

HOW DO SUPERINTENDENTS USE THE ISLLC STANDARDS TO EVALUATE
PRINCIPALS? OR DO THEY?

By

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Abstract

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In 1996 the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, (ISLLC) a committee formed by the Council of Chief School Officers (CSSO) released a set of standards to guide the training of candidates for public school administrative positions. By 2008, when ISSLC released an updated set of standards, the standards had been adopted by at least 43 states, including Washington state, as the basis for administrative training programs. By 2011 Assessments and evaluation tools, based on the ISLLC standards, were also in place and had either been adopted or were being piloted.

This study traces the development of the standards and provides a review of the literature surrounding research that has been conducted on the effectiveness of the ISLLC standards as a training tool. This study explores how, or if, superintendents in Washington state use the ISLLC standards in the evaluation process. The study reports how principals feel about the evaluation process and its effectiveness in guiding professional growth and development.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-------|
| ACKNOWLEDGMENT | iii |
| ABSTRACT | iv-vi |
| LIST OF TABLES | vii |
| CHAPTER | |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| Standards Evolve for Training..... | 4 |
| The Development of ISLLC..... | 8 |
| Problem Statement..... | 10 |
| 2. LITERATURE REVIEW | 13 |
| The Transformation of the Principalship..... | 14 |
| Impact of ISLLC on Thinking About Evaluation..... | 14 |
| The Evolution of ISLLC..... | 16 |
| Application of the Standard in the Field..... | 21 |
| The Standards are Revised..... | 24 |
| ISLLC Alternatives and Detractors..... | 25 |
| History of Principal Evaluation..... | 27 |
| Standardizing an Evaluation Document..... | 31 |
| ISLLC Standards as a Policy Implementation Challenge..... | 33 |
| 3. RESEARCH METHODS | 36 |
| Ethics..... | 42 |
| 4. FINDINGS | 43 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| General Findings..... | 43 |
| Superintendent Profiles and Findings..... | 45 |
| Principal Profiles and Findings..... | 54 |
| 5. CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS | 63 |
| If Not, Why not ISLLC Standards?..... | 65 |
| Attitudes of Principals..... | 69 |
| Conclusion and Recommendation..... | 71 |
| Limitations..... | 81 |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 83 |
| APPENDIX | |
| A. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – SUPERINTENDENTS | 88 |
| B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – PRINCIPALS | 89 |
| C. ISLLC STANDARDS AND FUNCTIONS | 90 |
| D. MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING ADMINISTRATORS – 2010 | 92 |
| E. WSSDA MODEL POLICY 5240 – EVALUATION OF STAFF | 97 |
| F. MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF CERTIFICATED EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING ADMINISTRATORS – 2011 | 99 |
| G. WASHINGTON STATE PRINCIPAL AND TEACHER EVALUATION PILOT AND THE SIG MERIT PROGRAM | 104 |
| H. SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION PRESS RELEASE AND SURVEY DATA | 109 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. ERIC Keyword Search Table | 15 |
| 2. Superintendent Experience | 46 |
| 3. Superintendent Familiarity with ISLLC | 47 |
| 4. Principal Experience | 54 |

Dedication

This work is dedicated to Angel, and would not have been possible without her. It is also dedicated to my brothers and sisters. Finally, it is dedicated to Mary Lou and “Dr.” Moe who never expected anything less.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

As a superintendent, I struggle with many issues, but one of my most significant challenges is to provide principals with supervision and evaluation that helps them improve their performance as school leaders. Since becoming a superintendent, I have often shared my belief that the principal is the most important person in the educational organization. While there is widespread acceptance that the classroom teacher does have the greatest impact on student learning, it is the principal who provides the leadership and monitors performance so that teacher effects will be consistently positive. Recent studies seeking to quantify the impact of the principal on student learning have placed the impact of the principal second only to that of the classroom teacher (Leithwood, Seashore, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Given this evidence, superintendents must recognize that having an effective principal in every school is essential to improving student learning. The evaluation process follows from that logic: How to objectively, honestly, fairly and transparently evaluate principal performance to determine what is truly effective, and to design strategies to address performance problems is a major priority. This dissertation approaches the issue of principal evaluation by examining the alignment between principal evaluation in Washington and the revised Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards implemented in 2008. The ISLLC Standards are listed below. Appendix C contains a listing of the ISLLC standards and the associated functions.

Standard 1: An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.

Standard 2: An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Standard 3: An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Standard 4: An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

Standard 5: An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Standard 6: An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

(Council of Chief School Officers, 2008).

In the 21st century, evaluation has become a topic of broader scrutiny. In 2009, the Obama administration, under the guidance of Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, announced plans to make available to states, on a competitive basis, funds for schools. Eligibility for this funding was to be determined through a competitive application process. In the applications that states submitted they were required to assure the federal Department of Education that they would put in place legitimate and transparent evaluation tools for teachers and principals. This new evaluation process must use student achievement as a primary factor in determining the effectiveness of individual teachers and principals. If states were to be forced to change their evaluation processes we can expect they would need to develop and use a standardized and more

objective instrument that has been tested for reliability and validity. For example, an instrument that purports to provide just that evaluation standard for principals was piloted in several states. One instrument that purports to have the degree of validity and reliability needed to effectively evaluate principals is the VAL-ED principal evaluation. The VAL-ED process was developed based on the widely adopted Interstate School Leaders Licensure (ISLLC) standards (Porter, Murphy, Goldring, Elliott, Polikoff, & May, 2008). In the spring of 2008, the VAL-ED was piloted in 235 school districts. These districts represented all regions of the country. The schools studied included elementary, middle and high school levels. Schools located in urban, rural and suburban settings are included in the sample. The conclusion reached by this pilot was that while the validation of the VAL-ED needs to be an ongoing process, the instrument is a reliable way to measure the learning centered-behavior of the school principal (Porter, Murphy, Goldring, Elliott, Polikoff, & May, 2010).

This study sought to determine to what degree superintendents responsible for evaluating principal performance in the state of Washington have been using the standards developed by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) to evaluate principal performance. This study also sought to understand how the principals who are being evaluated feel about the evaluation process. The results of this study might also help to guide principal professional development and training.

To accomplish this, I interviewed superintendents who have responsibility for evaluating principals. While the evaluation process may be conducted by persons other than the superintendent, especially in larger districts, the design of this study will be to only survey districts where the superintendent is directly involved in the evaluation process. I will also interview principals in these districts. Specifically, I will address the following primary question:

To what extent are superintendents in medium-sized school districts in Washington using the ISLLC standards to evaluate principals?

Subsidiary to the main question will be the following questions:

- 1) For those superintendents who claim to use the standards, to what extent and how do they use them and how useful do the superintendents and principals believe them to be? For those districts, have there been implementation challenges?
- 2) For those superintendents who don't use ISLLC standards explicitly, what do they do and how useful do they believe their principal evaluation to be and to what extent do their evaluation criteria overlap with ISLLC? Have these districts ignored, rejected, or simply not prioritized implementing ISLLC in principal evaluation?

How to objectively, fairly and transparently evaluate principal performance, though now under increased scrutiny, is not a new issue. Further, I believe this is an issue with which many of my colleagues have struggled. There is some evidence that the issue of how to conduct meaningful evaluation may be a national educational challenge and not confined to the state of Washington. A study conducted of educational leaders determined that one of the biggest problems with evaluation was a lack a formal job assessment (Servais, 2006). There does not seem to be a set of common expectations for how to evaluate principals. The way we evaluate principals is especially important because I believe, and will make a case for later in this paper, that significant learning is related directly to the effectiveness of the school principal.

Standards Evolve for Training

Berry and Beach (2009) argue that the profession of educational administration has evolved from non-existence, to management, to one that presently requires three basic areas of

expertise. These areas include practical knowledge, professional knowledge and academic knowledge.

Berry and Beach (2009) suggested that the practical knowledge necessary to do the work of an educational administrator is defined as the body of knowledge that is brought to the job from the experience of leadership. This knowledge may be acquired in any field. Professional knowledge can be thought of as the tricks of the trade unique to the field of education. Academic knowledge is that body of knowledge that encompasses the theory behind what we do to effectively guide student achievement. Certainly, my experience would support the idea that the successful school superintendent must bring skills from each of these areas. However, I do not believe most superintendents would consciously place the work they are doing into three neat categories.

The superintendent of today, in the early 21st century, is an instructional leader. It is no longer sufficient to be successful if your focus is limited to buildings, buses and budgets. Elmore (2000) argued that the standards based reform movements have changed the way that leaders must act and have fundamentally re-defined what effective leadership is in the modern educational organization. In spite of the changes they have wrought, Elmore (2000) was not convinced that the development of standards would in and of itself be sufficient to overcome an institutional history of “loose coupling” that sought to place the responsibility for what was learned at the classroom level. He held that even as standards seek to shift the responsibility for what is being taught to a higher level, the organizational unit upon which the standards operate should be at the school that contains the classroom (Elmore, 2000).

Whether sufficient to force change or not, the standards-based movement inculcated itself, at a minimum, into the training programs for educational leaders. In Washington state

since at least 1999, when I began my training for the superintendency, the ISLLC standards were and have remained the basis for the course of study to be recommended for both beginning and advanced administrative credentials.

Since at least the late 1970s researchers have worked to understand the relationship between the leadership qualities that principals demonstrate and student achievement (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). The importance of principals and their impact on student achievement has long been suspected. A recent research effort demonstrates that the connection between principal behavior and student achievement is real, responsible for about one-quarter of the effects on student learning (Leithwood, et al., 2004).

The re-evaluation of the importance of the principal on student achievement can be directly tied to the transformation that has occurred in the public school system since about 1990. Prior to that time changes in schools were episodic and gradual. Change started and stopped, but was not necessarily focused on a narrow set of issues. Since the 1990s education has become focused on student standards, data driven instruction and intervention and assessments based on measuring demonstrated student performance (Shipman & Murphy, 2001). New research supporting the concept that the principal is a major factor in student learning would seem to logically indicate the need for a comprehensive, standards based training and evaluation system for principals. However, the movement towards objective, standards-based and transparent system of evaluation for principals began before there was empirical evidence that effective principals were so integrally tied to increased student performance. It is not unreasonable to surmise that work began on a set of standards to train and evaluate principals because both academics in training programs and practitioners recognized the need for a set of standards that

were at least loosely based on the habits of administrators who had proven track records of effectiveness.

The work to implement a comprehensive assessment, based on ISLLC standards, was started and, partially implemented, before there was an empirical set of research to support the validity of that action. This lack of empirical evidence to support the development and implementation of an “unproven” assessment added to the complexity and political intrigue that would be expected anytime an action of this magnitude is undertaken. A major outgrowth of this work has been to develop a comprehensive training process for school administrators (Murphy, 2003). While evaluation of personnel has always been present in the public school system, the new emphasis on standards forced educational systems, both those systems that train educational administrators and those that employ them, to re-think how the competency of education administrators should be evaluated. Murphy (2003) refers to this as the struggle for the field of educational administration to grow out of its adolescence.

It should be noted that the detractors of the effort to design a standards based training and evaluation process for school leaders saw this work as ill-advised at best, and detrimental to the public education system at worst (English 2006). They argued that the lack of empirical evidence to support such a system makes it a tool that will simply reinforce the status quo.

If however, Murphy’s analogy is correct and educational leaders have been facing the transition from adolescence to some form of young adulthood, the argument for a set of best practice to guide a competent development and transition would dictate the formation of a set of norms. Indeed, this would be a natural maturation in light of our current standards based thinking and it is exactly what happened and continues to evolve.

The Development of ISLLC

In 1994, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) took on the challenge of defining the standards for effective school administration. ISLLC is a consortium of 32 education agencies and thirteen administrative associations. These organizations have been generally recognized as leaders in the field of education. The explicit purpose of forming ISLLC was to increase the professional standards for those who would enter into the field of education (Bryant, Hessel, & Isernhagen, 2002). In 1996, standards developed by ISLLC were published by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). The CCSSO published the ISLLC standards with the belief that the nation-wide adoption and implementation of these standards would offer coherence in the complex work of school administrators, raise the expectations for educational administrators and provide a mechanism to strengthen professional development (Bryant et al., 2002; Shipman & Murphy, 2001).

In 2008, the ISLLC standards were modified. They became more strategic in focus and less prescriptive. The original 1996 standards listed six standard areas and 183 sub areas consisting of knowledge, skills and dispositions. The 2008 standards still consisted of six standard areas, but the knowledge, skills and dispositions were distilled into 31 broad functions that would be assessed through observation and documentation of performance. The stated purpose of this change was to allow the standards to be used more as a guide to help direct performance based competency than as a checklist used to determine if administrators are engaged in a set of measurable activities (Sanders & Simpson, 2005).

It must be emphasized that the original purpose of the ISLLC standards was to train school administrators. The standards sought to capture those skills and habits that effective school administrators used and demonstrated as they led schools or school districts. The degree

to which the ISLLC standards were originally and were later integrated into the licensure and evaluation of school principals has been inconsistent from state to state. Some states embraced the use of the original ISLLC to develop licensure exams for school administrators (Bryant et al., 2002). As of this writing Educational Testing Service (ETS), the same testing service that administers such tests as the Graduate Records Examination (GRE) and Advanced Placement Tests (AP) for high school students to earn college credit, lists seventeen states, as well as the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands, that require administrators to take, and earn a minimum score, on an exam based wholly on the ISLLC standards. This exam was the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) (Educational Testing Service, 2010).

