



Pittsburgh Urban Leadership System for Excellence

“PULSE”

Prepared May 21, 2007

What is PULSE?

PULSE encompasses the components of the PPS Accountability Model that pertain to School Leadership. The two main components are:

- A new system of principal evaluation and compensation
- Programs to develop highly qualified aspiring principals

Additional components of PULSE include: Principal induction, principal mentoring, leadership academy, and intensive executive director support, mentoring and training

What does the research support on effective school leadership?

- “Scratch the surface of an excellent school and you are likely to find an excellent principal”...American Educational Research Association
- “Look into a failing school and you will find weak leadership”.... American Educational Research Association
- Leaders are thought to be essential for high-quality schools...American Educational Research Association
- 25% or more of school level factors related student achievement is attributable to school leadership...Marzano
- Principals play a vital & multifaceted role in setting the direction for successful schools that are vibrant learning centers for all children
- Improvement in education is guided by consistent and effective leadership...Excellence for All

Why do we need to do something differently?

Currently:

- There is no accountability structure that requires a systematic evaluation of principal performance by executive directors
- There are no research based performance standards for school administrators
- School administrator compensation is unrelated to performance and student achievement



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So what is happening?

We are developing a comprehensive, research-based, school administrator accountability system that will encompass evaluation and compensation for school administrators based on performance standards and student achievement.

The current system of allowing salary step movement each year, regardless of performance, will be gone? Are annual “across the board” increases gone as well?

Yes. Under the plan being developed there will be no additional compensation to school administrators that is unrelated to performance. There will be two ways for school administrators to increase their compensation on an annual basis:

- A performance increment of up to \$2,000 can be earned annually based on a performance assessment using an evaluation rubric. This performance increment will be included in the school administrator’s base salary.
- An achievement bonus of up to \$10,000 can be earned annually based on demonstrated growth in student achievement, incorporating the School Plans for Excellence and a student achievement index. The bonus amount will not be retained in a school administrator’s base salary.

How different is this from what is happening in other school districts?

This system will be ground breaking in that it will hold principals accountable through comprehensive, research-based, performance standards and will link compensation to student achievement.

Why will this system have better results in terms of principal evaluation and accountability?

The foundation of this plan is the adoption of clear performance standards for principals, something which has not been in place previously. Executive directors will be required to evaluate school principals using an evaluation rubric. Additionally, the achievement bonus can only be earned by principals if there is



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demonstrated growth in student achievement. Finally, Dr. Lane, as Deputy, will hold executive directors accountable for using the system to evaluate principals.

There is an increment and a bonus to reward principals who are performing well and moving student achievement. Similarly, the evaluation tool will gather information to support the assessment of principals who are not performing satisfactorily.

How will executive directors be supported to ensure that they are able to deliver the important role they play in this process?

- Executive directors will receive coaching and mentoring support through Focus on Results.
- Executive directors, who will be in schools 60% of their time, periodically will be accompanied on their school visits by a coach/mentor to assist them in identifying and assessing principal performance.
- Executive directors will receive monthly training through ETS to ensure inter-rater reliability.
- Executive directors will work collaboratively.
- There will be a direct line of accountability with regard to principal evaluation from Superintendent to Deputy Superintendent to Executive Directors to Principals to Assistant Principals.

Tell us more about the school administrator accountability system – how will it work?

- The evaluation rubric is designed to evaluate performance on four levels (not just satisfactory and unsatisfactory).
- The system will differentiate among novice and experienced principals, evaluating novice principals more frequently.
- The system will cycle experienced principals through a three year rotation. Principals will be divided into heterogeneous cohorts. One year will consist of a cohort of principals being evaluated formally and then, the next two years, they will complete a directed professional growth project designed to impact student achievement. The evaluation rubric will still be utilized during



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the directed professional growth project years but principals will not be required to collect artifacts and evidence as they are in the formal evaluation year.

- The first year, 2007-2008, all principals will be evaluated formally. The rotation will begin in 2008-2009.
- There will be a category of Intensive Support for principals who have exhibited rudimentary performance in one or more components of professional practice or for any principal who has been identified as appropriate to be in the Intensive Support category.

We have heard that the District applied for a federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant. How is that related? Using the teacher incentive fund grant, a proposal was submitted to support performance-based compensation for principals. The focus on principals was a result of the belief that school leadership significantly impacts student achievement and accountability for effective leadership is needed.

The chart below indicates the percent of costs associated with the principal performance-based compensation system that the grant will cover over the five year term of the grant. By year five the District would cover 75% of the cost and the grant would fund only 25%.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Total Cost Of Incentives	\$414,250	\$564,885	\$723,053	\$888,753	\$1,054,452
% covered by Grant	100%	90%	80%	70%	25%

What was the work plan for the design of the Principal Performance-Based Compensation System?

