

Tennessee Department of Education
Application for Approval of Alternate Qualitative Evaluation Instrument/Process
Developer Form
Due April 15, 2012

Directions: Provide the information requested below. This application form is a Word document, so where narrative is required, please insert it directly into the document. **Attach a copy of the rubric and the observation recording forms to this application for submission.** A soft copy of the application should be e-mailed to evaluation.models@tn.gov. Additionally, a hard copy of the application with required original signatures should be submitted to:

Aneesh Sohoni, TN Department of Education
710 James Robertson Parkway
Andrew Johnson Tower, 5th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243

Developer Information

Name of Organization or District: KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS

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Department Use Only

Received: Date _____

Reviewed by: _____

Assurances

I/we hereby assure that this alternate model meets all guidelines and criteria set forth by the Tennessee State Board of Education, including, but not limited to, the following:

- (1) The primary purpose of annual teacher and principal evaluations is to identify and support instruction that will lead to high levels of student achievement.
- (2) Evaluations will be used to inform human capital decisions, including, but not limited to individual and group professional development plans, hiring, assignment and promotion, tenure and dismissal, and compensation.
- (3) Annual evaluations will differentiate teacher and principal performance into five effectiveness groups according to the individual educator's evaluation results. The five effectiveness groups are: significantly above expectations, above expectations, at expectations, below expectations, significantly below expectations.
- (4) The qualitative appraisal instrument must contain the following domains: Planning, Environment, Professionalism, Instruction.
- (5) All approved models shall include, but are not limited to a review of prior evaluations, personal conferences to discuss strengths, weaknesses, and remediation, and classroom observation visits.
- (6) All educators, other than apprentice teachers and administrators, will have a minimum of four observations, with at least two observations in each semester, for a minimum of at least 60 minutes each school year. Apprentice teachers will have at least six observations, with three in each semester, for a minimum total of at least 90 minutes each school year.
- (7) Evaluators will provide written feedback within one week of each observation visit to the educator and schedule an in-person debrief with the educator within one week of each observation visit.

Authorized Signature for Model Developer

Date

I/we hereby assure that the model developer will cooperate with TN CRED in the ongoing study of the effectiveness of the model through the 2013-14 academic year.

Authorized Signature for Model Developer

Date

In the space below, describe the research base that informed the development of this model.

Proposed Alternate Model: McREL Balanced Leadership Principal Evaluation System

Research on School-Level Leadership

Researchers at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) and other organizations have analyzed key traits of educational leaders and those attributes which contribute to the success of schools. Portin et al. (2003) analyzed in-depth interviews with educators across 21 schools and identified seven types of leadership needs: instructional, cultural, managerial, human resources, strategic, external development, and micropolitical. Cotton’s (2003) review of 81 research reports on principals and student achievement showed that principals must take on a variety of roles (25 leadership practices) ranging from emotional and interpersonal support to community outreach and fundraising, in addition to academic leadership, in order to effectively empower the school to improve student achievement. It is clear that the role of the school principal has become one of instructional improvement, relationship building, delegation of key responsibilities, and leadership by example.

McREL’s Research: Balanced Leadership® and School Leadership that Works®

In 2003, McREL researchers examined more than 5,000 studies that purported to examine the effects of principal leadership on student achievement. Of these, 69 met rigorous criteria for inclusion in a meta-analytic research study. Three important findings emerged, which first were published in *Balanced Leadership: What 30 Years of Research Tells Us about the Effects of Leadership on Student Achievement* (2003).

The first finding is that leadership matters. The general effect of principal leadership on student achievement has a correlation of 0.25. This means that in schools where teachers on average rated their principal at the 84th percentile of leadership (one standard deviation above the mean), student achievement was 10 percentile points higher on norm-referenced tests. Expressed differently, the studies in the meta-analysis suggest that improving principals’ leadership abilities by one standard deviation from the 50th to the 84th percentile can lead to an increase in the average student achievement from the 50th to 60th percentile—a substantial improvement.

Second, the meta-analysis identified 21 Leadership Responsibilities associated with 66 leadership practices, which all have statistically significant relationships with student achievement (see Table 1). These responsibilities and practices are strongly aligned with the seven standards of executive leadership identified by Portin and others.

Table 1. McREL’s 21 Leadership Responsibilities

Responsibility	The extent to which the principal...	Associated Practices
Affirmation	Recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures	Systematically and fairly recognizes the accomplishments of teachers and staff Systematically and fairly recognizes and celebrates the accomplishments of students Systematically and fairly recognizes the failures of and celebrates the accomplishments of the whole school
Change Agent	Is willing to and actively challenges the status quo	Consciously challenges the status quo Is willing to lead change initiatives with uncertain outcomes Systematically considers new and better ways of doing things Consistently attempts to operate at the edge versus the center of the school’s competence

