

# Meeting the Standards

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## Standard 1

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

### Performance Indicators

The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- The vision and mission of the school are effectively communicated to staff, parents, students, and community members
- Progress toward the vision and mission is communicated to all stakeholders
- The school community is involved in school improvement efforts
- An implementation plan is developed in which objectives and strategies to achieve the vision and goals are clearly articulated

## Standard 6

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

### Performance Indicators

The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- Public policy is shaped to provide quality education for students
- Lines of communication are developed with decision makers outside the school community

### Scenario

The Glendale School District was scheduled to participate in the State School Improvement Program (SSIP) review during the fourth year of Dr. Ray Russell's tenure in the District. The SSIP was the state's new accreditation program and this was the first time the District had been reviewed under the new program. The program was different from the old accreditation system in that the old system was based on programs, resources, and qualifications of personnel to determine if a school district was accredited. The new SSIP also used some of the same measures. However, an important component had been added to the accreditation standards, eleven measures of student performance. These measures included student performance on the state mandated tests in language arts, math, science, and social

studies; drop-out rate; student attendance; and ACT scores. Schools were to participate in the new accreditation program every fifth year and one fifth of the schools in the state were reviewed every year. Glendale was being reviewed during the third year of the first five year cycle.

Dr. Russell and the other administrators in the district had attended several meetings concerning the SSIP over the previous three years in preparation for the review. They had learned that the visiting team of educators would spend three days in the district reviewing the school's programs, but the student performance standards would be reviewed by the state education agency based on state test data and other data submitted to the state by the district. The administrators had difficulty determining the criteria that would be used in determining if the district's test scores were high enough to meet the standards. Since they had consistently been above the state average on the new state tests and the standardized achievement test used by the district, the administrators assumed they would be ok on the performance standards. When the visiting team arrived and the performance report was presented to the superintendent, it was discovered that the district only met seven of the eleven student performance standards. The SSIP required districts to meet seven standards to be accredited and six to be provisionally accredited. Even though the district was accredited, the superintendent and other administrators were very disappointed that they had not done better and began to have discussions about how they could go about improving student performance before the next SSIP review in five years. When Dr. Russell questioned the state education agency about the criteria used to determine if a district met each of the eleven performance standards, he was told they were using a draft copy of a scoring guide that had not been released to the schools.

### **Assignment**

- Who should be involved in developing a new vision of learning for the district and how should the superintendent proceed in providing the leadership for the development of this new vision of learning?
- What role does the examination of student data play in the development of a vision, mission, and goals for the district? What kinds of data should be considered and who should be involved in examining the data?
- What efforts should be made by the superintendent to encourage the state education agency to specify the criteria for evaluating the student performance in a school district?

## Instructor's Notes and Scoring Guide

For

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#### Instructor Notes

This case study can be used in several different ways. One use could be to facilitate a discussion of a process for developing a plan for school improvement. This could be done by dividing the class into small groups (3 or 4), having them read the case study, and produce a chart or poster with their answers to the questions at the end of the case study. Each group would present their answers to the whole class and the instructor would facilitate discussion around the proposed answers of each group. Another approach could be an individual assignment for each student to write up and turn in.

#### Scoring Guide

- 2 point response.** The response includes a well defined process for the development of the vision, mission, goals, and action steps (school improvement plan) for the school district as well as a wide variety of specific stakeholders to be involved in the process. A discussion of the specific kinds of data that should be examined in developing the school improvement plan. The response should also include a discussion of how the superintendent should proceed in influencing the state education agency to better communicate the expectations for school districts and why it is important for local school administrators to influence state policies and procedures.
- 1 point response.** The response discusses the development of a school improvement plan but does not specify the use of a variety of stakeholders and is not specific about the process for developing the plan. The discussion of data does not include a wide variety of data. It might only include achievement data. The discussion of the failure of the state agency to share the criteria for evaluating the performance standards is vague and not specific about how to or why it is important to address the issue.
- 0 point response.** This response does not involve multiple stakeholders and gives very little importance to the examination of multiple forms of data. The development of a school improvement plan is basically unilateral and top down. No reference is given to the policies of the state education agency.

#### References

DuFour, R., & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Bernhardt, V. L. (1998). *Data analysis: For comprehensive schoolwide improvement*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

National Association of Elementary School Principals  
<http://www.naesp.org/>

National Association of Secondary School Principals  
<http://www.nassp.org>

Education Law Association  
<http://www.educationlaw.org/>

Education Index  
<http://www.educationindex.com/>

Education Week  
<http://www.edweek.org>

### **Pilot Test**

This case study was piloted in a masters level class "Foundations of Educational Administration. The comments from the students were favorable and the only recommendation for improvement was that the student be given feedback about their responses to the case. This can be done through the scoring guide. The scoring guide was not provided to the students participating in the pilot.