The trend to use the ISLLC standards as a basis for determining principal competency expanded over time. The Wallace Foundation worked with Vanderbilt University to develop an evaluation tool directly linked to ISLLC 2008. This tool, the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED) became available in 2008 (Olson, 2008). The Wallace Foundation supported the testing of this instrument in 100 elementary schools, 100 middle schools and 100 high schools. The testing occurred in 27 states and 53 school districts (Moran, 2008).

Discovery Education, a division of Discovery Communications LLC., has partnered with Vanderbilt to administer the Val-Ed (Discovery Education Assessment, 2010). The validity of the Val-Ed as a tool to identify the characteristics of strong principals is supported by a research project that was conducted in Louisiana in 2008. This study, examining high poverty, high performing schools, used the Val-Ed as one instrument to assess the degree to which successful principals exhibited the leadership characteristics contained in the Val-Ed. The researcher concluded that the Val-Ed could be used as one indicator of principal success (Southall, 2008).

It would be easy to assume, given the attention and focus that the ISLLC standards have received, that there would be widespread application of the standards by practitioners. This concept does not seem to be supported. Even in areas where they are essential to licensure there appears to be a disconnect between what we say we want administrators to know and what we expect them to do in actual practice.

In 2008, Babo completed a study in New Jersey. The purpose of his study was to determine how principal evaluators there were using the ISLLC standards to develop evaluation tools and evaluate principals. It is noteworthy that New Jersey was one of the states that require, as part of the principal certification process, successful completion of the SLLA. Because of low survey returns Babo cautions against too sweeping a generalization being drawn from his work, however, he concluded that most evaluators are actually evaluating principals based on their own preferences and experiences rather than the approved ISLLC standards (Babo, 2009).

Washington state, which adopted the original ISLLC standards as the core for administrative training programs in 2002, did not require licensure exams or an evaluation process based on the original ISLLC or ISLLC 2008 for principal candidates or principals. Evaluation of performance was left to the individual district. The Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA) developed a model evaluation policy, but was not specific about the instrument that should be used to evaluate principal performance (WSSDA Policy 5240, 2004). Ultimately, the evaluation of principals is guided by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). The RCW relating to principal evaluation is RCW 28A.405.1000.

Problem Statement

Researchers have tried to determine how widespread the use of the ISLLC standards to evaluate principals was in Washington state. Derrington and Sharratt (2008) conducted a study

that reviewed to what extent the ISLLC standards are used by principal evaluators. Their work revealed that the majority of principal evaluators do not use the ISLLC standards for principal evaluation.

There also seems to be an unintentional disconnect between the ISLLC standards and efforts to improve principal effectiveness at the state level with regard to policy. In spite of the statewide adoption of the ISLLC standards, as the basis for all approved administrative training programs in Washington, there have been programs developed to help school leaders increase their impact on student achievement that seem to operate independent of the ISLLC standards. It can only be surmised that even though ISLLC has enjoyed a widespread and at least nominal acceptance as an integral part of the principal training program, that visibility has not been maintained in the field of practice.

A conversation in August 2007 with Mack Armstrong of the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) pointed out just how strong an emphasis is being placed on professional development for educational professionals and particularly for educational leaders. During the 2007 legislative session lawmakers in Washington state authorized the development of the Washington Leadership Academy. Dr. Armstrong in his role as the Assistant Executive Director of WASA led the effort to develop the academy.

The stated purpose of the academy was to meet many of the professional development needs of administrators at all levels of the profession. The goal was to create an organization based on a strong foundation of research that demonstrates the skills and knowledge that administrators must possess to significantly increase student learning and academic performance.

A follow up conversation with Dr. Armstrong in May of 2008 determined that the academy had indeed made great strides in developing a curriculum and hiring coaches and

teachers, as well as a director, to help further its mission of helping principals to gain the skills and knowledge required to improve student achievement. To Dr. Armstrong's knowledge, the ISLLC standards were not referenced when developing this curriculum. Although there may be a strong correlation to the curriculum developed by the Leadership Academy and the ISLLC standards, the standards were not deliberately used as a basis for curriculum development.

The ISLLC standards were conceived of as a format to help to train administrators. However, they developed with the idea that the first step in any professional development program is to evaluate the competencies and deficits of the individual. Comprehensive professional development, based on a set of recognized standards, could then be individualized, using the aforementioned evaluation of competencies and deficits, to address areas where specific professional growth activities will improve performance. Logic would seem to dictate that since the educational administrative training programs in 43 states, including Washington state, adopted the ISLLC standards as the benchmarks to determine if candidates for professional certification are competent, that those standards would form the basis for evaluation and the ensuing plans for professional development (Kaplan, Owings & Nunnery, 2005).

This evolution from a set of standards to guide training to a set of standards to evaluate competencies to a way to guide professional development is evident in the modifications that were made to the standards in 2008. The new standards, ISLLC 2008, though more global and less prescriptive, provided the same framework for evaluation while also allowing for greater flexibility in how individuals both demonstrate application of the standards and use the standards to guide professional growth.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

As stated, the purpose of this research project is to understand how, or if, the ISLLC standards are being used in some school districts in the state of Washington to evaluate principal performance. This is not as straightforward as it seems. The issue of principal evaluation is complex in and of itself. The literature on the effectiveness and validity of the standards, from conception through application, is thin and divergent in both opinion and empirical findings.

This literature review explains how the ISLLC standards came to be. The historical record of their development does not seem to be in dispute. This review further seeks to trace how the standards progressed in their development. An attempt has been made to gather the relevant literature to understand how the standards moved from a concept, to becoming the foundation of a curriculum for training administrators, to a basis for determining licensure. A review of the current status of the standards, including recent modifications to the standards is included. Finally, this literature review relates the empirical studies that have been conducted to determine how, if and of what value, using the ISLLC standards to evaluate administrative performance seems to provide.

Before moving into a review of the literature surrounding the perceived need to develop a set of standards and the process that eventually produced the ISLLC standards, I frame the context in which principal evaluation took place prior to the development of ISLLC and may have continued to take place after ISLLC became a recognized standard. It must also be understood that the job of today's principal is very different from the work that was done when the job first emerged. This background provides insight not only into the impetus for developing ISLLC but helps to understand the way principal evaluation was conducted prior to 1996.

The Transformation of the Principalship

The transformation of the principalship into its modern form was not planned. The job evolved as school systems grew more complex and became less likely to be managed by one person (Iwanicki, 1999). As the one room schoolhouse gave way to the modern day school system, the principalship happened in an almost accidental fashion. Managers, further removed from the teaching, and more knowledgeable in skills more commonly linked to business, were needed to keep the organization running (Berry & Beach, 2009). Even then, the duties associated with the role of the principal did not remain stagnant. Three distinct eras can be identified that took the principalship from a skill set that required management skills to transformational leadership skills (Hallinger, 1992).

Recent work has demonstrated a clear connection between the effectiveness of the principal and student achievement (Grissom & Loeb, 2009; Leithwood et al., 2004; Witziers, Boskers & Kruger, 2003). Other work has shown the connection between superintendent performance and student achievement (Waters & Marzano, 2006). If the work of school leaders is second only to that of the classroom teacher on student performance it seems only logical that a systematic, objective and research based way to evaluate performance be implemented.

Impact of ISLLC on Thinking About Evaluation

Virtually, any review of the literature since 1996, which deals with principal evaluation, references the ISLLC standards. The researcher, or practitioner, seeking a set of consistent standards for principal evaluation would not be able to avoid being exposed to the ISLLC standards. Thus, we see an evolution, at least from the scholarly perspective, to a standards based evaluation process that is grounded in research.

The tracing of ISLLC standards from conception to application is not linear. The standards were being applied even as they were being evaluated. They were being tested for validity as they were gaining popularity. They were being modified as they were being used as a basis of licensure.

Before presenting the review of the literature as it directly relates to ISLLC the incompleteness of the literature review must be understood. The ISLLC standards were published in 1996. They were relatively new as an educational concept and the literature associated with them, especially with regard to their development history, early application and evolution to a licensure tool, is told by a few scholars.

The empirical research that has been conducted with regard to the standards grew slowly. The focus on more rigorous evaluation, as well as the development of an evaluation document that is based on the standards led to an increased interest in the standards. However, ISLLC 2008 was hardly off the press. Most of the empirical studies that look at ISLLC were conducted while development and modification were still in progress.

A table summarizing the results of an ERIC search conducted on May 12, 2010 follows below:

Table 1. ERIC keyword search table

| Search Term | Principal Evaluation | ISLLC | Principal Evaluation AND ISLLC | ISLLC 2008 | ISLLC 2008 AND Principal Evaluation | VAL-ED |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Number of citations returned | 3908 | 65 | 10 | 9 | 3 | 4 |

The search criteria for all keywords were set from Pre-1966 to 2010

As the table demonstrates, there is simply not a wealth of literature about the ISLLC standards.

The literature review that will be presented does exceed the publications referenced by the ERIC

search conducted above. Additional sources have been obtained by acquiring source documents cited in the references returned in the ERIC search and by conducting searches of databases of individual authors, or agencies that have been discovered to be involved with the ISLLC standards.

This is not to suggest that the literature review presented here is exhaustive. What I am attempting to demonstrate is that the literature review is sufficient to allow me to understand and present the context of ISLLC in its formation and application, and to explain how it applies to this study's research question.

The Evolution of ISLLC

This section of the literature review traces the development of the ISLLC standards. This is not a controversial issue. The way the standards were developed is well documented. In 1994, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), under the leadership of its corporate secretary Scott Thompson, created the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Committee. The purpose of this committee was to develop a set of professional standards for public school administrators (Murphy, 2003). The ISLLC committee was housed by the Council of Chief School Officers (CCSO). In 1996, a set of standards to guide the practice of administrators were published (Bryant et al., 2002). By 1998 an exam to test the competency of administrators in the standard areas had been developed and by 1999 this examination was available to all states (Latham & Pearlman, 1999).

According to Joseph Murphy, chair of the consortium, the need to develop a set of standards to guide the work of school administrators evolved as a growing sense of unrest began to take hold in the thinking about how schools should be managed. After World War II, an emphasis on science and scientific thought replaced the ideas that schools were best managed

under a quasi-business model that relied on a combination of corporate acumen and behavioral science foundations to create a safe and stable institution (Murphy, 2003).

To ground their work, an extensive review of the literature was undertaken by those responsible for developing new standards to codify administrative competencies. The outcome of this work was to reject the thinking that had guided the field of educational administration during the past century (Murphy, 2003). The researchers were determined to develop a set of standards to identify those traits that could be used as indicators of principal effectiveness. They believed effective models that relied on standards of performance were already in place and that by developing a set of standards to guide educational administrators they could re-culture the profession, cause reform and create links to actual practice (Bryant et al., 2002).

The body of literature to work from may have been limited. An ERIC database inquiry from “earliest” to 1994 using the keywords “principal effectiveness” returned 56 citations. Murphy (2003), in his reflections on the status of the standards ten years from development, recognized that the early research on school effectiveness was flawed. He did however argue that a second generation of research was available and was sufficient to help reshape and identify the functions of school administrators. While the research literature was undoubtedly a major part of the framework for the creation of the ISLLC standards, the consortium also relied heavily on information gathered on principals and superintendents who were deemed to be accomplished leaders. An accomplished leader was identified as someone who led a high performing organization and was effective as defined by having a quality program that stressed equity, while adding value to the school experience (Murphy, 2003).

Ultimately, the consortium used traits identified as present in effective administrators to backward map the standards. ISLLC developers identified high performing schools and then

identified the traits that the leaders of those schools engaged in on a regular basis (Murphy, 2003).

Completion and publication of the ISLLC standards served as the catalyst for researchers to begin to examine the validity and effectiveness of the standards. Much of the initial literature surrounding the standards sought to explain the reasoning behind the establishment of the standards, the degree to which the standards were being adopted by states and the way the standards were being used by states to certify or license principal candidates (Murphy, 2003).

Once completed, the rate and degree to which the ISLLC standards were actually implemented by states is unclear. Various sources indicate various degrees of adoption by the individual states of the standards as a basis for the training and/or licensure of educational administrators (Kaplan et al., 2005; Hale & Moorman, 2003; Glatthorn & Jailall, 2008). A survey of the CCSO conducted in 2006 indicated that 43 states used the standards in their original or in an adapted form to train and/or license school administrators (Glatthorn & Jailall, 2008). Even if this number is slightly inflated, the ISLLC standards have by 2010 become ubiquitous.