- A Steering Committee is overseeing the work of with 4 subcommittees.
 - Principal Evaluation Subcommittee
 - Leadership Roles Subcommittee



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- Achievement Bonus Subcommittee
- Design Subcommittee
- Committee Membership Includes: Central Office Administration, School Administrators, RAND representatives, Institute for Learning representative, Educational Testing Services (ETS) facilitator

What is each subcommittee responsible for doing?

- **Principal Evaluation Subcommittee:** Participated in a 4-day retreat facilitated by ETS consultant, Dr. Paula Bevan, in partnership with RAND and IFL to develop a differentiated, standards-based, rubric of evaluation to for principal performance. The principal evaluation tool will be used to determine the performance increment/indicator, annually. Committee work will conclude on or before June 7th.
- **Leadership Roles Subcommittee:** Will define the additional leadership responsibilities Standard #7: Leadership for Learning as part of the standards-based performance evaluation rubric. Committee work will conclude on or before June 7th.
- **Achievement Bonus Subcommittee:** Will develop the metric in partnership with RAND for determining the \$10,000 pay for performance achievement bonus based on student achievement growth models, incorporating the School Plan for Excellence and a School Performance Index measure. Conceptual framework will be completed on or before June 7th
- **Design Committee:** Will work in partnership with RAND to define the design of the principal pay for performance model. This subcommittee will confront and resolve difficult issues around the current model such as moving to a calendar year, compensation structure in future years, interim principals, mobility issues, retirement, etc. Committee work will conclude on or before December 1st, 2007.

What did the Principal Evaluation Committee accomplish? How were the performance standards selected and the evaluation rubric developed? How will the evaluation rubric be used?

A four day offsite retreat was held in April, facilitated by ETS. The Inter-state School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards (known as the ISLLC



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Standards), which are researched based and reflect the qualities of school leaders that impact student learning, were determined to be a solid foundation for the Pittsburgh model. The retreat was used to refine the indicators of performance for each standard and to develop the system for linking the evaluation rubric to the \$2,000 performance increment, as well as aligning it to the State required rating system.

- Principal Evaluation Retreat
 - April 17th-20th
 - Goals and Outcomes:
 1. Design Performance Standards Evaluation Rubric
 2. Design a system of compensation based on the performance standards evaluation rubric that replaces current step system with a performance-based increment system
 3. Design how the performance standards evaluation rubric will coordinate with the annual rating required by PDE

What are the Research-Based Performance Assessment: 5 Critical Elements for Principal Evaluation?

1. Start with a defensible definition of practice supported by research that is studied, and understood, by all stakeholders.
2. Differentiate the processes of evaluation for novices, experienced principals and principals in need of intensive support.
3. Evidence, not opinion, must anchor the process.
4. Conduct evaluations in such a way that they produce principal learning.
5. Give due consideration to process, weighting and scoring.



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What are the performance standards that the principal compensation system is based upon?

Interstate School Leaders' Licensure Consortium Standards

- 6 standards for school leadership [ISLLC Standards](#)
 1. The Vision of Learning
 2. The Culture of Teaching and Learning
 3. The Management of Learning
 4. Relationships with Families and the Community to Foster Learning
 5. Integrity, Fairness, and Ethics in Learning
 6. The Political, Social, Economic, Legal, and Cultural Context of Learning
 7. PPS Added Leadership Standard #7: Leadership for Learning

What do the performance standards accomplish?

- Reflect current knowledge of the qualities of school leaders that impact student learning
- Applicable to all levels of leadership and are comprehensive
- Contain rubrics: School Leadership is a performance not a role. Performances are best measured using rubrics. Performance as improvement (process accountability)

How many performance standards are there in the principal performance-based compensation system?

There are a total of 7 standards each with 4 components = 28 components evaluated across 4 performance levels:

- rudimentary, emerging, proficient, accomplished

Who endorses the ISLLC standards that anchor our performance standards rubric?

- National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBA)
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
- National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)
- Council of State School Officers (CSSO)
- National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)



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What research-based resources were used when developing the performance standards rubric?

- Robert Marzano' work: "School Leadership That Works From Research to Results" Mapping the 21 attributes of effective school leadership correlated to the ISLLC standards
- American Educational Research Association (AERA) "What We Know About Successful School Leadership"
- NSF System-Wide Change for All Learners and Educators: School Leadership Rubrics developed by Rich Halverson University of Wisconsin-Madison heavily influenced Standard #2 The Culture of Teaching and Learning
- School Leadership Study, Developing Successful Principals (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson), commissioned by the Wallace Foundation, conducted by the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute

How many administrator categories are there?

