

Principal Evaluation Rubrics

by Kim Marshall – Revised May 20, 2013

Rationale and suggestions for implementation

1. These rubrics are organized around six domains covering all aspects of a principal's job performance:

- A. Strategy
- B. First Things First
- C. Curriculum and Data
- D. Talent Development
- E. Culture
- F. Management

The rubrics use a four-level rating scale with the following labels:

4 – Highly Effective 3 – Effective 2 – Improvement Necessary 1 – Does Not Meet Standards

2. The rubrics are designed to give principals and other school-based administrators an end-of-the-year assessment of where they stand in all performance areas – and detailed guidance for improvement. The rubrics are not checklists for school visits. To knowledgeably evaluate a principal at the end of a school year, a supervisor needs to have been in the school frequently, had lots of formative feedback conversations, and looked at numerous artifacts. It is irresponsible to fill out the rubrics based on 1-2 visits and without ongoing dialogue.

3. The rubrics cover principals' actions, not their personal qualities. Underlying these 60 manifestations of leadership are the principal's vision, firm beliefs, access to research and a network of support, interpersonal and communication skills, cultural competence, courage, decisiveness, resilience, and wisdom.

4. The *Effective* level describes solid, expected professional performance; any administrator should be pleased with scores at this level. The *Highly Effective* level is reserved for truly outstanding leadership as described by very demanding criteria. *Improvement Necessary* indicates that performance has real deficiencies and must improve (although some novice administrators might start here). And performance at the *Does Not Meet Standards* level is clearly unacceptable and will lead to dismissal if it is not improved immediately.

5. To score, read across the four levels of performance for each criterion, find the level that best describes the principal's performance, and circle or highlight it. On each page, this will create a clear graphic display of overall performance, areas for commendation, and areas that need work. Write the overall score at the bottom of each page with brief comments, and then record all the scores and overall comments on the summary page.

6. Evaluation conferences are greatly enhanced if the supervisor and administrator fill out the rubrics in advance and then meet and compare one page at a time. Of course, the supervisor has the final say, but the discussion should aim for consensus based on actual evidence of the most accurate score for each criterion. Supervisors should go into evaluation process with some humility since they can't possibly know everything about an administrator's complex world. Similarly, administrators should be open to feedback from someone with an outside perspective – all revolving around whether the school is producing learning gains for all students. Note that student achievement is not explicitly included in these rubrics, but clearly it's directly linked to school leadership. How student results factor into evaluation is for each district or governing board to decide.

7. Some supervisors sugar-coat criticism and give inflated scores to keep the peace and avoid hurting feelings. This does not help an administrator improve. The kindest thing a supervisor can do for an underperforming administrator is give candid, evidence-based feedback and robust follow-up support. Honest scores for all the administrators in a district can be aggregated into a spreadsheet that can give an overview of leadership development needs (see page 9 for a sample).

A. Strategy

	4 Highly Effective	3 Effective	2 Improvement Necessary	1 Does Not Meet Standards
The principal:				
a. Team	Recruits a strong leadership team and develops its skills and commitment to a high level.	Recruits and develops a leadership team with a balance of skills.	Enlists one or two like-minded colleagues to provide advice and support.	Works solo with little or no support from colleagues.
b. Diagnosis	Involves stakeholders in a comprehensive diagnosis of the school's strengths and weaknesses.	Carefully assesses the school's strengths and areas for development.	Makes a quick assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses.	Is unable to gather much information on the school's strong and weak points.
c. Gap	Challenges colleagues by presenting the gap between current student data and a vision for college success.	Motivates colleagues by comparing students' current achievement with rigorous expectations.	Presents data without a vision or a vision without data.	Bemoans students' low achievement and shows fatalism about bringing about significant change.
d. Mission	Wins staff and student buy-in for a succinct, inspiring, results-oriented mission statement.	Produces a memorable, succinct, results-oriented mission statement that's known by all staff.	Distributes a boiler-plate mission statement that few colleagues remember.	Does not share a mission statement.
e. Target	Gets strong staff commitment on a bold, ambitious 3-4 year student achievement target.	Builds staff support for a 3-4-year student achievement target.	Expresses confidence that student achievement will improve each year through hard work.	Takes one year at a time and does not provide an achievement target.
f. Theory	Wins staff ownership for a robust, research-based theory of action for improving achievement.	Researches and writes a convincing theory of action for improving achievement.	Accepts colleagues' current notions of how student achievement is improved.	Says that hard work improves achievement – but shows doubts that progress can be made.
g. Strategy	Collaboratively crafts a lean, comprehensive, results-oriented strategic plan with annual goals.	Gets input and writes a comprehensive, measurable strategic plan for the current year.	Writes a cumbersome, non-accountable strategic plan.	Recycles the previous year's cumbersome, non-accountable strategic plan.
h. Support	Fosters a sense of urgency and responsibility among all stakeholders for achieving annual goals.	Builds ownership and support among stakeholders for achieving annual goals.	Presents the annual plan to stakeholders and asks them to support it.	Gets the necessary signatures for the annual plan, but there is little ownership or support.
i. Enlisting	Masterfully wins over resistant staff members who feared change and/or harbored low expectations.	Manages resistance, low expectations, and fear of change.	Works on persuading resistant staff members to get on board with the plan.	Is discouraged and immobilized by staff resistance, fear of change, and low expectations.
j. Revision	Regularly tracks progress, gives and takes feedback, and continuously improves performance.	Periodically measures progress, listens to feedback, and revises the strategic plan.	Occasionally focuses on key data points and prods colleagues to improve.	Is too caught up in daily crises to focus on emerging data.

