



Principal Supervisor Performance Standards

VERSION 4.0

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The District Leadership Design Lab (DL2) Principal Supervisor Performance Standards (PSPS) help district leaders understand and support the success of their principal supervisors. The standards describe what principal supervisors do when their work supports principals' growth as instructional leaders. Within each standard, we define that practice along five levels of expertise that capture meaningful markers of principal supervisors' progress.

The DL2 PSPS are:

Research-based

Each standard reflects a deepening body of scholarship that substantiates the importance of principals operating as strong instructional leaders¹ and principal supervisors focusing on supporting principals' instructional leadership growth through specific strategies.²

Growth-focused

We distinguish each standard along five levels that capture how professionals typically deepen their expertise.³ This approach reflects the importance of every principal supervisor seeing themselves on a growth trajectory toward progressively more impactful practice.

Measurable

The standards reflect observable practices that principal supervisors and others can assess using various evidence including peer-observations, principal feedback, and time studies. The standards do not include attitudes or dispositions, which are challenging to measure and not yet research-based.

Relevant

The standards stem from rigorous, practice-engaged scholarship that produced practical lessons about principal supervision. We vetted the original language of the standards with over 100 educational leaders and have continued to refine it as principal supervisors and others have used the standards over a decade.

Use the DL2 PSPS to:

- Develop principal supervisor job descriptions based on research-based, results-oriented work practices,
- Focus principal supervisors' onboarding and ongoing professional development on practices that help principals grow as instructional leaders,
- Anchor principal supervisors' leadership of their own learning⁴, and
- Evaluate principal supervisors on effective, measurable practices and growth.

The next page shows the six standards and the growth scale. On each following page, we elaborate each standard along the scale.

DL2 Principal Supervisor Performance Standards 4.0

Standard 1

Dedicates their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders.

Standard 2

Helps principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders.

Standard 3

Uses teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders.

Standard 4

Uses teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice (e.g., professional learning communities, networks) to support principals' growth as instructional leaders.

Standard 5

Engages principals in the formal district principal evaluation process in ways that support principals' growth as instructional leaders.

Standard 6

Selectively and strategically participates in other central office work processes to maximize their support of principals' growth as instructional leaders.

○ Not Adopting

Does not yet talk about their practice or engage in practices consistent with the standard.

◐ Adopting the Talk

Talks about their practice in ways consistent with the standard, but their actual practice does not yet reflect the standard.

◑ Engaging at a Surface Level

Begins to engage in practices that reflect the standard and to demonstrate understanding of which practices are consistent with the standard and why to engage in those practices.

◒ Engaging with Understanding

Often engages in practices that reflect the standard and demonstrates deepening understanding of what practices are consistent with the standard and why to engage in those practices.

● Mastery

Routinely engages in practices that reflect the standard at the level of "engaging with understanding" across multiple contexts and years. Improvises—uses the standard as a jumping off point to develop new ways of working consistent with the standard and likely to contribute to progressively more powerful results.

Standard 1

Dedicates their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders.

 Not Adopting	 Adopting	 Engaging at a Surface Level	 Engaging with Understanding	 Mastery
Does not yet talk about their practice or engage in practices consistent with dedicating their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders	Talks about dedicating their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders but does not yet spend their time in that way	Begins to dedicate some of their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders but often engages in other work Begins to demonstrate understanding of what is involved in dedicating their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders and why to do so	Often dedicates their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders Demonstrates deepening understanding of what is involved in dedicating their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders and why to do so	Routinely dedicates their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders across multiple contexts and years Routinely reflects deepening understanding of what is involved in dedicating their time to helping principals grow as instructional leaders and why to do so Improvises—develops new ways of working consistent with dedicating their time to helping principals grow as instructional that are likely to contribute to progressively more powerful results

Standard 2

Helps principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders.

 Not Adopting	 Adopting	 Engaging at a Surface Level	 Engaging with Understanding	 Mastery
Does not yet talk about their practice or engage in practices consistent with helping principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders	Talks about helping principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders but does not yet take that approach in their actual practice	Begins to help principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders Begins to demonstrate understanding of what is involved in helping principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Often helps principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders Demonstrates deepening understanding of what is involved in helping principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Routinely helps principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders across multiple contexts and years Routinely reflects deepening understanding of what is involved in helping principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders and why to do so Improvises—develops new ways of working to help principals lead their own growth as instructional leaders that are likely to contribute to progressively more powerful results

Standard 3

Uses teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders.