While the rate at which the states adopted the standards is unclear, by 2002 there was at least one state using an ISLLC based assessment to measure administrative candidate knowledge of the standards. One of the first studies conducted to review the standards and how competency in them could be assessed was completed in 2002. This study compared how administrators trained in standards would perform on actual examples of questions that formed the basis of the newly developed School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA). The SLLA is an exam based on ISLLC standard areas and designed to measure aspiring administrator's knowledge (Bryant et al., 2002). This study was significant because it began to examine the standards in conjunction with

assessments that had been developed to assess mastery of the standards. Although the data set to determine if the SLLA would really predict performance of school administrators, trained in ISLLC standards was not yet fully developed, other research into the effectiveness of the SLLA was being conducted. McCown, Arnold, Miles, and Hargadine (2000) had conducted a study of 146 principals who had taken the SLLA. They found no correlation between the ratings these principals received from their evaluators and their scores on the SLLA. Bryant (2002) and his colleagues concluded with the observation that while the work they cited showed no evident correlation between training programs that required SLLA competency and actual job evaluation, the movement for supporting a set of standards may become inevitable. These researchers offered a “heads-up” to their colleagues that it might become incumbent on them to inform students in educational administration programs that they will be expected to engage in ISLLC like activities. Based on the widespread use of ISLLC for training principals, this insight was extremely perceptive.

Other researchers found a correlation between the standards and the job performance of principals. A study that looked at principals who had failed while serving as administrators in Indiana school districts had been conducted by Coutts in 1997. He found that those principals who had failed were assessed by their evaluators as not conforming to ISLLC standards.

A study led by Lindle and presented at the annual convention of the University Council for Educational Administration compared the content validity of the ISLLC standards to the standards that had already been adopted and put in place in Kentucky (Lindle, Stalion, & Young, 2004). Lindle’s team found that there was a 94% correlation between the ISLLC standards and observed principal activities. This compared to an 89% correlation for the standards already adopted by the state of Kentucky.

At about the same time, another study was being conducted to examine ISLLC standards, principal quality and student achievement (Kaplan et al., 2005). These researchers reviewed the performance of principals in 160 schools in the state of Virginia. They created a rubric based on ISLLC competencies to evaluate the performance of each principal. Principal performance was rated by the superintendent of the school district. He used a quantitative process to analyze if a correlation existed between principal performance, as defined by the ISLLC standards, and increased student achievement. They found a statistical and practical link between student achievement, ISLLC standards and principal workplace behaviors (Kaplan et al., 2005).

The ISLLC standards were designed to influence policy development with regard to principal training programs. One of the first descriptions of how ISLLC standards had been used to design and implement a program for educational leaders was described by Simms, Masden and Fiene (2001). These educators presented a paper to the South Region Council on Educational Administration, held in Jacksonville Florida in November of 2001. This work is important because it illustrates how the program at Austin Peay University would seek to embed the ISLLC standards completely into the educational leadership program. It appears to have been successful as a review of the Austin Peay University website (http://www.apsu.edu/cogs/current/degrees/curriculum_instruction.htm#lead) indicates that a degree in educational administration is an ISLLC standards performance based program.

A study conducted at Moorhead University in Minnesota to try and determine how effectively students felt they had been prepared for employment as an educational leader used the ISLLC standards as a framework for developing a rubric to identify real tasks that administrators engage in their regular work. The researcher found that ISLLC does provide a good way of describing the daily work of school administrators. However, the findings also suggest that

getting students practical experience in the work ISLLC defines is very difficult. Internships did not provide the bridge between the classroom theory and application in the field (Barnett, 2004).

The data set that shows the correlation between ISLLC based training programs and the SLLA has continued to develop and has drawn the attention of some researchers. The research that examines the connection between the success that candidates have had in demonstrating mastery on various licensing exams that are required and developed using ISLLC standards and their success as administrators is still somewhat contradictory. An assessment of how well the SLLA reflected ISLLC standard content was conducted in 2003. This work demonstrated that the SLLA was a good assessment for students who had recently engaged in or were engaged in an ISLLC based training program (Bryant, Isernhagen, LeTendre, & Neu, 2003). The researchers further concluded that if a person were trained in ISLLC they would score higher on the SLLA than people who are not ISLLC trained. However, this research also raises the possibility that the SLLA, if used as a screening tool for licensure, could limit the pool of administrative candidates, including highly successful candidates who are practicing but are not schooled in the ISLLC standards (Bryant et al., 2003).

As the body of evidence supporting the utility of ISLLC began to grow advocates began to make cogent arguments for the national adoption of ISLLC standards and an assessment based on those standards to ensure that aspiring school leaders are keeping the most important elements of their work at the forefront of their practice (Holloway, 2002).

Application of the Standard in the Field

Between 1996 to 2008, 43 states adopted the ISLLC standards completely or as a template for the development of educational leaders (Glatthorn & Jailall, 2008). The widespread adoption of the standards by colleges and states opened a new set of research questions. The

question of how the standards were actually being used by practitioners to evaluate principals has been explored to a limited degree.

Because the ISLLC standards are the most widely recognized standards used to train principals, it would not be unreasonable to expect a high degree of fidelity between the evaluation standards used by superintendents to gauge principal performance and the ISLLC standards. Research conducted by Derrington and Sharratt (2008) in Washington does not support this assumption. In fact, there appears to be a significant disconnect between the criteria used to evaluate principals and the standards by which they are trained. The survey results gathered by Derrington and Sharratt (2008) showed that, of the 237 respondents, all of whom are responsible for evaluating principals, only 57% were even familiar with the ISLLC standards. When asked if they used the ISLLC standards for evaluation of principals, only 16% of the respondents reported that they used the ISLLC standards exclusively to evaluate principals while 28% of the respondents reported that they used the ISLLC standards “somewhat” for evaluation. This means that 41% of the respondents reported that they had no knowledge or familiarity with the standards (Derrington & Sharratt, 2008).

The disconnect between the competencies principals are being trained to demonstrate and the evaluation tools used to evaluate them is cause for concern. As noted previously, research conducted by Lindle, et al. (2004) determined that principals spent 94% of their time engaged in skill indicators defined by the ISLLC standards. If, as Lindle and her team conclude, principals are spending the bulk of their time engaged in ISLLC skill indicators it would seem the evaluation process should reflect how competent they are in those skills. Further support for an evaluation tool that is ISLLC based is provided by a study completed by Coutts (1997) of failed Indiana principals. He found a correlation between failed principals and a failure to engage in the

skill set defined by the ISLLC standards. These studies indicate that if the ISLLC standards are used as a basis for evaluation and subsequent plans of improvement are developed to address specific deficiencies, principals could be more effective and successful. If these principals are spending the bulk of their time engaged in ISLLC skill indicators it would seem they should be evaluated based on their competency in those activities. Coutts (1997) study of failed Indiana principals further supports the idea that we must evaluate to see which ISLLC standards are absent from the day-to-day work of our educational leaders. If the ISLLC standards are used as a basis for evaluation and subsequent plans of improvement are developed to address specific deficiencies, could principals be more effective and successful?

Gerald Babo (2009) of Kean University in New Jersey conducted research similar to the work of Derrington and Sharratt. It should be noted that New Jersey, like the state of Washington adopted the ISLLC standards as the basis for training administrative candidates. However, New Jersey took the process one-step further than the state of Washington and required candidates for administrative licensure to pass an ISLLC based licensing examination administered by ETS. Babo (2009) sought to determine what superintendents, as evaluators of principals, believed to be the most important elements of a principal evaluation and how well the ISLLC standards are incorporated into principal evaluation tools. Using a survey instrument to gauge beliefs about specific ISLLC items, and how those items were used to evaluate principals, he correlated how suburban superintendents felt reflected the standards in their evaluation of principals. Babo's conclusions suggested that although all the standards were deemed to be essential to effective performance, those items directly related to student achievement were deemed less essential. The rank order that emerged from the research might imply that the basis for evaluation of principals

is really more about how the administrator doing the evaluation was evaluated when they were a site administrator than the ISLLC standards themselves (Babo, 2009).

Babo's work actually focused on the ISLLC 2008 standards. The introduction of the new standards was framed in the context that a growing body of evidence indicates that leadership is second only to teacher impact on student achievement and therefore a set of empirical standards that can define best practice for educational leaders is essential (Condon & Clifford, 2009).

The Standards are Revised

In 2008 a modified set of ISLLC standards were released by CCSSO. The Wallace foundation was a prime sponsor of the effort to update the ISLLC standards. A great deal of information concerning the rationale for the need to create a set of new standards and the process used to codify ISLLC 2008 can be gathered from their web site:

<http://www.wallacefoundation.org/Pages/default.aspx>. An item that is of special interest, linked from the Wallace Foundation site and to CCSSO and housed on the CCSSO website, is an empirical list of sources that support the ISLLC 2008 standards:

(<http://www.ccsso.org/publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=365>).

The ISLLC 2008 standards reflect modifications based, at least in part, on a comprehensive review of empirical research and other source documents. As part of their work, the NPBEA/ISLLC steering committee formed a national research committee. This research committee was comprised of scholars and experts in the field of educational administration and policy. The research committee identified 83 empirical research articles and 47 other source documents that support the standards as a set of best practices for improving student achievement by improving educational leadership: (<http://www.ccsso.org/projects/isllc2008research/>).

ISLLC Alternatives and Detractors

As would be expected the development of a set of standards as far reaching as the ISLLC standards was not without its critics. ISLLC was not developed in a vacuum and many efforts to improve administrative training and evaluation were occurring simultaneously. It should also be noted that as the ISLLC standards were being developed, other attempts to make changes to the training programs for principals were being instituted. In 1987, Danforth Foundation began, in partnership with institutions of higher learning, to sponsor programs that would train principals around a set of common features. These commonalities included careful screening, searching for female and minority candidates and the use of internships and mentors (Leithwood, Jantzi, & Coffin, 1995). The researchers exploring these programs found that standardization of the programs and programs that provided authentic experiences and fostered real life problem solving skills produced more effective leaders than programs that did not contain these elements (Leithwood et al., 1995).

During the same period development of the ISLLC standards was taking place; the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) was developing a set of standards to guide 21st century administrators to peak performance. In 1998, AASA published a 200-page book to help guide administrative practice. The guide contains an extensive reference section at the end of each of its ten chapters. In none of the bibliographic citations is there any reference to ISLLC (Hoyle, English, & Steffy, 1998).

The approaches used by some other researchers to independently identify a set of common strengths for principals were not all that unique from the process used to develop the ISLLC standards. Iwanicki (1999) cites research on principals who had been deemed effective by

their peers to determine what they felt were the most important aspects of their jobs. The outcome of this research was supportive of the methodology used by ISLLC developers.

Still other researchers were more hostile towards the standards. One of the most vocal of those detractors was Fenwick English. He took issue not only with the standards but also with the process that was used to develop them. While he agreed that changes had to be made in the way administrators were being trained, English (2005) took a more cynical view of the impetus of the driving forces for change. He saw a political agenda that sought to codify the status quo and insulate the profession from real change. One of his primary arguments was that current practice in educational administration was always protected until it changed to reflect the latest business fad.

His issue with the standards themselves was based on work completed, in and related to, a study of agricultural practices in the early 19th century. English (2005) argued that backward mapping simply rewarded the systems that were already in place, stifled innovation and froze the system so that it could not evolve. English (2000) argued that the standards were a set of non-empirically developed mandates designed to brainwash educational leaders, maintain the status quo and create a pseudo-scientific following that was determined to pursue the standards with an almost religious fervor. Less vociferous in their questioning of the standards as having value, but still curious of their worth as a tool to train and guide leaders were Pitre and Smith (2004).

Further, as noted earlier, other researchers, questioned the utility of the standards as a tool for truly defining and identifying the work administrators should engage in if they wish to master their craft and improve student achievement (Lindle et al., 2004; Bryant et al., 2003; Barnett, 2004; Hale & Moorman, 2003). The questions raised by these researchers must be viewed in light of research projects that would seem to support that the ISLLC standards are having a

limited impact on the evaluation process as related to school principals (Derrington & Sharratt, 2008; Babo, 2009).

The question of this utility does not seem to be limited to the work of principals. A study published in 2001, fairly early in the ISLLC life cycle, looked at the work of superintendents and their daily work activities (Boeckmann & Dickinson, 2001). Though focused on superintendents, the findings do provide some insights that might be relevant to this discussion and the research project at hand. The researchers studied the work of 500 randomly selected superintendents in seventeen different states. They sought to understand how superintendents felt about the ISLLC standards and how they incorporated the standards into their daily work. Although there was a strong degree of respect for the standards, the degree to which the standards were being incorporated into day-to-day actions was very limited (Boeckmann & Dickinson, 2001).

Detractors aside, it is unlikely ISLLC is in danger of disappearing. There is now a strong body of empirical evidence to support the standards and they have been adopted in at least 43 states. It seems the evolution of the standards continues to mature, from a set of standards to guide performance, to a set of standards to assess competency through testing. This progression is, according to Holloway (2002), a natural and expected progression. It therefore makes logical sense that the next progression should be an application to monitor how the standards are being applied in the field; that is, a tool for evaluating principals.

History of Principal Evaluation

Washington superintendents, and superintendents in other states, have conducted formal evaluations of school principals since at least 1917 (Ginsberg & Berry, 1990). Superintendents of that era were using checklists and time studies to evaluate principals. Given that the first articles on principal evaluation began to appear early in the 20th century we would expect to find

a great deal of literature on the subject. In fact, there should be an expectation of finding a robust base of knowledge about best practice as it relates to evaluation of the school principal.