Overall rating: _____ Comments: _____

B. First Things First

	4 Highly Effective	3 Effective	2 Improvement Necessary	1 Does Not Meet Standards
The principal:				
a. Planning	Plans for the year, month, week, and day, relentlessly getting the highest-leverage activities done.	Plans for the year, month, week, and day, keeping the highest-leverage activities front and center.	Comes to work with a list of tasks that need to be accomplished that day but is often distracted from them.	Has a list in his or her head of tasks to be accomplished each day, but often loses track.
b. Communication	Successfully communicates goals to all constituencies by skillfully using a variety of channels.	Uses a variety of means (e.g., face-to-face, newsletters, websites) to communicate goals to others.	Has a limited communication repertoire and some key stakeholders are not aware of school goals.	Is not an effective communicator, and others are often left guessing about policies and direction.
c. Outreach	Frequently solicits and uses feedback and help from staff, students, parents, and external partners.	Regularly reaches out to staff, students, parents, and external partners for feedback and help.	Occasionally asks staff, students, parents, or external partners for feedback.	Rarely or never reaches out to others for feedback or help.
d. Follow-Up	Has a foolproof system for capturing key information, remembering, prioritizing, and following up.	Writes down important information, remembers, prioritizes, and almost always follows up.	Writes things down but is swamped by events and sometimes doesn't follow up.	Trusts his or her memory to retain important information, but often forgets and fails to follow up.
e. Expectations	Has total staff buy-in on exactly what is expected for management procedures and discipline.	Makes sure staff know what is expected for management procedures and discipline.	Periodically reminds teachers of policies on management procedures and discipline.	Is constantly reminding staff what they should be doing in management and discipline.
f. Delegation	Has highly competent people in all key roles and is able to entrust them with maximum responsibility.	Delegates appropriate tasks to competent staff members and checks on progress.	Doesn't delegate some tasks that should be done by others.	Does almost everything him- or herself.
g. Meetings	Successfully gets all key teams meeting regularly and taking responsibility for productive agendas.	Ensures that key teams (e.g., leadership, grade-level, student support) meet regularly.	Needs to call key team meetings because they are not in people's calendars.	Convenes grade-level, leadership, and other teams only when there is a crisis or an immediate need.
h. Prevention	Takes the initiative so that time-wasting activities and crises are almost always prevented or deflected.	Is effective at preventing and/or deflecting many time-wasting crises and activities.	Tries to prevent them, but crises and time-wasters sometimes eat up lots of time.	Finds that large portions of each day are consumed by crises and time-wasting activities.
i. Efficiency	Deals quickly and decisively with the highest-priority e-mail and paperwork, delegating the rest.	Has a system for dealing with e-mail, paperwork, and administrative chores.	Tries to stay on top of e-mail, paperwork, and administrative chores but is often behind.	Is way behind on e-mail, paperwork, and administrative chores, to the detriment of the school's mission.
j. Balance	Remains sharp and fresh by tending to family, friends, fun, exercise, nutrition, sleep, and vacations.	Is healthy and focused by balancing work demands with healthy habits.	Is sometimes unfocused and inattentive because of fatigue and stress.	Is unproductive and irritable because of fatigue and stress.

