

# Colorado Professional Standards for Principals

**Draft January 31, 2011**

*Effective principals in the state of Colorado are responsible for the collective success of their schools, including the learning, growth and achievement of both students and staff. As the school's primary instructional leader, effective principals enable critical discourse and data-driven reflection about curriculum, assessment, instruction, and student progress, and create structures to facilitate improvement. Effective principals are adept at creating systems that maximize the utilization of resources and human capital, foster collaboration, and facilitate constructive change. By creating a common vision and articulating shared values, effective principals lead and manage their schools in a manner that supports the school's ability to promote equity and to continually improve its positive impact on students and families.*

Effective principals in the state of Colorado demonstrate a positive impact on student outcomes, including advancing student academic growth and closing the achievement gap by demonstrating excellence against the following professional standards:

## **Standard I: Principals Demonstrate Strategic Leadership**

- a. **School Vision, Mission and Strategic Goals:** Principals develop the vision, mission, values, beliefs and goals of the school, collaboratively determine the processes used to establish these attributes, and facilitate their integration into the life of the school community.
- b. **School Improvement Plan:** Principals ensure that the unified improvement plan provides the structure for the vision, values, goals, and changes necessary for improved achievement and developmental outcomes for all students, and provides for tracking of progress based on data.
- c. **Leading Change:** Principals collaboratively develop a vision and implementation strategies for improvements and changes which result in improved achievement and developmental outcomes for all students.
- d. **Distributive Leadership:** Principals create and utilize processes to distribute leadership and decision making throughout the school.

## **Standard II: Principals Demonstrate Instructional Leadership**

- a. **Curriculum, Instruction, Learning and Assessment:** Principals enable school-wide conversations about standards for curriculum, instruction, assessment and data on student learning based on research and best practices, and ensure that the ideas developed are integrated into the school's curriculum and instructional approaches.
- b. **Instructional Time:** Principals create processes and schedules which maximize instructional, collaborative and preparation time.
- c. **Implementing High-quality Instruction:** Principals support teachers through feedback and appropriate professional development in order to ensure that rigorous, relevant and appropriate instruction and learning experiences, aligned across P-20, are delivered to and for all students.
- d. **High Expectations for all Students:** Principals hold all staff accountable for setting and achieving rigorous performance goals for all students, and empower staff to achieve these ambitious student outcomes.

## **Standard III: Principals Demonstrate School Culture and Equity Leadership**

- a. **Intentional and Collaborative School Culture:** Principals articulate and model a clear vision of the school's culture, and involve students, families and staff in creating a climate that supports it.
- b. **Commitment to the Whole Child:** Principals value the cognitive, physical, mental, social and emotional health and growth of every student.

- c. **Equity Pedagogy:** Principals demonstrate a commitment to a diverse population of students by creating an inclusive and celebratory school culture, and provide direction in meeting the needs of diverse students, talents, experiences and challenges.
- d. **Efficacy, Empowerment and a Culture of Continuous Improvement:** Principals and their leadership team foster a school culture that encourages continual improvement through innovation, risk-taking, and an honest assessment of outcomes.

#### **Standard IV: Principals Demonstrate Human Resource Leadership**

- a. **Professional Development/Learning Communities:** Principals ensure that the school is a professional learning community that provides opportunities for collaboration, fosters teacher learning and develops teacher leaders in a manner that is consistent with local structures, contracts, policies and strategic plans.
- b. **Recruiting, Hiring, Placing, Mentoring, and Dismissal of Staff:** Principals establish and effectively manage processes and systems that ensure a high-quality, high-performing staff, including an overall count and percentage of effective teachers that reflects the school's improvement priorities.
- c. **Teacher and Staff Evaluation:** Principals evaluate staff performance using the district's educator evaluation system in order to ensure that teachers and staff are evaluated in a fair and equitable manner with a focus on improving performance and, thus, student achievement.

#### **Standard V: Principals Demonstrate Managerial Leadership**

- a. **School Resources and Budget:** Principals establish systems for marshaling all available school resources to facilitate the work that needs to be done to improve student learning, achievement and healthy development for all students.
- b. **Conflict Management and Resolution:** Principals effectively and efficiently manage the complexity of human interactions and relationships, including those among and between parents/guardians, students and staff.
- c. **Systematic Communication:** Principals facilitate the design and utilization of various forms of formal and informal communication with all school stakeholders.
- d. **School-wide Expectations for Students and Staff:** Principals understand the importance of clear expectations, structures, rules and procedures for students and staff.
- e. **Supporting Policies and Agreements:** Principals familiarize themselves with federal and state laws, and districts and board policies, including negotiated agreements, and establish processes to ensure that they are consistently met.

#### **Standard VI: Principals Demonstrate External Development Leadership**

- a. **Family and Community Involvement and Outreach:** Principals design structures and processes which result in family and community engagement, support and ownership for the school.
- b. **Professional Leadership Responsibilities:** Principals strive to improve the profession by collaborating with their colleagues, district leadership and other stakeholders to drive the development and successful implementation of initiatives that better serve students, teachers and schools at all levels of the education system. They ensure that these initiatives are consistent with federal and state laws, district and board policies, and negotiated agreements where applicable.
- c. **Advocacy for the School:** Principals develop systems and relationships to leverage the district and community resources available to them both within and outside of the school in order to maximize the school's ability to serve the best interest of students and families.

#### **Standard VII: Principals Demonstrate Leadership Around Student Growth**

- a. **Student Academic Achievement and Growth:** Principals take responsibility for ensuring that all students are progressing toward postsecondary and workforce readiness by high school graduation. Principals prepare students for success by ensuring mastery of Colorado Academic Standards, including 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
- b. **Student Growth and Development:** Principals take responsibility for facilitating the preparation of students with the skills, dispositions and attitudes necessary for success in work and postsecondary education, including democratic and civic participation.
- c. **Use of Data:** Principals use evidence to evaluate the performance and practices of their schools, in order to continually improve attainment of student growth.