Unfortunately, this is not the situation.

The practice of principal evaluation, even as of 1999, though documented as common in some areas was far from ubiquitous in either application or practice. While one study found that very large school districts, those with populations of over 100,000 students, were fairly consistent in principal evaluation practices as early as 1957, the study also found that the smaller the district became the less likely it was to have a cogent principal evaluation process in place (Ginsberg & Berry, 1990). More recent studies of principal evaluation have found that many principals are not evaluated or are evaluated on a sporadic and inconsistent basis (Davis & Hensley, 1999).

While great volumes of material have been printed that relate to principal evaluation, very little of the literature, collected prior to 1990 contains empirical evidence of a best practice (Ginsberg & Berry, 1990; Ginsberg & Thompson, 1992; Kimball, Heneman & Milanowski, 2007). Catano and Stronge (2000) support this contention and argue that until ISLLC (1996) came into being little attention was given to the instruments used by local jurisdictions to evaluate principal performance.

Because the material surrounding principal evaluation is not based on empirical study, there are a number of myths and misconceptions surrounding principal evaluation, from both a historical and contemporary point of reference. There are some reasonable explanations for the historical misconceptions that seem to be held about principal evaluation. If we accept Hallinger's (1992) premise that the principalship is an evolving profession, and if we concur with Elmore (2000) that the "loose-coupling" theory of school organization is truly designed to

buffer the actions of the school from outside input, we can begin to understand why so little has changed in the principal evaluation model since the 1960s. By and large, the evidence suggests that principals are being evaluated with outdated evaluation instruments that do not reflect the evolution of the work they are expected to perform. This assertion is bolstered by the work of Servais (2006) who found a lack of formal job assessments in place for school administrators and by a first person piece by Rooney (2009) who discussed the tension and insecurities that can be generated by the evaluation process.

The literature is rich with opinions about how principal evaluation should be conducted (Ginsberg & Berry, 1990). Unfortunately, most of this literature reflects the personal biases and experiences of those responsible for conducting the evaluation process. It also ignores the political aspect of the principalship. In the modern era of educational administration, the principal who thrives is likely to be the principal who can self-promote and keep unwanted attention from reaching the desk of the superintendent or school board (Davis & Hensley, 1999). This political aspect of the work sets in place a completely new dynamic for both the evaluator and person being evaluated. There can be no doubt that the work of the principal involves much more than just objectively gathered data. If, as most logical reviews of the evaluation process would seem to dictate, a set of objective standards are implemented to gauge strictly task performance and student achievement, how does an evaluator remove a high performing individual who lacks the political savvy or interpersonal skills to manage the newly evolved role of school principal? The political reality in which the principal operates and the historical context in which principal evaluation has developed may help explain why the tools used to evaluate principals that are standards based are rare (Kimball et al., 2007).

The issue of principal evaluation is further complicated by a number of factors. I would submit that it is difficult to find authors or practitioners who would argue that the process of principal evaluation, as it has been practiced and institutionalized, is anything more than a perfunctory exercise. This contention is supported by Catano and Stronge (2006), Davis and Hensley (1999) and Ginsberg and Berry (1990).

Further adding to the contention that, at least as currently practiced, principal evaluation makes little difference to the actual work of the principal are researchers who have examined the impacts that evaluation has on principal work conditions, such as compensation and professional development (Kimball et al., 2007). They studied large school districts and found that while principal evaluation was a common and often legislated activity, the results of the evaluation were not strongly related to professional development activities and only marginally related to principal compensation. This would seem consistent with Washington state principal experiences where principal salaries, for most districts where the principals are organized as a group, are generally set in a range guided by the SIRS database, local conditions and longevity. The Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) assists local principal groups in the development of contract language. Professional development activities funds are generally included in the contract language and are not subject to oversight by the program evaluator.

Adding to the complexity of the evaluation process is how the person being evaluated feels about how they are evaluated. It would be expected that a fair and understandable process, conducted by a trained evaluator has the potential to create a much more positive outcome (Kimball, Milanowski & McKinney, 2009). One study that explored these ideas used a standards based rubric to evaluate some principals in a district and compared several aspects of their evaluation experience and professional development to a control group who was not evaluated

using the new system. The researchers found mixed results. When the evaluation process is deliberate and focused, those being evaluated are able to develop better goals and more defined focus on problem areas. They did feel they were more fairly evaluated but they were not necessarily more satisfied with the evaluation process (Kimball et al., 2009).

One finding from Kimball's work that must be emphasized is the skill, training and enthusiasm of the evaluator. Evaluators who take the task seriously and use the evaluation process as an opportunity to engage in real and authentic conversations seem to make a significant difference in how the person who is being evaluated perceives the process. There seems to be some evidence that principals not only want to be evaluated, they seek the evaluation as an affirmation of their good work.

In the end, the evaluation of the principal, at least in the state of Washington, as long as board policy is followed and minimum requirements of state law are met, has been ultimately up to the superintendent. If evaluators, and those who are evaluated, can cast off the myths that have defined the long and storied history of principal evaluation in the public school system, perhaps a new era surrounding legitimate evaluation can be entered. New research is framing the debate about principal evaluation. The questions that are being raised are about the future and not about looking to the past.

Standardizing an Evaluation Document

The work of developing a new evaluation process begins with looking at what effective principals do and, as Ginsberg and Thompson (1992) and Davis and Hensley (1999) document, that is not an easy task. Work to identify the effective traits of principals is not new, and has been conducted since at least the mid-1980s. In their 1984 study of 90 principals, Leithwood and Montgomery (1984) set out to determine if they could establish, with a degree of validity, those

traits that effective principals possessed or actions they engaged in to improve student achievement. They concluded that they could identify traits and growth towards mastery of certain traits that indicated a higher level of effectiveness. Their work also suggested that alignment between hiring practice and evaluation of performance could be linked to an assessment of whether an individual possessed certain traits for effectiveness.

The ISLLC standards have built on that work and the work since that time to develop the body of knowledge around effective practice. The codification of effective practice has resulted in The School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) that has been the standard for principal assessment, in those jurisdictions where assessment is required, since 1996. A review of the ETS website gives candidates seeking to schedule testing for the SLLA a comprehensive overview of the assessment, including fees, qualifying scores and test format. Obtaining a qualifying score on the SLLA would seem to be the end of an administrator's formal association with ISLLC. That may change eventually.

In 2008, with the release of ISLLC 2008, the standards sought to extend their reach through what would seem a natural and logical evolution. The development of an evaluation tool using the standards as a basis for gauging performance was developed. This tool known as the VAL-ED was developed by researchers at Vanderbilt University and the University of Pennsylvania and supported in its development by the Wallace foundation (Moran, 2008). Currently the assessment division of Discovery Education is administering the evaluation to those administrators that wish to engage in the process. The website for Discovery Education: (http://www.discoveryeducation.com/products/assessment/val_ed.cfm.) provides an overview and some resources for districts wishing to learn more about the VAL-ED.

Condon and Clifford (2009) reviewed 20 principal evaluation tools. They found eight that met pre-determined criteria for further study. Only two of the eight that were studied in depth were developed in the last ten years. The VAL-Ed is one of these assessments. The researchers noted that while the age of the other assessments, especially in light of the changing nature of the principalship, might make them less effective they could still be valid if the data they provide is used appropriately by the principal and their supervisor.

There does however seem to continue to be a significant disconnect between ISLLC in theory and ISLLC in practice. The standards are now broad in scope and well supported by empirical research. They can serve as a guide to implement policy at the local level and influence to what standards administrators are trained. A licensure tool, the SLLA, that has fidelity to the standards has been proven to, at the very least, certify that administrative candidates have a working knowledge of the standards (Leithwood et al., 2004). This suggests that an evaluation tool that helps evaluators determine if the standards are being practiced as a part of the daily work of administrators is available. With all of these components in place and influencing administrative training, licensure and assessment, why do ISLLC based evaluations appear to be all but absent from Washington state?

ISLLC Standards as a Policy Implementation Challenge

One answer to the question raised above might be explained by organizational change theory. Honig (2006) suggests that the organizational change process is one of episodic progress. Some policies will be implemented in some places and not implemented in other areas. The interactions of policy, people and places are highly situational and contingent (Honig, 2006). What might be possible in one area or in one situation might not be possible in another. Honig (2003, 2004) provides a framework for understanding why this resistance to change exists and

how it might be overcome by describing how organizations learn. The organizational learning process Honig delineates and how it might help to address the issue of ISLLC and evaluation is further discussed in chapter five.

The implementation of ISLLC as policy was not only situational; it was or is now linear. As has been shown, the majority of administrative training programs in the United States use the ISLLC standards as the basis for training administrators. Many states require candidates for an administrative credential to pass an ISLLC based assessment, now an evaluation tool to measure the degree to which practitioners are using the standards is available. The model of the standards was copied in England and Australia and arguments for their adoption are being made by Canadian researchers (Bedard & Aitken, 2006). The standards have and continue, at the top levels of policy implementation, to gain ground. The re-writing of the standards addressed at least some of the issues raised by the harshest critics of the standards.

While it seems illogical that principals would be evaluated on a set of standards that did not relate to their training, it could be argued that the development and implementation of ISLLC to date, at least at the top levels of the organizational structure, is a policy implementation success. Murphy recognized that the standards would give states a tool to manipulate and exercise controls over the how administrative candidates were trained and licensed (Bedard & Aitken, 2006). That has certainly proven to be the case.

The implementation disconnect seems to exist at the lower levels of the organization: the district unit. It would seem that the implementation of ISLLC as policy in practice at the school district level is really one of situational implementation. Models for this occurrence are common. Recent research shows that even when those responsible for implementing policy are not resistant to the policy and may even be working to implement the policy, implementation failure

does occur. Policy failure is often a function of the complexity of the human sense making mechanisms that cause us to try and relate the new to the familiar (Spillane, Brian, Reiser & Gomez, 2006).

This natural inclination to place things into the context of that with which we are already familiar might be a very real issue in the use of ISLLC as an evaluation tool. Babo (2009) found that most administrative evaluators he surveyed used the familiar as a basis for judging performance even when they agreed with and recognized the standards defined by ISLLC as valid. Could it be that, if a disconnect exists between the tools used by superintendents to evaluate principals and the training principals receive, it is because the evaluators are seeking to form the evaluation process into a familiar and recognizable pattern?

Understanding how superintendents view the standards and how familiar they are with the use of the standards as a training and evaluation tool might help to answer a couple of other questions that will explain if and/or why a disconnect between evaluation practice and ISLLC is present:

- 1) For those superintendents who claim to use the standards, to what extent and how do they use them and how useful do the superintendents and principals believe them to be? For those districts, have there been implementation challenges?
- 2) For those superintendents who don't use ISLLC standards explicitly, what do they do and how useful do they believe their principal evaluation to be and to what extent do their evaluation criteria overlap with ISLLC? Have these districts ignored, rejected, or simply not prioritized implementing ISLLC in principal evaluation?

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

The purpose of this study was to determine to what degree superintendents in several Washington state school districts use the ISLLC standards to evaluate the performance of their building principals. The inquiry further sought to provide an insight into how principals feel about their evaluation process. As outlined in the preceding literature review many studies have been conducted to evaluate the degree to which the ISLLC standards reflect the actual practice of the building principal.

Several researchers who have endeavored to truly understand the impact of ISLLC on principal performance have had to go beyond a quantitative methodology and dig into not just what the numbers indicate but what principals and their evaluators are really willing to do with the information that objective, transparent evaluation provides (Condon & Clifford, 2009).

To complete this project an investigative study was conducted. The framework for the methodology was developed from reading and applying the work of Creswell (2007) and Marshall and Rossman (1999). These works provided a global overview and understanding of the interview process. A refresher on interview design and technique was provided by Turner (2010). The overview provided by Turner served as a guide to ensure the concepts expressed by Creswell (2007) were applied with fidelity.

The first goal of the study was to determine the degree to which a set of pre-defined standards are used to evaluate principal performance. The second goal of the study was to gain an understanding of the attitudes and feelings associated with the evaluation process from the perspectives of both the person doing the evaluation and the person being evaluated. Recent work on principal efficacy has shown a strong connection to principal effectiveness and how

they feel about their ability to competently perform their job (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008). This study also sought to understand how valuable the evaluation process, to those being evaluated, is in increasing self-efficacy and job confidence.

Interviews were conducted with superintendents and some assistant superintendents. While the original study proposal had not sought to interview educators who were not directly responsible for principal evaluation, superintendents in some districts felt that an interview with the assistant superintendent was essential to gaining a full understanding of the evaluation process in the district. The feelings of the superintendents who expressed this concern were honored and these assistant superintendents, all of whom had served as superintendents previously added to the richness of the final study.