Overall rating: _____ Comments: _____

C. Curriculum and Data

The principal:				
	4 Highly Effective	3 Effective	2 Improvement Necessary	1 Does Not Meet Standards
a. Expectations	Gets all teachers to buy into clear, manageable, standards-aligned grade-level goals with exemplars of proficient work.	Tells teachers exactly what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level.	Refers teachers to district or national scope-and-sequence documents for curriculum direction.	Leaves teachers without clear direction on student learning outcomes for each grade level.
b. Baselines	Ensures that all teams use summative data from the previous year and fresh diagnostic data to plan instruction.	Provides teacher teams with previous-year test data and asks them to assess students' current levels.	Refers teachers to previous-year test data as a baseline for current-year instruction.	Does not provide historical test data to teachers.
c. Targets	Gets each grade-level/subject team invested in reaching measurable, results-oriented year-end goals.	Works with grade-level and subject-area teams to set measurable student goals for the current year.	Urges grade-level/subject teams to set measurable student learning goals for the current year.	Urges teachers to improve student achievement, but without measurable outcome goals.
d. Materials	Ensures that all teachers have high-quality curriculum materials, technology, and training on how to use them.	Gets teachers effective literacy, math, science, and social studies materials and technology.	Works to procure good curriculum materials in literacy and math.	Leaves teachers to fend for themselves with curriculum materials.
e. Interims	Ensures that high-quality, aligned, common interim assessments are given by all teacher teams at least four times each year.	Orchestrates common interim assessments to monitor student learning several times a year.	Suggests that teacher teams give common interim assessments to check on student learning.	Doesn't insist on common interim assessments, allowing teachers to use their own classroom tests.
f. Analysis	Orchestrates high-quality data/action team meetings after each round of assessments.	Monitors teacher teams as they analyze interim assessment results and formulate action plans.	Suggests that teacher teams work together to draw lessons from the tests they give.	Does not see the value of analyzing tests given during the year.
g. Causes	Gets data meetings engaged in a no-blame, highly productive search for root causes and hypothesis-testing.	Asks that data meetings go beyond <i>what</i> students got wrong and delve into <i>why</i> .	Suggests that teachers focus on the areas in which students had the most difficulty.	Does not exercise leadership in looking for underlying causes of student difficulties.
h. Follow-Up	Gets teams invested in following up assessments with effective reteaching, tutoring, and other interventions.	Asks teams to follow up each interim assessment with reteaching and remediation.	Suggests that teachers use interim assessment data to help struggling students.	Does not provide time or leadership for follow-up after tests.
i. Monitoring	Uses data on grades, attendance, behavior, and other variables to monitor and drive continuous improvement toward goals.	Monitors data in several key areas and uses them to inform improvement efforts.	Monitors attendance and discipline data to inform decisions.	Is inattentive to important school data.
j. Celebration	Boosts morale and a sense of efficacy by getting colleagues to celebrate and own measurable student gains.	Draws attention to student, classroom, and school-wide successes, giving credit where credit is due.	Congratulates individuals on successes.	Takes credit for improvements in school performance or misses opportunities to celebrate success.