Responsibility	The extent to which the principal...	Associated Practices
Communication	Establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among students	<p>Is easily accessible to teachers and staff</p> <p>Develops effective means for teachers and staff to communicate with one another</p> <p>Maintains open and effective lines of communication with teachers and staff</p>
Contingent Rewards	Recognizes and rewards individual accomplishments	<p>Uses performance versus seniority as the primary criteria for rewards and recognition</p> <p>Uses hard work and results as the basis for rewards and recognition. Recognizes individuals who excel</p>
Culture	Fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation	<p>Promotes a sense of well being among teachers and staff</p> <p>Promotes cohesion among teachers and staff</p> <p>Develops an understanding of purpose among teachers and staff</p> <p>Develops a shared vision of what the school could be like</p> <p>Promotes cooperation among teachers and staff</p>
Discipline	Protects teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their teaching time or focus	<p>Protects instructional time from interruptions</p> <p>Protects/shelters teachers and staff from internal and external distractions</p>
Flexibility	Adapts his or her leadership behavior to the needs of the current situation and is comfortable with dissent	<p>Is comfortable with making major changes in how things are done</p> <p>Encourages people to express diverse opinions contrary to those held by individuals in positions of authority</p> <p>Adapts leadership style to the needs of specific situations</p> <p>Is directive or non-directive as the situation warrants</p>
Focus	Establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention	<p>Establishes high, concrete goals and expectations that all students meet them</p> <p>Establishes high, concrete goals for curriculum, instruction and assessment practices within the school</p> <p>Establishes high, concrete goals for the general functioning of the school</p> <p>Continually keeps attention on established goals</p>
Ideals/Beliefs	Communicates and operates from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling	<p>Possesses well-defined beliefs about schools, teaching, and learning</p> <p>Shares beliefs about school, teaching, and learning with the teachers and staff</p> <p>Demonstrates behaviors that are consistent with beliefs</p>

Responsibility	The extent to which the principal...	Associated Practices
Input	Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions	<p>Provides opportunities for teacher and staff input on all important decisions</p> <p>Provides opportunities for teachers and staff to be involved in developing school policies</p> <p>Uses leadership teams in decision-making</p>
Intellectual stimulation	Ensures that the faculty and staff are aware of the most current theories and practices and makes the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school culture	<p>Keeps informed about current research and theory on effective schooling</p> <p>Continually exposes teachers and staff to cutting-edge research and theory on effective schooling</p> <p>Fosters systematic discussion regarding current research and theory on effective schooling</p>
Involvement in curriculum, instruction and assessment	Is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices	Is directly involved in helping teachers design curricular activities and address assessment and instructional issues
Knowledge of curriculum, instruction and assessment	Is knowledgeable about current curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices	<p>Possesses extensive knowledge about effective curricular, instructional, and assessment practices</p> <p>Provides conceptual guidance regarding effective classroom practices</p>
Monitor / Evaluate	Monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning	<p>Continually monitors the effectiveness of the school's curricular practices</p> <p>Continually monitors the effectiveness of the school's instructional practices</p> <p>Continually monitors the effectiveness of the school's assessment practices</p> <p>Remains aware of the impact of the school's practices on student achievement</p>
Optimize	Inspires and leads new and challenging innovations	<p>Inspires teachers and staff to accomplish things that might be beyond their grasp</p> <p>Is the driving force behind major initiatives</p> <p>Portrays a positive attitude about the ability of teachers and staff to accomplish substantial things</p>
Order	Establishes a set of standard operating procedures and routines	<p>Provides and reinforces clear structures, rules, and procedures for teachers and staff</p> <p>Provides and reinforces clear structures, rules, and procedures for students</p> <p>Establishes routines for the effective running of the school that teachers and staff understand and follow</p>

Responsibility	The extent to which the principal...	Associated Practices
Outreach	Is an advocate and spokesperson for the school to all stakeholders	Ensures the school complies with all district and state mandates Is an advocate of the school with the community at large Is an advocate of the school with parents Is an advocate of the school with central office
Relationships	Demonstrates awareness of the personal aspects of teachers and staff	Is informed about significant personal issues within the lives of teachers and staff Maintains personal relationships with teachers and staff Is aware of the personal needs of teachers and staff Acknowledges significant events in the lives of teachers and staff
Resources	Provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the successful execution of their jobs	Ensures that teachers and staff have the necessary materials and equipment Ensures that teachers and staff have the necessary professional development opportunities that directly enhance their teaching
Situational awareness	Is aware of the details and the undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems	Is aware of informal groups and relationships among teachers and staff Is aware of the issues in the school that have not surfaced but could create discord Accurately predicts what could go wrong from day to day
Visibility	Has quality contacts and interactions with teachers and students	Makes systematic and frequent visits to the classroom Is highly visible to students, teachers, and parents Has frequent contact with students

Third, McREL researchers discovered that principal leadership has a differential impact on student achievement. In some of the studies included in the meta-analysis, the principals were perceived by teachers as strong leaders, yet student achievement was low. This finding shows that not all leaders perceived as strong have a positive impact on student achievement. Two explanations underlie McREL's theory of the differential impact of principal leadership on student achievement: (1) strong principals may not be focused on the right things, namely the use of research-based classroom or school practices known to have a positive effect on student achievement, and (2) strong principals may miscalculate the implications of a change initiative for the stakeholders in the school, causing inconsistent implementation of the initiative.