A total of five school districts were evaluated. The study group was recruited from superintendents across the state respecting the conventional wisdom that districts east of the Cascade Mountains are quite different from those in the west. It is generally recognized that Washington state is a state with a split personality when it comes to the public school system. The dividing line for this personality is the Cascade Mountain range. This geographical separation results in geopolitical and social differences in school districts that manifest themselves in both practice and attitudes in Washington state. Medium sized west-side districts tend to be viewed as more affluent, more diverse in student population and more progressive in the way they embrace educational change and innovation. East-side districts are viewed as more conservative, less diverse as to numbers of ethnic groups served and while less affluent also facing fewer problems with violence, drugs and other social ills. The number of school districts and student populations on the west side of the state provide many more opportunities for service

as either a superintendent or principal in a mid-size district than are available on the east side of the state.

In an effort to account for this divide, two of the school districts selected for this study were on the westside of the state and two were on the east side of the state. One was in the center. Size of the school district was also considered in the data collection. East of the Cascades, school districts tend to be smaller and more isolated from each other. That is, each community or town has an independent school district and the distance from these school districts may be significant. This is opposed to west-side school districts, which as a rule are larger and even when associated with a community or town, tend to be closer in proximity to each other. The size of the school districts selected ranged from just under 2,000 students to just over 9,000. Three school districts had an enrollment of approximately 5,500 students. In what could be considered a departure from the standard profile of school districts in Washington state, the smallest district selected is located west of the Cascades and the largest district selected is east of the Cascades.

There were several reasons for this population target. First, superintendents in this size district tend to have direct contact with the principals. They will have one or two high schools, two or more middle schools and several elementary schools. These selection criteria provided a large and diverse interview group. Superintendents in districts of this size are often competing for the same principal candidates, assuming a candidate is willing to relocate to one side of the state or the other, and therefore have similar expectations of candidates, at least in the screening and hiring process.

The original study design sought to evaluate districts that had the same superintendent in place for at least three years. The rationale for this requirement was that having three years in the same district would provide an experience base with the district's evaluation system that would

be useful. It was hoped that this arc of leadership would help to gain a historical understanding of how the evaluation process has worked in prior years.

As will be seen in the data analysis two of the superintendents interviewed did not meet the three-year criteria. While their personal experiences in the districts they served were very different, it was each of these superintendents who suggested an interview with an assistant. I believe this suggestion provided a greater understanding of the evaluation process not just in the districts studied but also in the application of the findings of this study to a larger educational community.

The total number of persons interviewed was 20. Thirteen interviews were conducted with persons being evaluated and seven interviews were conducted with evaluators. This number mirrors closely the number of interviews that Davis and Hensley (1999) conducted as they explored the political nature of the evaluation process. While this study did not seek to expand on or duplicate the work of Davis and Hensley (1999), using a study group of similar size, and asking some questions that are very similar to the questions they asked, did provide a platform to explore themes common to both research projects. This study did provide some insight into how the feelings about the political aspects of the evaluation process have changed more than ten years after a process to eliminate or at least severely curtail the political nature of evaluations has been at work.

The process to gain access to the interviewees was very straightforward. The superintendents of the prospective districts were contacted and the project was explained to them. They were asked if they were willing to grant an interview. They were also asked to allow two or more principals in their district to participate in an interview. Without exception, every superintendent who was contacted cooperated. Four of the five superintendents set up the

interview schedule and selected the principals to be interviewed. Only one of the selected participants chose, after reading the informed consent form, to opt out of the interview process and study.

The interview format was used because it allowed me to get a complete data set and to collect that data set in a professional context. The interviews were conducted in a relaxed and collegial format. The goal was to conduct all interviews at the school or in a district building but because of some major weather disruptions accommodations had to be made to conduct interviews at non-school sites.

The interviews ranged in time duration from just under 30 minutes to over an hour and fifteen minutes. Interviews were recorded and notes were taken during the interview process. The recordings have been transcribed, non-verbatim. It is my perception that all the individuals who consented to the interview were very honest and straightforward. I detected no attempts to deceive me and I was heartened by the willingness of those being interviewed to be both supportive and critical of the evaluation process and how it impacted their work.

Questions were developed based on several sources, especially the research conducted by Derrington and Sharratt (2008) and Babo (2009). The questions used for the interview are listed in Appendix A and B. I believe the questions that were used in the interview process supported the purpose of the project.

The purpose of the interview with the evaluators was to:

- 1) Determine their familiarity with the ISLLC standards.
- 2) Determine the degree to which they believe the evaluation tool they are using is aligned with the ISLLC standards.

- 3) Determine how effective they believe the evaluation process is for determining principal effectiveness and guiding professional growth.
- 4) Ask for their insights on improving the evaluation process.
- 5) Determine how they view the evaluation process as a tool for truly recognizing, developing and promoting talent.

The purpose of the interview with the principal being evaluated was to:

- 1) Determine their familiarity with the ISLLC standards.
- 2) Determine the degree to which they believe the evaluation tool they are using is aligned with the ISLLC standards.
- 3) Determine how effective they believe the evaluation process is for determining principal effectiveness and guiding professional growth.
- 4) Ask for their insights on improving the evaluation process.

This research project sought to understand real people who were doing real work. I began with the assumption that the individuals who are doing evaluations are dedicated to doing the best possible job and have actively explored ways to improve the evaluation process. These pre-determined conclusions fit with a qualitative research method that allowed me to employ a research method that is interactive and humanistic. Analysis of the collected materials was completed from a qualitative perspective with the goal of presenting a holistic point of view of the evaluation process, not just as an action that is completed but as an action that has a real and significant impact on the entire educational organization. I have carefully explored and tried to mitigate my own prejudices and biases.

Ethics

Every effort was made to approach the evaluators being interviewed in such a manner as to make it clear that they were being approached by a person conducting research. It must however be recognized that a peer relationship with these individuals did exist. The superintendents being interviewed were very receptive to answering questions and while all of them exhibited the most gracious of stances with regard to time and support, care was taken to ensure that I did not abuse the access they granted me. All participants were asked to review and sign the informed consent form and all participants were verbally informed that they could refuse to answer any questions or stop the process at any time. As stated, one member of the identified interview group chose not to participate. While this was awkward, no pressure was applied to this person to participate and the identity of that person has been kept completely confidential. The materials gathered during the interview process are in a secure location and they will be destroyed three years from the completion of the project. The requirements for retaining and securing the records are outlined in the Washington State University Office of Grant and Research Development Memorandum 29: Research Records Definition, Retention, Ownership, Access, and Storage (2008). This information was also shared with all participants through the informed consent form that was completed prior to the interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

General Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine how or if evaluators use the ISLLC standards to evaluate principals and how do those principals feel about the evaluation process. To accomplish this, superintendents and principals in five school districts were interviewed. Some general findings emerged from this interview process.

It is evident, from the data collected that Washington state is rich with highly qualified educators who are dedicated to their profession. Tables follow, for both superintendents and principals that outline years of experience and educational level and other factors that support the assertion that the administrative cadre in Washington state is well prepared and experienced.

However, the numbers associated with these educational professionals only tell a portion of the story. Before moving to a discussion about the evaluation process and how it impacts both the evaluator and the person being evaluated, I feel it is essential, to the context of this work, to reiterate how truly qualified these leaders are to engage in the work they undertake.

Six of the people interviewed for this project are actively engaged in formal teaching for an institution of higher learning. All of the persons interviewed are engaged in ongoing professional development and spoke competently and articulately about the issues facing our educational system, at the local, state, and national levels. All of these professionals are people who have been connected to education for many years. Five of the 20 individuals interviewed were at the terminal point of their career. They had already announced retirement or were contemplating retirement, yet they did not see retirement as an end to their professional work. Only one of these five individuals indicated that they would not immediately seek a post-

retirement opportunity to remain connected to public education. These people have dedicated their lives to the education of children. When asked to give a brief history of themselves and describe how they came to be in the position they currently occupied only a single person indicated any significant experience in a field other than education. Four interviewees indicated a “break” from education to attend to family issues but it was evident from the information they provided that they see themselves as educators.

Perhaps most importantly each of the people interviewed possessed self-awareness about their role in the educational system. One principal shared the following:

“I am so sincere and it sounds so bullshit, but often the custodian knows more about how kids are doing than I do. I mean I know the names and I know who they are but I get so caught up in the budget and other things I lose touch. We have to remember that the power is often not where we think it is.”

Through the interview process, they identified their own personal strengths and weaknesses. This self-awareness seems to be a core element of the evaluation process and essential to the decisions these educational leaders are making about not only their role in the organization but also their level of competence in the system. As one principal related: “I would love to look at what I am doing more closely and how I could do it better. Because I think I do things fairly effectively because I want to be strong on myself but at no point do I think I am an amazing administrator, but then again, I am not sure what one looks like either.”

This sense of self-awareness and competence is important for several reasons. These people view themselves as professionals working in a profession. They not only know the technical aspects of the profession, they comprehend and have successfully navigated the

political, social, and human aspects of the profession. In effect, they are standard-bearers for the professional mores of the education system, both good and bad.

Some of these educators have traveled some tough roads to reach their current positions.

A successful principal related the following story about their first principalship:

“I applied for quite a few jobs and was offered quite a few so I really had to narrow things down. I ended up taking a job as a principal, probably the best and worst professional experience I ever had. I took over for a terminated principal and there was lots of chaos and dysfunction, one third of the staff left and I was hiring new staff and developing a new culture and the first year was, for lack of better term, a lesson in mental breakdown almost, very difficult, because there was so much lack of culture and lack of defined culture we were building those as we were going. But WASL scores went up 100% in two years and discipline dropped, oh I don’t know, Jesus, maybe 200%, but we had to build those cultures.”

The positive energy encountered and expressed by the individuals interviewed made the interview process an absolute pleasure for me as a researcher. Most interviewees wanted to spend time after the interview was concluded to discuss the state of education and to visit. My professional practice is richer for the time these people gave me.

Superintendent Profiles and Findings

Table 2, shows a statistical profile of the superintendents who were interviewed with regard to years of experience and educational level.

Table 2. Superintendent Experience

| Superintendent | Years in Education | Years as Superintendent | Number of Districts – Superintendent | Highest Degree |
|----------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 40 | 18 | 2 | Doctorate |
| 2 | 27 | 13 | 3 | Doctorate |
| 3 | 34 | 12 | 2 | Doctorate |
| 4 | 30 | 11 | 3 | Doctorate |
| 5 | 9 | 4 | 1 | Enrolled in Doctorate |
| 6 | 34 | 3 | 1 | Doctorate |
| 7 | 22 | 2 | 1 | ABD |

Washington state, as a member of the Council of Great Schools was a participant in the ISLLC development process that was completed in 1996 (Interstate School Leader Licensure 1996 Reference). A review of the Professional Educators Standards Board requirements for Principal, Program Administrator and Superintendent Certification reveals that the ISLLC standards have been incorporated, as requirements for certification, into all administrative training programs operated in Washington state as of September 1, 2004 (<http://www.pesb.wa.gov/>). Although the requirement that all candidates seeking certification of an administrative credential did not become a statewide requirement until September of 2004, a phone conversation with Dr. Larry Lashway of the Washington Professional Education Standards board on November 16, 2010 indicated that administrator training programs in Washington state were acting to implement the ISLLC criteria prior to it becoming a requirement. This assertion, by Dr. Lashway is supported by a review of several certification reports, found on the PESB website, those evaluations give an indication how the use of the

ISLLC standards, by various colleges, that train administrative candidates were being integrated in programs of study well before September of 2004. Further, a review of the program guide for Washington State University Field Based Superintendency Handbook from 1999 shows that the college had already embraced the ISLLC standards. Table 3 summarizes those superintendents who, based on where and when they received their administrative training should have been ISSLC trained. Table 3 also summarizes which superintendents believe they are familiar with the standards. The final column in the table indicates which superintendents believe they are using the standards in the evaluation process. It should be noted that the data in this table is linked, by superintendent number, to the data in the previous table.

Table 3. Superintendent Familiarity with ISLLC

| Superintendent | Administrative Credential ISLLC Based? | Familiar with ISLLC? | Use ISLLC in Evaluation? |
|----------------|---|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | No | Yes | No |
| 2 | Yes | Yes | No |
| 3 | Yes | Yes | No |
| 4 | No | Yes | Yes |
| 5 | No | Yes | No |
| 6 | Yes | Yes | No |
| 7 | No | Yes | Yes |

Based on self-report during the interview process of where and when they received their administrative credentials, three of the seven superintendents interviewed, were trained in the ISSLC standards. Of the four remaining superintendents, one has had formal training in the

ISSLC standards post administrative credentialing and the other three indicate that they have become familiar with the ISSLC standards through their professional practice.

Five of the seven superintendents were certain that the process and tools they used for evaluation were not based on the ISSLC standards. One of these five stated that the district did not have an evaluation instrument. Four of these superintendents stated that their evaluation instruments were based, at least in part, on the standards defined by Washington state law. Indeed, a review of the instrument a superintendent in this group was willing to share refers directly to the state guidelines for evaluation as codified in the Revised Code of Washington 28A.405.100. One of the superintendents in this group who used the state standards suggested that perhaps these standards were based on the early ISSLC standards. The remaining two superintendents asserted that their evaluation processes were ISLLC based but then went on to explain that the tool they used to base their evaluation process on was developed prior to 1990 and is codified in the state regulations. Since the ISSLC standards were not developed until after this date and the Washington law that outlines the criteria for evaluation was first enacted in 1975, before the ISLLC standards were released, this makes this assertion suspect (Common School Manual 2010). Appendix D contains the criteria for administrative evaluation, as codified by the Revised Code of Washington 28A.405.100, that all the evaluators in this research study were using as the legal basis for evaluation (Common School Manual 2010). This is the criteria that superintendents and principals referred to when they referred to the evaluation form based on state standards. Appendix E contains the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA) policy that was derived from these state standards.