Overall rating: _____ Comments: _____

D. Talent Development

The principal:				
	4 Highly Effective	3 Effective	2 Improvement Necessary	1 Does Not Meet Standards
a. Meetings	In plenary staff meetings, gets teachers highly invested in discussing results, learning best strategies, and building trust and respect.	Uses plenary staff meetings to get teachers sharing strategies and becoming more cohesive.	Uses staff meetings primarily to announce decisions, clarify policies, and listen to staff concerns.	Rarely convenes staff members and/or uses meetings for one-way lectures on policies.
b. Ideas	Ensures that the whole staff is current on professional literature and constantly exploring best practices.	Reads and shares research and fosters an on-going, schoolwide discussion of best practices.	Occasionally passes along interesting articles and ideas to colleagues.	Rarely reads professional literature or discusses best practices.
c. Development	Orchestrates aligned, high-quality coaching, mentoring, workshops, school visits, and other professional learning tuned to staff needs.	Organizes aligned, on-going coaching and training that builds classroom proficiency.	Provides staff development workshops that rarely engage staff or improve instruction.	Provides occasional workshops, leaving teachers mostly on their own in terms of professional development.
d. Empowerment	Gets teams to take ownership for using data and student work to drive constant refinement of teaching.	Orchestrates regular teacher team meetings as the prime locus for professional learning.	Suggests that teacher teams work together to address students' learning problems.	Does not emphasize teamwork and teachers work mostly in isolation from colleagues.
e. Support	Gives teacher teams the training, facilitation, and resources they need to make their meetings highly effective.	Ensures that teacher teams have facilitators so meetings are focused and substantive.	Has teacher teams appoint a leader to chair meetings and file reports.	Leaves teacher teams to fend for themselves in terms of leadership and direction.
f. Units	Ensures that teachers backwards-design high-quality, aligned units and provides feedback on drafts.	Asks teacher teams to cooperatively plan curriculum units following a common format.	Occasionally reviews teachers' lesson plans but not unit plans.	Does not review lesson or unit plans.
g. Evaluation	Visits 2-4 classrooms a day and gives helpful, face-to-face feedback to each teacher within 24 hours.	Makes unannounced visits to a few classrooms almost every day and gives helpful feedback to teachers.	Tries to get into classrooms but is often distracted by other events and rarely provides feedback.	Only observes teachers in annual or bi-annual formal observation visits.
h. Criticism	Courageously engages in difficult conversations with below-proficient teachers, helping them improve.	Provides redirection and support to teachers who are less than proficient.	Criticizes struggling teachers but does not give them much help improving their performance.	Shies away from giving honest feedback and redirection to teachers who are not performing well.
i. Housecleaning	Counsels out or dismisses all ineffective teachers, scrupulously following contractual requirements.	Counsels out or dismisses most ineffective teachers, following contractual requirements.	Tries to dismiss one or two ineffective teachers, but is stymied by procedural errors.	Does not initiate dismissal procedures, despite evidence that some teachers are ineffective.
j. Hiring	Recruits, hires, and supports highly effective teachers who share the school's vision.	Recruits and hires effective teachers.	Hires teachers who seem to fit his or her philosophy of teaching.	Makes last-minute appointments to teaching vacancies based on candidates who are available.

Overall rating: _____ Comments: _____

E. Culture

	4 Highly Effective	3 Effective	2 Improvement Necessary	1 Does Not Meet Standards
The principal:				
a. Expectations	Gets staff buy-in for clear, schoolwide student-behavior standards, routines, and consequences.	Sets expectations for student behavior and establishes schoolwide routines and consequences.	Urges staff to demand good student behavior, but allows different standards in different classrooms.	Often tolerates discipline violations and enforces the rules inconsistently.
b. Effectiveness	Deals effectively with any disruptions to teaching and learning, analyzes patterns, and works on prevention.	Deals quickly with disruptions to learning and looks for underlying causes.	Deals firmly with students who are disruptive in classrooms, but doesn't get to the root causes.	Tries to deal with disruptive students but is swamped by the number of problems.
c. Celebration	Publicly celebrates kindness, effort, and improvement and builds students' pride in their school.	Praises student achievement and works to build school spirit.	Praises well-behaved students and good grades.	Rarely praises students and fails to build school pride.
d. Training	Ensures that staff are skilled in positive discipline and sensitive handling of student issues.	Organizes workshops and suggests articles and books on classroom management.	Urges teachers to get better at classroom management.	Does little to build teachers' skills in classroom management.
e. Support	Is highly effective getting counseling, mentoring, and other supports for high-need students.	Identifies struggling students and works to get support services to meet their needs.	Tries to get crisis counseling for highly disruptive and troubled students.	Focuses mainly on discipline and punishment with highly disruptive and troubled students.
f. Openness	Makes families feel welcome and respected, responds to concerns, and gets a number of them actively involved in the school.	Makes parents feel welcome, listens to their concerns, and tries to get them involved.	Reaches out to parents and tries to understand when they are critical.	Makes little effort to reach out to families and is defensive when parents express concerns.
g. Curriculum	Informs parents of monthly learning expectations and specific ways they can support their children's learning.	Informs parents of the grade-level learning expectations and ways they can help at home.	Informs parents of grade-level learning expectations.	Does not inform parents of the school's learning expectations.
h. Conferences	Orchestrates student-led report card conferences in which parents and students see specific next steps for improvement.	Works to maximize the number of face-to-face parent/teacher report card conferences.	Makes sure that report cards are filled out correctly and provided to all parents.	Provides little or no monitoring of the report card process.
i. Communication	Sends home a weekly school newsletter, gets all teachers sending substantive updates, and organizes a user-friendly electronic grading program.	Sends home a periodic school newsletter and asks teachers to have regular channels of communication of their own.	Suggests that teachers communicate regularly with parents.	Leaves parent contact and communication up to individual teachers.
j. Safety-net	Provides effective programs for all students with inadequate home support.	Provides programs for most students whose parents do not provide adequate support.	Provides ad hoc, occasional support for students who are not adequately supported at home.	Does not provide assistance for students with inadequate home support.