- The differentiated supervision model consists of 3 categories
 - Novice Principals: First 2 yrs in the principal position or 1st yr of service to the district
 - Experienced Principals:
 - Formal: 2 or more yrs as a principal in PPS or 1 year as new principals in PPS
 - Directed Professional Growth Experienced Principals: Designated in heterogeneous cohorts at the discretion of the Executive Director
 - Intensive Support: based on, but not limited to, rudimentary performance in one or more components of professional practice

What is the frequency and process of evaluation?

- Novice principals: 2 formal evaluations (once per semester); total of 4 formal observations over 2 yrs; focus on standards 1, 2 and 3.
- Experienced Principals:
 - Formal annual evaluation once every 3 yrs; all 7 standards (28 components) with evidence.



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- Experienced Directed Professional Growth: only for experienced principals; year long cycle, twice every 3 yrs; heterogeneous cohorts; focused project on one component with greatest impact on teaching and learning and performance improvement is warranted; “directed” oversight by executive director throughout; principals are accountable for all 28 components related to their annual rating and performance increment.
- Intensive Support: At the discretion of the Executive Director or Superintendent’s Designee based on objective collected evidence of, but not limited to, rudimentary performance in one or more of the 28 components of professional practice. Intensive, extensive team-based support is key. Clear goals, outcomes and timelines for improvement.

Why is evidence important in the principal performance-based compensation system? And how will it be collected?

- Evidence is a factual reporting of events. It may include teacher, principal and student actions and behaviors.
- It may also include artifacts prepared by the principal, teacher, students or others.
- It is not clouded with personal opinion, biases, or subjectivity.
- It is selected using professional judgment by the observer and/or the principal.
- Evidence collection is best accomplished at the school site by the Executive Director and principal, collaboratively.
- Information from documents will be recorded on the executive director Evidence Collection Form.
- Principal does not assemble and carry documents to a remote location.
- The key to rigorous, evidence-based principal evaluation is adequate, on-going training of executive directors and principals
 - Principals will receive intensive training on the rubric and process beginning June 19th and June 20th and continuing July 31st, 1st and 2nd



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- Executive Directors throughout the year will receive monthly intensive support/training in a collaborative process to establish inter-rater reliability with ETS

How does an evaluation process produce principal learning?

- “Learning is done by the learner; it is mental WORK.”
- Charlotte Danielson
- Evaluation systems must promote and foster conditions for professional learning.
- National Staff Development Council defines the nature of professional learning as:
 - Reflection on practice: end of each cycle
 - Collaboration: on final assessment using rubric, with executive director
 - Self-assessment based on evidence: beginning/end of each cycle
 - Directed Professional Growth Inquiry (action research): 2 years of every three
 - Decisions based upon evidence/standards

Is the performance standards rubric used differently for novice and experienced principals?

- Novice principals focus on Standards 1, 2 and 3 and self-assess on all 28 components (7 standards). Novice principals produce artifacts for standards 1, 2 and 3.
- Experienced Principals focus on all 7 Standards (28 components), self-assess on all 28 components and provide artifacts for all 7 standards.
- Highlight performance standards evaluation rubric to score and determine rating
- Eliminate artificial requirements: i.e., confining scores to one level in each component

What is the future work for principal performance-based compensation?

- Principal evaluation and leadership subcommittee to complete work by June 7th
- Achievement Bonus subcommittee to complete conceptual framework by June 7th



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- Design Committee to complete work by December
- Training principals on the performance standards evaluation rubric will begin in June and continue during the Leadership Academy July 30th-August 3rd
- Executive Director training will begin May 21st and 22nd and continue monthly throughout the year

What is the timeline for principal performance-based compensation?

- July 1st, 2007
 - School Administrator Performance Standards Evaluation Rubric will be implemented for all principals connected to annual rating and performance increment
 - Performance standards evaluation rubric will become operational, with all principals assessed formally in 2007-2008 (baseline year). A few principals will be invited to pilot the directed professional growth plan
 - After July 1, 2008 performance increments and achievement bonuses, as earned, will be awarded to principals
- July 1st, 2008
 - Implement performance standards evaluation rubric for assistant principals connected to annual rating
 - Implement school administrators' compensation structure, including work year revisions, etc.

What is the evaluation design of PULSE?

- Develop a subcommittee to define evaluation design of PULSE including metrics
- Possible evaluation metrics include:
 - # of qualified applicants
 - # of principal candidates hired from Pittsburgh's Emerging Leadership Academy
 - Success rate of novice principals
 - Aggregate data on principal performance standards evaluation rubric
 - Change in principal behaviors & attitudes and student achievement
 - Focus group meetings with principals
 - Refer to pages 38-42 of the TIF proposal



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What references were used?

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