 Not Adopting	 Adopting	 Engaging at a Surface Level	 Engaging with Understanding	 Mastery
Does not yet talk about their practice or engage in practices consistent with using teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders	Talks about using teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders but does not yet use those moves in their actual practice	Begins to use teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders Begins to demonstrate understanding of what is involved in using teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Often uses teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders Demonstrates deepening understanding of what is involved in using teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Routinely uses teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders across multiple contexts and years Routinely reflects deepening understanding of what is involved in using teaching-and-learning moves when working with principals one-on-one and why to do so Improvises—develops new teaching-and-learning approaches when working with principals one-on-one to support principals' growth as instructional leaders that are likely to contribute to progressively more powerful results

Standard 4

Uses teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice (e.g., professional learning communities, networks) to support principals' growth as instructional leaders.

 Not Adopting	 Adopting	 Engaging at a Surface Level	 Engaging with Understanding	 Mastery
Does not yet talk about their practice or engage in practices consistent with using teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice to support principals' growth as instructional leaders	Talks about using teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice to support principals' growth as instructional leaders but does not yet use those moves in their actual practice	Begins to use teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice to support principals' growth as instructional leaders Begins to demonstrate understanding of what is involved in using teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice to support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Often uses teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice to support principals' growth as instructional leaders Demonstrates deepening understanding of what is involved in using teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice to support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Routinely uses teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice to support principals' growth as instructional leaders across multiple contexts and years Routinely reflects deepening understanding of what is involved in using teaching-and-learning moves when leading principal communities of practice and why to do so Improvises—develops new teaching-and-learning approaches when leading principal communities of practice that are likely to contribute to progressively more powerful results

Standard 5

Engages principals in the formal district principal evaluation process in ways that support principals' growth as instructional leaders.

 Not Adopting	 Adopting	 Engaging at a Surface Level	 Engaging with Understanding	 Mastery
Does not yet talk about their practice or engage in practices consistent with engaging principals in the formal district principal evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders	Talks about engaging principals in the formal district principal evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders but does not yet use those moves in their actual practice	Begins to engage principals in the formal district principal evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders Begins to demonstrate understanding of what is involved in engaging principals in the formal district principal evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Often engages principals in the formal district evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders Demonstrates deepening understanding of what is involved in engaging principals in the formal district principal evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Routinely engages principals in the formal district evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders across multiple contexts and years Routinely reflects deepening understanding of what is involved in engaging principals in the formal district evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so Improvises—develops new ways of engaging principals in the formal district evaluation process to support principals' growth as instructional leaders that are likely to contribute to progressively more powerful results

Standard 6

Selectively and strategically participates in other central office work processes to maximize their support of principals' growth as instructional leaders.

 Not Adopting	 Adopting	 Engaging at a Surface Level	 Engaging with Understanding	 Mastery
Does not yet talk about their practice or engage in practices consistent with selectively and strategically participating in other central office work processes to maximize their support of principals' growth as instructional leaders	Talks about selectively and strategically participating in other central office work processes to maximize their support of principals' growth as instructional leaders but does not yet use those moves in their actual practice	Begins to limit their participation in other central office work processes when their participation does not demonstratively support principals' growth as instructional leaders Begins to demonstrate understanding of what is involved in limiting their participation in other central office work processes when their participation does not demonstratively support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Often limits their participation in other central office work processes when their participation does not demonstratively support principals' growth as instructional leaders Demonstrates deepening understanding of what is involved in limiting their participation in other central office work processes when their participation does not demonstratively support principals' growth as instructional leaders and why to do so	Routinely limits their participation in other central office work processes across multiple contexts and time when their participation does not demonstrably support principals' growth as instructional leaders Routinely reflects deepening understanding of what is involved in limiting their participation in other central office work processes and why to do so Improvises—develops new strategies to limit their participation in other central office work processes that are likely to contribute to progressively more powerful results

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