high expectations for achievement.
- d) Assumes various roles in the instructional process appropriate to the content, purposes of instruction, and the needs of students.
- e) Engages students by using varied activities, assignments, groupings, structure, pacing, and a variety of instructional techniques such as direct instruction, inquiry, questioning, and discussion as appropriate for individual student achievement.
- f) Uses strategies that enable students to develop skills in critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving.
- g) Uses existing and emerging technologies as needed to support and promote student learning.
- h) Implements engaging learning experiences that draw upon family and community resources.

(5) Assessment

The teacher systematically uses multiple methods of formative and summative assessment to measure student progress and to inform ongoing planning, instruction, and reporting.

Example Indicators

The Teacher:

- a) Develops and uses varied and appropriate assessments and accommodations based on instructional objectives and student needs.
- b) Uses both formative and summative assessments and the resulting data to inform instruction, monitor student progress over time, and provide meaningful feedback to each student.
- c) Seeks to assure that classroom-based assessment instruments and procedures are effective, free of bias, and appropriate to the developmental and linguistic capabilities of students.
- d) Develops or selects appropriate assessments and interprets the resulting data, both individually and with colleagues.
- e) Uses strategies that enable students to set high expectations for personal achievement, and to assess, monitor, and reflect on their own work.
- f) Compiles and reports assessment data to accurately document student progress over time.

(6) Professionalism

The teacher acts as an ethical and responsible member of the professional community.

Example Indicators

The Teacher:

- a) Systematically reflects on his/her own professional practice in order to bring about continuous improvement.
- b) Actively pursues meaningful professional development.
- c) Contributes to and advocates for the profession.
- d) Protects the established rights and confidentiality of students and families.
- e) Adheres to school policies, procedures, and regulations.
- f) Models ethical behavior in accordance with established standards.
- g) Maintains accurate records, documentation, and data.

(7) Vision and Collaboration

The teacher contributes to and promotes the vision of the school and collaborates with students, families, colleagues, and the larger community to share responsibility for the growth of student learning, development, and achievement.

Example Indicators

The Teacher:

- a) Actively participates in the development and implementation of the school's vision, mission, and goals for teaching and learning.
- b) Contributes to the continuous school improvement process.
- c) Establishes and maintains collaborative professional relationships.
- d) Uses effective communication strategies and technological resources when appropriate, and takes into account various factors that impact communication with individual students, their families, and the community.
- e) Collaborates with students, parents, families, and the community to create meaningful relationships that enhance the learning process.

Nebraska's Performance Framework for Principals

The Effective Practices:

(1) Vision for Learning

The principal establishes and communicates a vision for teaching and learning that results in improved student achievement.

Example Indicators

The Principal:

- a) Uses varied sources of information and analyzes multiple sources of data about current practices and outcomes to shape the vision, mission, and goals of the school.
- b) Engages constituent groups within the school community to develop commitment to the vision, mission, and goals of the school.
- c) Aligns the school's vision, mission, and goals to district, state, and federal policies.
- d) Communicates the vision in order to establish high expectations for student performance.
- e) Leads a systematic review of the vision, mission, and goals and revises as appropriate.

(2) Continuous School Improvement

The principal leads a continuous school improvement process that results in improved student performance and school effectiveness.

Example Indicators

The Principal:

- a) Develops and implements, in collaboration with the school community, a school improvement plan that is aligned with district, state, and federal guidelines and goals.
- b) Maintains comprehensive and current information about students, academic achievement, school effectiveness, and the school community.
- c) Makes informed decisions based on student achievement data, research, and best practices to improve teaching and learning.
- d) Uses technology to increase school efficiency and effectiveness.
- e) Revises the school improvement plan based on a systematic review of progress toward its goals.
- f) Uses the continuous improvement plan to guide professional development within the school community.

(3) Instructional Leadership

The principal provides leadership to ensure the implementation of a rigorous curriculum, the use of effective teaching practices, and accountability for results.