Overall rating: _____ Comments: _____

F. Management

The principal:				
	4 Highly Effective	3 Effective	2 Improvement Necessary	1 Does Not Meet Standards
a. Ethics	Sets a stellar example for colleagues through impeccably ethical and professional behavior.	Acts in an ethical and professional manner and conveys the clear expectation that colleagues will do likewise.	Cuts corners and is not sufficiently attentive to ethical and professional standards, giving mixed messages to colleagues.	Acts unethically or unprofessionally, setting a poor example for colleagues.
b. Scheduling	Creates an equitable schedule that maximizes learning, teacher collaboration, and smooth transitions.	Creates a schedule that provides meeting times for all key teams.	Creates a schedule with some flaws and few opportunities for team meetings.	Creates a schedule with inequities, technical flaws, and little time for teacher teams to meet.
c. Movement	Ensures efficient, friendly student entry, dismissal, meal times, transitions, and recesses every day.	Supervises orderly student entry, dismissal, meals, class transitions, and recesses.	Intermittently supervises student entry, dismissal, transitions, and meal times.	Rarely supervises student entry, dismissal, and common spaces and there are frequent problems.
d. Custodians	Leads staff to ensure effective, creative use of space and a clean, safe, and inviting campus.	Supervises staff to keep the campus clean, attractive, and safe.	Works with custodial staff to keep the campus clean and safe, but there are occasional lapses.	Leaves campus cleanliness and safety to custodial staff and there are frequent lapses.
e. Transparency	Is transparent about how and why decisions were made, involving stakeholders whenever possible.	Ensures that staff members know how and why key decisions are being made.	Tries to be transparent about decision-making, but stakeholders sometimes feel shut out.	Makes decisions with little or no consultation, causing frequent resentment and morale problems.
f. Bureaucracy	Deftly handles bureaucratic, contractual, and legal issues so they rarely detract from, and sometimes contribute to, teaching and learning.	Manages bureaucratic, contractual, and legal issues efficiently and effectively.	Sometimes allows bureaucratic, contractual, and legal issues to distract teachers from their work.	Frequently mishandles bureaucratic, contractual, and legal issues in ways that disrupt teaching and learning.
g. Budget	Skillfully manages the budget and finances to maximize student achievement and staff growth.	Manages the school's budget and finances to support the strategic plan.	Manages budget and finances with few errors, but misses opportunities to support the strategic plan.	Makes errors in managing the budget and finances and misses opportunities to further the mission.
h. Compliance	Fulfills all compliance and reporting requirements and creates new opportunities to support learning.	Fulfills compliance and reporting responsibilities to the district and beyond.	Meets minimum compliance and reporting responsibilities with occasional lapses.	Has difficulty keeping the school in compliance and district and other external requirements.
i. Relationships	Builds strong relationships with key district and external personnel and gets them excited about the school's mission.	Builds relationships with district and external staffers so they will be helpful with paperwork and process.	Is correct and professional with district and external staff but does not enlist their active support.	Neglects relationship-building with district and external staff and doesn't have their support to get things done.
j. Resources	Taps all possible human and financial resources to support the school's mission and strategic plan.	Is effective in bringing additional human and financial resources into the school.	Occasionally raises additional funds or finds volunteers to help out.	Is resigned to working with the standard school budget, which doesn't seem adequate.

Overall rating: _____ Comments: _____