The criteria for evaluation were changed in 2011. Engrossed Second Substitute Bill 6696 (E2SSB 6696) mandated the development of a new and expanded evaluation system for

principals. The new criteria are defined by the amended Revised Code of Washington 28A.405.100 (Common School Manual 2011) and are listed in Appendix F.

E2SSB 6696, which became effective on June 10, 2010, started two major initiatives that are currently underway in Washington state to improve the principal evaluation process. These initiatives are Washington State Principal and Teacher Evaluation Pilot Program and the Sig Merit Program. Descriptions of these initiatives are provided in Appendix G. The superintendents who participated in this study were asked if their district was involved in any of the statewide efforts to improve the principal evaluation process. None of the studied districts was participating in these initiatives.

Although all of the superintendents had engaged in various workshops and trainings to improve their professional practice and management of personnel, none of the superintendents could recall any specific training that related to principal evaluation from the standpoint of effectiveness. Five of the superintendents spoke of trainings to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Those who did reference specific principal evaluation training spoke of trainings that were conducted by the district legal counsel. The purpose of these trainings was to make sure that the legal requirements of the evaluation process comply with law.

The evaluation process that superintendents described was surprisingly consistent. All superintendents talked about setting up processes that allowed them to meet with their principals early in the year to establish goals and talk about expectations. All superintendents talked about being in the school buildings and seeking to gain an understanding of the unique issues facing the principal. All superintendents described a process that concluded with a meeting towards the end of the year to finalize the evaluation process.

Six of the seven superintendents spoke of the importance of using student performance data as an indicator of principal performance. The superintendents recognized that many factors play into student success and the emphasis that was placed on the weight given to student performance data in the final evaluation varied widely. Superintendents who used data were not looking to punish principals who failed to meet data related goals but were seeking to understand why students were not improving at targeted rates. One Superintendent described how the evaluation tool that was in place when they arrived did not really address the issues of student learning:

“You know in (districts) I have been all had evaluative language in place when I arrived. They had a negotiated instrument and they had policy at the board level that covered the eight general criteria that are in the state guidelines, in (district) on top of that we added the nine characteristics of high performing schools and so what I have is basically those eight areas and we comment on the other. That describes the tool. (But) I look at student learning then I will be involved.”

Another superintendent put it this way:

“I can’t walk in a principals moccasins. So I really have to be able to step back, I can pop in and out of a classroom and get a measure of, is effective instruction going on but as a superintendent with (number of schools) that is going to be pretty intermittent. So, I think probably the most important function that I assume is in reviewing data with the principal looking at how, you know what kind of growth is happening in the building. I think it is critical that I work with them to look at what skill levels kids are coming in to our schools, grade level by grade level and then what kind of progress are our students making.”

None of the superintendents felt like the evaluation process was effective in guiding professional development or improving principal performance. This was an interesting finding because six of the superintendents indicated that they had removed or professionally improved principals who they felt were not performing adequately. Three of the superintendents disclosed that at least one of the principals that were interviewed for this project was required to make improvements or face negative consequences. However, the superintendents did not make a connection to the formal evaluation process and the improvement in performance.

One superintendent summed up the evaluation process and instrument as used in professional development as follows:

“It takes a modicum of courage to tell an administrator that you (they) have problems and that trust takes four or five years to create, and how many superintendents have that time? Ideally, the evaluation tool is a vehicle (to guide professional development) and could be the tool (to guide professional development) but I like to work on a more affective level and if I lay out the questions of hey, how can I help you with this or to reach this goal it is much more effective. Rarely have I seen evaluations work that way.”

A principal in that superintendent’s district would agree:

“I mean obviously there needs to be a link (between evaluation and professional development) but I don’t sit around and think how what I am doing is going to affect my evaluation. I think about how it is going to affect students, yes I would like to see more of a focused, I don’t know if it is an evaluation process, but a focused process about how I am able to grow, as an administrator. Evaluation is not necessarily guiding work or professional development; I mean but is not in conflict. The professional development needs to be continuous over time it needs to come from

the board and the superintendent. Everyone needs to know the guiding principles of our district. I don't believe every school should be treated equally but all need to be treated equitably and then whatever we are working on needs to be consistent. I would like to consider that sort of ping-pongy effect to really decide what our district wants to focus on and then stick with it for a period of time, with professional development and then whatever we are working on needs to filter down to the classroom teacher and be aligned."

Five of the superintendents indicated that if there were problems with performance they would not use the evaluation process to address the performance issues. These superintendents felt like they were effective at counseling poor performers out of the system and that the formal evaluation process did little to add to or subtract from their ability to make changes. One superintendent talked about how people are encouraged to move:

"I am helpful in getting people to move to other districts and other situations where they can renew themselves. I do a lot of work, and it is part of the evaluation process but we call people in and say; 'It is not working well and we can't turn our back on it. I am not going to turn my back on you because I can't turn my back on the staff and kids'. And what I tell the board is that my evaluation might be a paragraph but it does not help to put those things (in writing). You know it is the same when people write the same great stuff about people."

There was one other common theme that emerged with all superintendents. All superintendents felt that principal effectiveness was dependent on being both a leader and a manager. The degree to which this was emphasized varied but none of the superintendents felt that principals could be effective as leaders if they could not first manage the day-to-day

operations of the building. The consensus of all superintendents was that before the principal could work to close any achievement gaps or improve student performance they had to be able to manage the budget, staff, logistics, and work within the community. One Superintendent expressed the following:

“I think the (evaluation) process that I use is successful and we have been able to non-renew or obtain resignations from principals who had a combination of issues effecting performance, and while that included student performance it was also relations and/ or budget. There is no tolerance in my evaluation model for failure to meet budgetary expectations.”

A common, but not universal sentiment that was expressed by the superintendents was the idea that after the budgets, books, and buses were put in order, consideration needed to be given to how the principal fit in the district. That is, as long as students were safe and happy, things were quiet with the staff and community, and the principal fit well with the administrative team, the principal was pretty secure.

Principal Profiles and Findings

Thirteen principals were interviewed. The table below lists their profiles in random order.

Table 4. Principal Experience

| Principal | Years in Education | Years as Principal | Number of Districts/Buildings as Principal | ISLLC Trained/Aware ISLLC Trained | Aware of ISLLC |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| 1 | 35 | 19 | 1/3 | No/No | Yes |
| 2 | 37 | 15 | 3/3 | No/No | Yes |
| 3 | 31 | 11 | 1/1 | No/No | No |
| 4 | 20 | 11 | 1/3 | Yes/Yes | Yes |
| 5 | 20 | 10 | 1/1 | Yes/No | No |
| 6 | 21 | 8 | 1/1 | No/No | No |
| 7 | 18 | 8 | 2/2 | Yes/No | No |
| 8 | 34 | 7 | 2/2 | No/Yes | Yes |
| 9 | 20 | 6 | 1/1 | No/No | No |
| 10 | 19 | 6 | 1/1 | Yes/Yes | Yes |
| 11 | 18 | 4 | 1/1 | No/No | No |
| 12 | 9 | 4 | 1/1 | Yes/No | No |
| 13 | 11 | 3 | 1/1 | Yes/Yes | Yes |

Based on self-report of where and when they received their administrative credentials, it would be expected and was confirmed that six of the thirteen principals interviewed, were trained in the ISLLC standards. This determination was made by using information about the ISLLC standards and information on the PESB website (<http://www.pesb.wa.gov/>). Because the ISLLC standards were not published until 1996, any principal who was trained prior to 1996 would not have been trained by the standards. For principals who were trained after 1996 but

before 2004, the year the standards were required to be the basis of all administrative certification training programs, an analysis of the administrative training program was completed using information from the PESB website it could be determined when these programs actually incorporated the ISLLC standards.

Determining whether a principal was actually trained in a program that embedded the ISLLC standards was important for several reasons. First, there is some evidence that principals who were trained in the standards are familiar with them and at least in the context of assessments based on the standards know how to apply them (Lindle et al., 2004). It is not a stretch of logic to believe that principals who were trained in the standards would be engaging in the activities that are outlined in the standards to guide their day-to-day work. If it is the case that the administrators interviewed were engaged in activities that could be measured and correlated to ISLLC standards, it might make sense for the evaluation process to recognize these standards.

However, that is not the case. Three of the six principals confirmed to have been trained in ISLLC based administrative training programs reported that they were not trained in the standards. Furthermore, none of these three principals professed any familiarity with the standards. This is in contrast to the seven principals who were not trained in the standards yet three of whom professed knowledge of the standards. It is also noted that one principal who received principal credentialing years before the standards were developed believes their program was ISLLC based and professed to be familiar with the standards.

The data around how familiar with ISLLC standards principals are has some implications that will be explored in the next chapter. However, a summary of the data is revealing: Six of thirteen principals had formal training in the ISLLC standards, yet only three were familiar with the standards. Three of the remaining seven principals were familiar with the standards. Two of

these principals actually became familiar with the standards when they engaged in formal training after receiving their principal credential. Even if the one principal who believed they were trained in the standards but clearly was not, is indeed familiar with the standards and is included in the group of principals who have knowledge of the ISLLC standards, less than half of the principals interviewed are familiar with the standards. Half of those who know about the standards learned about them in some place other than their principal training program. This finding is consistent with the findings of Derrington and Sharratt (2008).

Given this apparent dearth of familiarity with regard to the ISLLC standards among the principal group, it is not surprising that the same confusion about the use of the ISLLC standards as an evaluation tool seemed to exist in the principal group as in the evaluator group. None of the principals believe they are being evaluated based on the ISLLC standards. In those districts where an evaluation tool is in place, three principals guessed that the tool that was used probably referred to the standards to some degree since it had been used for so long and was part of state law.

The confusion about the ISLLC standards and the lack of inclusion of the standards in the evaluation process will be expanded upon in the next chapter. In addition to determining how or if the ISLLC standards are being used by those who evaluate principals, this study sought to understand how principals feel about the evaluation process. There were common themes among the principals who were interviewed.

None of the principals interviewed placed much, if any value, on the evaluation process that they were currently operating under as a true measure of their performance. Principals recognized the need for a legitimate evaluation process and offered many suggestions and insights into improving the process. At least one principal in each of the districts surveyed talked

about past evaluation experiences that used either the formal 360-degree evaluation process or some modification of that process. The principals, who talked about the 360-degree evaluation process, or their version of that process, reported that it had helped them to become more aware and grow in their work.

All the principals talked about the need to have an evaluator who understood the subtleties of the work that a principal must perform. They wanted an evaluator who had not only walked a mile in their shoes but who also understood that the business of schools cannot be run like a business. Principals wanted an evaluator who was willing to adjust their expectations as the demands placed on the district or the school changed over the course of the year. Most of the principals expressed a desire that their evaluator spend more time with them and delve deeper into the work they are doing. All of the principals who elaborated on this issue recognized how busy the superintendent is and were extremely appreciative of the time they got with the superintendent or with central office staff who were acting directly on behalf of the superintendent. Still they were conflicted between not wanting to be a bother and struggling to get the amount of time needed with their evaluator. They believed increased time in the building would allow the evaluator to more deeply understand their accomplishments and challenges. One principal expressed a sense of guilt over “taking the time of the superintendent” to discuss problems or issues that required some extra guidance. Every principal interviewed talked directly or indirectly about the need to have an evaluator they could trust. One principal stated:

“A genuine caring relationship between the evaluator and the principal is most helpful. That would be the way that you could have trust and have rapport and you could maybe do the problem solving together and feel like you are working as a team. You have to

work on building the care and rapport and you do that through tackling some of those tough problems together. To begin with there has to be enough trust to communicate where the problems are both ways.”

Every person interviewed expressed a great deal of trust in his or her evaluator. These high levels of trust were directly tied to positive feelings about the evaluation process even though little to no value was placed on the outcomes generated by the process. These positive feelings were expressed even when the individual being interviewed expressed some level of discomfort or disappointment with the evaluation they had received. It seemed that when the levels of trust were high and the person doing the evaluation was respected by the principal that the evaluation process was considered more collaborative and less stressful or threatening.

Here is how one principal spoke of the evaluation process and their feelings for the superintendent:

“I can’t even think of what the categories are (for evaluation). It (evaluation) feels like it is so ongoing. Always talking and (Superintendent) always gives feedback and (Superintendent) gives really good feedback. I have learned so much, I mean (Superintendent) is a transformational leader. It is a shared responsibility. There is a feeling tone, under (Superintendent) that there is an enough for all of us (principals). In counseling, they call this the abundance theory, we can all survive and all thrive and (Superintendent) has created that, I have never worked with a leader quite as strong and intelligent and as real. Wonderful role model has very high standards.”