Example Indicators

The Principal:

- a) Promotes teaching practices based on sound instructional theory and professional collaboration to meet the learning needs of all students.
- b) Ensures that the instructional program is aligned with content standards, includes effective instructional and assessment practices, and protects instructional time to maximize learning.
- c) Supports the selection of instructional content that maximizes individual student learning and provides appropriate multiple perspectives.
- d) Uses student performance data from multiple assessments to evaluate the curriculum and instructional program.
- e) Assumes responsibility for the continued improvement of student learning within the school and holds staff accountable for the growth of student achievement across the curriculum.

(4) Culture for Learning

The principal creates a school culture that enhances the academic, social, physical, and emotional development of all students.

Example Indicators

The Principal:

- a) Provides full and equitable access to curricular and extra-curricular programs that address the needs, interests, and abilities of all students.
- b) Develops a culture of high expectations for self, students, and staff.
- c) Fosters an environment of respect and rapport based on clear guidelines for appropriate behavior.
- d) Uses multiple indicators of student performance to encourage the development of the whole child in a manner consistent with academic achievement.
- e) Identifies barriers to student learning and development, and devises strategies to reduce or eliminate them.
- f) Maintains a high level of visibility within the school community, and recognizes the accomplishments of students and staff.
- g) Leads an ongoing assessment of the school climate and culture.

(5) Systems 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.

Example Indicators

The Principal:

- a) Allocates financial, material, and human resources to support the educational program.
- b) Monitors the school's site, facilities, services, and equipment to provide a safe and orderly environment.
- c) Identifies and resolves problems, manages conflict, and builds consensus to achieve the efficient operation of the school.
- d) Communicates with community agencies to provide a safe school environment.
- e) Develops procedures for the effective use of technology among staff, students, and the school community.
- f) Understands school law and its impact on staff, students, and families, and complies with local, state, and federal mandates.
- g) Guides and influences policymakers as they develop regulations, policies, and laws that impact the school.

(6) Staff Leadership

The principal uses effective personnel practices to select, develop, support, and lead high quality teachers and non-teaching staff.

Example Indicators

The Principal:

- a) Recruits, hires, develops, and retains high quality professional and support staff to realize the school's vision.
- b) Develops and supports an effective learning environment for teachers and other staff.
- c) Mentors emerging staff leaders in order to build leadership capacity within the school community.
- d) Supervises the school's staff members and holds them accountable for results based on high expectations and professional standards.
- e) Implements a performance evaluation system and a professional development program for teachers and instructional support staff based on a common instructional language and effective teaching practices.
- f) Models continuous learning and provides professional development opportunities for all staff.

(7) Developing Relationships

The principal promotes and supports productive relationships with students, staff, families, and the community.

Example Indicators

The Principal:

- a) Builds relationships that support the school and its vision.
- b) Develops an understanding of the community's cultural, social, and intellectual resources among students and staff, and makes use of those resources to strengthen the school.
- c) Encourages active family and community participation in the learning process to enhance student achievement.
- d) Strengthens the educational program by soliciting information from families and community members.
- e) Uses effective public information strategies.
- f) Creates strategic partnerships with business, religious, political, and other community leaders in order to carry out the school's mission.
- g) Strives to develop understanding and respect for others among students and staff.

(8) Professional Ethics and Advocacy

The principal acts with fairness, integrity, and a high level of professional ethics, and advocates for policies of equity and excellence in support of the vision of the school.

Example Indicators

The Principal:

- a) Treats others with dignity and respect.
- b) Protects the established rights and confidentiality of students and staff.
- c) Seeks to make decisions that are just, fair, and equitable.
- d) Models and articulates reflective practice, transparency, and ethical behavior in accordance with established standards.
- e) Holds others in the school community accountable for demonstrating integrity and ethical behavior.
- f) Advocates for public policies that ensure appropriate and equitable resources for the education system.
- g) Responds to the political, social, economic, legal and cultural environment in which the school exists.

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