This finding is a bit difficult to accept since four of the superintendents related that several of the principals who were interviewed were, to various degrees, working on performance improvement plans or being counseled to consider a career move. While the

researcher has no idea who those individuals were, there was no indication during the interview process, by any principal, that they felt anything but trust and respect for the evaluator.

Only two of the principals felt like they had a very clear set of guidelines with regard to the evaluation process. The remaining principals felt that the process was not clearly defined. A quote from one principal who was asked if they knew the criteria for a positive evaluation responded:

“I think I know some of what forms the evaluation, some is from observation some of it from conversations with the principal, I am guessing here now, I don’t know how you convey all of those nuances sometimes. Some of it may come from conversations that the superintendent has with teachers and parents and it all plays in but truly subjective.”

Even principals in the same districts, who were being evaluated by the same evaluator, felt the process was subjective and arbitrary.

In spite of this lack of clarity all principals reported that they knew or could surmise what was required to receive a satisfactory evaluation. Perhaps the best quote to sum up this feeling was from a principal who responded to the question of knowing the criteria as follows: “Not really, but I can kinda guess, I mean I am not a dumbass, I kinda put it in (terms of) if I were evaluating me what would I look for.”

However, four principals reported that they learned what was expected through experience in the job, a previous poor evaluation or through trial and error. They did not believe a new principal would know what was expected. When asked if they knew the criteria for receiving a satisfactory evaluation this principal replied:

“Yes, I do only from a sense of the job. I don’t think that has been spelled out by anyone and I don’t think anyone walking in new to our district would be pulled aside and told

here are the things we are looking for in you. It is one of those things that they assume you come in knowing and I think that is largely true but there are components that are changing. Am I being measured by student data, AYP? It is evolving and ever changing.”

None of the principals felt that the evaluation process provided any guidance for professional development. The disconnect between their professional development and the evaluation process, was in the view of the principals, absolute. Principals were asked to reflect on their professional development needs and identify activities they would like to engage in to meet those needs. Several principals expressed the need to engage in professional development activities to improve teacher performance. A reoccurring theme, with regard to professional development, was that the goals set through the evaluation process were not adequate to guide real professional development. One principal expressed this thusly:

“I really don’t feel the setting of a goal and then a mid-year dipstick and then an end of the year evaluation is sufficient (to guide professional growth) I think people should be more engaged than that. They should understand a day in my life mentality, understand the nature of my work and the strengths and weaknesses I bring to the job everyday and they should really have working knowledge what it means to do the work I do. I like it when people challenge my thinking, I like it when people ask driving questions and that’s how I grow I don’t necessarily grow from reading written synopsis of you know the seven criteria that is spoken to or whatever it is. That to me is just a summative process rather than formative and less meaningful.”

If the principal was to engage in development, the principals needed to take it upon themselves to seek out and/or organize the activities. Those principals who had been able to engage in professional development activities were asked how their evaluator knew professional

development was occurring and if the growth gained by this work was considered in the evaluation process. All reported that unless they emphasized the activities they were undertaking during the final evaluation conference or during another conversation with the evaluator, the evaluator was not aware of the professional development and they doubted it had any bearing on the final evaluation.

Attendant to the theme of trust and accessibility most of the principals expressed a need for the evaluator to act to address emergent problems or complaints during the school year. This finding seems to support the perception that the formal evaluation process has no real connection to the day-to-day work of the principal. All principals reported that if there were an emergent problem it would be dealt with outside of the formal evaluation process and would not be reflected in the final formal evaluation. One principal expressed the following: “I think (if there was problem) my administrators would be honest enough and come talk to me about that but at the same time when there isn’t anything wrong, I am not hearing anything about that so in reality I would love more feedback.”

Another principal states the following:

“In a district like ours where there are competing priorities and different folks and we come to school and we don’t really know what our to do list is going to look like, so, a parent concern can morph into the biggest concern of the day. And you can spend two days putting out a fire and doing fabulous work and then maybe be dinged because something else didn’t go well. And you see a way to flag this and you want to say well what about this? Now magnify it by ten and it becomes part of the issue (with the evaluation process).”

While they appreciated the fact that the superintendent was not letting important issues go unaddressed, they also related a disconnect between the work they had to do and the work they were expected to do. This disconnect was disturbing to several of the principals. One principal expressed disappointment that if a really difficult situation was handled with great skill, credit for that accomplishment was unlikely to be recognized in the evaluation process but if that emergent work impacted the ability to complete a pre-set goal, that had been established as part of the evaluation process, an explanation for the failure to meet that goal or even a plan for remediation to work on that goal might be the result.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine to what degree superintendents in several Washington state school districts use the ISLLC standards to evaluate the performance of their building principals. The inquiry further sought to provide an insight into how principals feel about their evaluation process.

The conclusions reached, based on this research, are clear. Superintendents do not intentionally or completely use the ISLLC standards to evaluate principals and principals are, at best, ambivalent about the evaluation process. What is less clear is whether or not the elements that comprise the ISLLC standards, essentially the ISLLC standards in some other form or name, are being used in an indirect way to evaluate principals

The answer to this question is complex. Lindle et al. (2004) demonstrated that principals were performing tasks defined by the ISLLC standards during the majority of their workday. Coutts (1997) found that principals who did not perform the actions defined by the ISLLC standards were likely to fail. Babo (2009) showed that, even if superintendents did not formally evaluate based on the ISLLC standards, they believed the actions defined by them to be of value. Based on the responses that superintendents and principals provided, it would be premature to conclude that simply because they claimed to not use the ISLLC standards, that they are absent from the evaluation process.

What can be concluded is that superintendents did not make an intentional effort to include the standards. It can be further concluded that most of the principals who participated in this research would not really know if the standards were being used as part of the evaluation

process or not. The answers they provided, when questioned about the standards, leaves a good deal of doubt about how knowledgeable they are of the standards.

Therefore, the answer to the question of whether the ISLLC standards are being used indirectly or unknowingly in the evaluation process might best be answered through an indirect route and perhaps a more global perspective on evaluation.

A strong body of research supports the concept that the basic actions and competencies that the ISLLC standards seek to measure are part of the evaluation process. Even the detractors of the standards, such as English (2005) who argue that the standards are defined by looking backwards and not to the future do not argue that the activities defined by the standards are not the activities that principals should be engaged in on a day-to-day basis. Reviewing the minimum standards that were mandated by the state law that the superintendents and principals who participated in this study were operating under, it can be concluded that some association between the minimum criteria and the ISLLC standards does exist. For example, one of the minimum criteria defined by law was; an interest in pupils, employees, patrons and subjects taught in school (RCW 28A.405.100 (2) 2010). This could be roughly identified with ISLLC standard 2. However, this association is weak and several elements contained in the ISLLC standards or the attendant functions that define them are largely absent from both the law and the supporting policy developed by WSSDA. For example, ISLLC Standard 4: Safety, ISLLC Standard 5: Integrity and ISLLC Standard 6: Outreach, are not part of the defined competencies and it is up to the individual school district to develop or include evaluation based on these areas.

If superintendents were evaluating only to state standards and if principals were working only to state standards the people interviewed for this research project would not have listed criteria that form the base of the ISLLC standards as essential to giving and receiving

satisfactory performance evaluations. Superintendents and principals both cited the need to be able to use data to improve student learning (ISLLC Standard 4), work collaboratively (ISLLC Standard 1), function with integrity (ISLLC Standard 5) and reach out to the community (ISLLC Standard 6). Therefore, based on the things that both superintendents and principals stated were essential to receive a good evaluation and the alignment of those activities with ISLLC Standards it can be concluded that ISLLC standards are being used, in at least a limited fashion, in the evaluation process.

Why the ISLLC standards have failed to be fully incorporated into the evaluation process might provide some insight into how educational reforms are currently implemented and perhaps offer some ideas on how to move forward with implementation of ISLLC, and improve the implementation process for future educational reforms. Why principals see the evaluation process as an add-on to their work and not a reflection of it, might also help to provide some insight into how the state moves forward in developing a meaningful evaluation process.

If Not, Why Not ISLLC Standards?

The ISLLC standards were originally published in 1996. They were modified in 2008. In most organizations fifteen years is a considerable period-of-time. That is, it would be hard to imagine an organizational process or innovation, especially one that was designed to increase performance, to not be fully implemented over a fifteen year period-of-time.

These same time frames do not appear to apply to educational reforms. All but two of the people interviewed had more than fifteen years of experience in education. Thirteen of the 20 people interviewed expressed a familiarity with the ISLLC standards. With the recent emphasis on standards based education and the even more recent attention being paid to the evaluation process it would not be unreasonable to expect that ISLLC, the standard for all educational

training programs in the state, to be fully integrated into the system. So why are the ISLLC standards not being used to evaluate principals? There are several potential explanations.

The simplest explanation would be that the people who are responsible for doing evaluations are not familiar with the standards. That explanation is not supported by the evidence. All of the evaluators expressed familiarity with the standards. While the number of principals who expressed familiarity with the standards was not what was expected at least one principal in every district surveyed was familiar with the standards. While no assessment was given to determine exactly how familiar these principals were with the standards, based on the training programs these principals participated in and the level of competency with which they discussed the standards it can be concluded that they had at least a moderate level of familiarity with the standards. A moderate level of familiarity would be defined as knowing the standards existed and that the program they engaged in for administrative training was ISLLC based.

Another fairly simple explanation might be that there are barriers not connected to the standards themselves that prohibit the evaluator from using the standards. Potential barriers of this type did surface during the interview process. The two barriers that seemed most likely to have the potential to inhibit the use of the ISLLC standards in evaluation were school board policy and the negotiated agreements that were in place with the administrative team.

The model policy from the Washington School Directors Association is included in Appendix E. All of the districts studied have this policy in effect. This policy is very broad and was revised by WSSDA in April 1998 and December 2000.

The right of the administrative group to approve the evaluation tool could be another barrier to the implementation of the ISLLC standards as the basis of the evaluation. The potential barriers presented by this element are complex and operate on many levels. At one level, the

barrier may be just the inertia that is present whenever an existing process, especially one that is not perceived to be flawed, is in place.

Operating at a higher level and potentially also causing a barrier to the implementation of ISLLC is that the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) has long held its own set of standards to guide the work of principals. Recently, they have modified the standards. This modification was a direct result of the recent work undertaken around the discussion at a national level that honest, fair and legitimate evaluation was at the core of improving the American system of public education. While the AWSP standards do provide many of the elements contained in the ISLLC standards, they are standards built around their own identity. These standards are listed in Appendix G as part of the description of the Principal and Teacher Evaluation Pilot Project and the Sig Merit program. It is expected that principals would negotiate to have the standards developed by the professional organization that represents their interests as the basis for evaluation.

Recognizing the barrier that could be imposed by the administrative group is important but in the final analysis, it is difficult to conclude that it is a real issue. In light of the overwhelming degree of trust and cooperation that was expressed by the interviewees, it is difficult to conclude that if an evaluator wanted to use an ISLLC based instrument for evaluation that it would be challenged. Especially since none of the districts surveyed were using the standards from AWSP and that most of those who were evaluated did not see the process as having any real impact on their job performance.

A more complex reason that might explain why the superintendents chose not to use the ISLLC standards for evaluation is presented by (Machado & Cline, 2010). They argue that if the ISLLC standards are going to be truly used to improve the capacity of educators to increase

student outcomes, the educational administration faculty who are responsible for teaching them must go beyond the minimum of just meeting the standards in training programs and truly embrace them. While Machado and Cline (2010) found that most educational faculty they surveyed felt that there was a strong alignment of the standards in the administrator training programs they also found significant variances amongst the programs. These variances included the degree of fidelity to the standards as a whole as well as a variance across the standards with one or more standards being emphasized more than other standards.

Since the implementation of the standards into administrative training programs was a process, it is not unreasonable to speculate that those administrative candidates who were trained during the implementation and alignment phase of the process received a less robust and thorough indoctrination into the standards. The idea that administrators trained in a program in 1998, as the ISLLC standards were being learned by those responsible for teaching them, have a different level of understanding of the standards than administrators trained in 2008 has merit.

Perhaps the least esoteric reason that the ISLLC standards are not used by superintendents is the opinion superintendents hold of them: Some superintendents do not think the standards work to guide the evaluation process. The process of evaluation of principals is extremely complex. It is fraught with politics and subtlety. The outside influences that impact the evaluation process are apt to weigh as heavily on the evaluator as any objective set of standards.

The superintendents who were interviewed for this study had experience in the evaluation of principals in many settings. Depending on the district and community they were serving, the superintendents had a very different set of expectations and needs for the building administrator. One evaluator talked about the need to have a high school principal who really understood sports. Another spoke of the need for the principal to be able to work with grants and federal

agencies. Neither of these superintendents cared, in those particular situations, if the principal had any real skill as an instructional leader, but failure to be able to get the football team scheduled or keep the basketball team in good standing would mean that the principal was not a “good fit.”

While it could be argued that the ability to manage a sports team, and thereby manage community relations is an ISLLC standard, the superintendents did not see the evaluation through this lens. They see certain aspects of the job as much more important than other aspects of job, and what those important tasks are is highly situational. The ability or failure to perform these highly essential situational tasks forms the basis for the evaluation. Standards are not weighted evenly and the evaluation is not connected to tasks that may be essential but are not viewed by the evaluator as critical.

One evaluator summarized why ISLLC, or any standard evaluation tool for that matter, was not used in the evaluation process as follows: “If the principal is liked by the community and if the kids in the building are safe and happy and if the staff seem happy and are not causing problems and there is evidence of academic progress, I am not going to do much with the evaluation. I want to catch my people doing something good and setting a bunch of goals doesn’t add much.” The attitudes and actions expressed by the superintendents discussed above would seem to support the conclusions that were reached by Babo (2009) that superintendents use their own preferences and experiences to evaluate principals.

Attitudes of Principals

Does the way the evaluator conducts the evaluation process impact how principals feel about the process? This was not a question that was asked directly. However, some conclusions

can be drawn from the responses of the principals, especially since it has already been established that principals see little, if any value, in the evaluation process.

Across the survey group, the principals expressed the desire to have their evaluator spend more time with them in the work setting. Principals who were queried about special projects or initiatives that they had undertaken noted, that if their evaluator was to be made aware of these projects, they had to take it on themselves to inform the evaluator. These principals also doubted that the undertaking and successful completion of a major task or problem would be reflected in the final evaluation.

Because the job of superintendent requires that the superintendent allocate time among many competing interests, the time that can be spent with principals is a finite commodity. However based on the evidence presented by the principals, it can be concluded that if activities that were completed during the school year were recognized and given credit during the final evaluation conference the principals might feel more connected to and engaged in the evaluation process. This action would create a more clear connection to the final evaluation and the day-to-day work.

What is particularly interesting about this element of the evaluation process is that based on the evidence provided by superintendents, this is probably already happening. From the study superintendents' report using the day-to-day actions of the principals to form their overall view of job performance. The element that seems to be absent is that these actions are not being formally recognized in the final evaluation process.

There could be several reasons that these day-to-day successes are not being codified. In a culture that does not value evaluation and has a rote process, no effort is made to include these victories and high points in the already set format. In districts where goals are set in the

beginning of the year and the evaluation process becomes set, the need to add additional markers of success is redundant. Likewise, the addition of items that would mitigate the failure to meet a goal could serve to corrupt an evaluation process that is heavily data driven.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The evaluation process does not seem to be valued by either superintendents or those being evaluated. Yet there seems to be no real impetus on the part of those who must engage in the principal evaluation to make real change in the practice. The state of the evaluation process in Washington school districts might be compared to a car that someone receives as a gift or wins in a contest. If it runs well, does not cost much to maintain and is not an embarrassment to drive, the color or even whether it has two or four doors is not going to matter much. It will get you from point A to point B.

The emergent problem is that outside forces are demanding a more legitimate and robust evaluation system for educators. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for Washington state seems committed to creating real change in the evaluation process. Evidence of this change is presented in Appendix H. Appendix H contains a press release and survey, dated April 6, 2011. While the timing of this survey does raise the question of why the effort to gather data would be made after a pilot to change the evaluation process was already in place, it is only fair to take State Superintendent Dorn at his word that he believes; “It’s (the reform of the evaluation process) work that doesn’t just benefit teachers, it benefits students, too. A better evaluation system will lead to better teaching, and better teaching will lead to better learning.”

The participants interviewed for this research recognized that the evaluation process is going to change. Unfortunately, most expressed a level of fear that the process was going to be

pushed upon them and become just another abstract mandate that fails to make much of a difference in their day-to-day work, guide their professional development or really change how they work to improve student outcomes. Administrators who expounded on what they believe is the inevitable evolution of the evaluation process recognize and accept the need to have a set of standards to guide the work they are doing and to influence the work they should be doing. However, administrators fear a heavily data driven evaluation process, mandated from a high level of government, that will not take into account the human side of education.

I have lived, with various degrees of involvement, with the ISLLC standards for the past ten years. Over the course of that time, my thinking about them has shifted from being ignorant of them, to a strong advocate of the standards, to believing the standards are not the right tool for guiding evaluation and training and finally through this research study to the cautiously optimistic belief that the ISLLC standards can offer sound guidance to develop a meaningful and fair evaluation tool for educational administrators. To accomplish this I believe several steps need to take place.

First, an understanding of why the ISLLC standards have failed to achieve a high level of implementation needs to be developed. The conceptual framework of organizational learning theory might offer an explanation for the failure of the ISLLC standards to evolve beyond the use as a set of standards to guide administrative training programs and become a widely used standard for the evaluation of administrators.

Honig (2003, 2004) describes organizational learning theory as the process by which organizations seek or search for information and then exploit or deliberately choose not to use that information to modify the organizational rules and outcomes. Organizational learning has a

direct impact on how and to what degree organizations use new information to change policy and practice.

The searching for information, sometimes called exploration, can be accomplished by a variety of processes but ultimately results in new information being brought to the organization. Examples of ways this information might be gathered would be through new individuals coming into the organization, trainings being conducted within the organization or the attendance of seminars (Honig, 2003, 2004).

The use of data or the exploitation of information is multi-faceted and involves the subactivities of interpretation, storage and retrieval. The interpretation of the data will have a direct impact on how the data is used in policy modification or lack of action. Storage of the information occurs, from a policy perspective, when that information becomes part of the organizational policy. Retrieval is the process where the information is reviewed and reformulated to guide actions and choices around the policy-making decisions (Honig, 2004)

Organizational learning theory also requires that the information management process deal with two additional complexities; ambiguity and risk taking. In complex social arenas, the development of policy based on the search and use of data is ambiguous. The implementation of policies based on new information is unlikely to render immediate results. Organizational learning occurs when the organization makes the policy changes the information management process dictates regardless of objective performance outcomes (Honig, 2004).

Risk taking is an element of organizational learning that cannot be avoided. Simply put the more information or choices that are at the disposal of an organization the greater the amount of risk they are likely to be exposed to for achieving either a great success or an extreme failure.

Past experiences can influence how risky the search and use processes of information management are to the organization (Honig, 2004).

Previously, barriers to why the ISLLC standards are not being used as an evaluation tool were reviewed. Potential explanations for why these barriers are not legitimate were offered. However, do these explanations really explain why the ISLLC standards are not being used in evaluation and why principals do not feel the evaluation process is of value? If they do not, framing those barriers in the context of organizational learning theory might offer additional insight and chart a course for future action. Indeed, it could be argued that through the lens of organizational learning theory an explanation for the lack of knowledge about ISLLC standards on the part of principals, the failure to use the standards in the evaluation process by superintendents, the clinging of professional organizations to standards other than ISLLC, the potential that the institutions of higher learning might not be adequately embracing the standards and the feelings of ambiguity about the standards by superintendents could be developed. If an explanation that adequately addresses these barriers can be formulated, through the application of organizational learning theory, logic dictates that a course of action to address the barriers and perhaps even add value to the evaluation process is potentially at hand.

Organizational learning is complex and requires a significant shift in attitudes and beliefs (Honig 2003). Therefore, implementing the recommendations that follow will be difficult especially in light of the current practice. In our current environment, we are training people to one set of standards, retraining them, through state sponsored leadership academies, to other standards and meeting the legal requirement for evaluating them against another set of standards. Professional organizations are recommending their own standards and government leaders are reacting to political pressure and climate to pilot still other standards for evaluation. It should not

be a surprise to find that people caught in this melee, superintendents and principals, see the movement to change the evaluation process as unproductive.

The conceptual framework of organizational learning described by Honig (2003) can provide the road map for statewide organizational change that could make a real difference in the evaluation process. The key to this change will be leadership and deliberate action that combines vigilance with a commitment to alter practice and attitudes towards evaluation. Without vigilance, the implementation of a better and different evaluation process runs the risk of regressing to the same old way of doing business, with just a new name (Spillane, et al., 2006). Without leadership to guide new ways of thinking and a new way of looking at evaluation the organizational learning process will be stymied (Honig, 2003).

If Washington state is going to have a fair and legitimate evaluation process that guides professional development, the colleges and universities that train educational administrators need to truly embrace the standards and lead the way to implementation. Simply put, these institutions need to focus on the expectations they have for faculty who teach in these programs and the students who graduate from these certification programs. Faculty must be knowledgeable of and competent with the ISLLC standard domains. Faculty in institutions of higher learning must use the standards in the instructional program and be able to articulate how the ISLLC standards are different from other standards or competencies. Faculty must also evaluate candidates for administrative credentials against the ISLLC standards. As noted earlier at least seventeen states currently require candidates who seek licensure as administrators to demonstrate mastery on an ISLLC based assessment (Educational Testing Service, 2010). While I would stop short of recommending that administrative candidates in Washington state be required take such an

examination, I do believe that the institutions that train administrative candidates should explore an ISLLC based assessment and its possible efficacy in improving leadership competency.

As the institutions of higher learning take the actions listed above they must also simultaneously undertake the leadership role of engaging the various educational professional organizations and work with them to accept the ISLLC standards as a foundation for guiding the work of their members. If agreement could be reached to use the ISLLC standards as a basis for guiding the work of educational leaders, the professional organization could show leadership and further this cause by sponsoring work sessions at annual conferences and at other times to teach members who may not have been trained in the ISLLC standards or have forgotten about the standards.

The next step in this process would be for professional organizations, hand-in-hand with the institutions of higher learning and oversight boards such as the Professional Educator Standards Board, to approach the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and the legislature. The goal would be to enact legislation that establishes a statewide, research based evaluation process that reflects the tenets in which every administrator in the state either has been trained or has a demonstrated competency.

The recommendation that the ISLLC standards be used as the basis for evaluation in the process outlined above is based mainly on the issue of convenience. While the validity of the ISLLC standards as a basis for developing and guiding administrative training programs has been proven, that does not mean that there are not other standards that would be equally effective. Organizational learning theory requires that two actions be completed if an organization is going to learn to act differently. The first action is changing how people or collectives act (Honig 2003). This would be accomplished through changes in the practice and

the leadership of institutions of higher learning and professional organizations. The second requirement for organizational learning is a search for information and the decision to implement, or not implement that information (Honig 2003). The ISLLC standards should be the standards used in Washington state to develop a statewide evaluation program because they are already in place in all institutions of higher learning. The actions of searching for information and the decision to implement information, even if that implementation might be lacking, has already occurred.

With the bulk of the theoretical foundation to cause a change in the organizational structure in place, one must consider the practical dilemma that would impede implementation if standards other than ISLLC were selected for the basis of a statewide evaluation process. Getting institutions of higher learning to move away from ISLLC and adopt a new set of standards would be an onerous and tedious task. Furthermore getting the faculty in these institutions to fully embrace a new set of standards would, in the short term, be next to impossible. While the evidence gathered in this research, and the research of others, would suggest that few of the superintendents in the state are using ISLLC standards in their day-to-day work, there is good evidence that they are aware of the standards and were probably trained in them.

The outcome of organizational learning is organizational change. A second order change that would indicate that learning had occurred would be a shift in the underlying attitudes, beliefs and premises with regard to evaluation (Honig 2003). For a shift in how the evaluation process is perceived to occur superintendents must consider if the issues and problems with evaluation are due to the tool that is being used or are a result of how the process is being applied. This new look at an old process cannot just be expected to happen. It must be guided in a deliberate

manner and managed and reviewed in a logical and cogent fashion. Deliberate action is a basic tenet of organizational learning theory (Honig 2004).

Deliberate actions and statewide effort could quiet those who would argue that the ISLLC standards are not the right tool for evaluation. The detractors of the ISLLC standards argue, among other things, that the standards are based on flawed past practice and if implemented will inhibit growth (English, 2005). I do not believe a legitimate argument can be made that the ISLLC standards, especially in the modified form of ISLLC 2008, are not useful and comprehensive set of guidelines for measuring the activities and competencies that an educational leader should engage in and possess. However, the assertion by the supporters of the standards that the standards reflect the best practices of educational leaders and that measuring other leaders against those standards is a way to gauge competency (Murphy, 2005) denies the ambiguity, from the standpoint of organizational learning theory perspective that is inherent in the action of implementing the standards as policy. Neither point of view, that of the supporter or detractor, seems to recognize that it is really how the standards are used, or can be used, that makes them effective or limiting.

Would the recommendations listed above impact the way principals feel about the evaluation process? Perhaps, as stated previously, organizational learning is by definition measured by a change in action and attitude. If the state moves forward to implement a set of standards, and for this discussion the adoption of ISLLC standards will be assumed, as the basis for an evaluation process and does so in a way that organizational learning takes place, a paradigm shift with regard to evaluation will have occurred. Exactly what that shift will be is unknown. However, given the capacity for the ISLLC standards to be used as a tool to not only guide practice but to also reflect on it, one might hope that that paradigm shift would include

some of the elements of evaluation that principals identified during the interview process for this research.

It is common, whether through formal or informal processes for evaluation processes to center around the setting of goals and the measurement of success or failure against those goals. In systems where goals are not articulated in some form, there exists a set of criteria that must be met. These goal and criteria driven evaluations seek to set clear guidelines and take away the surprises. There is a belief, on the part of superintendents that this is a fair way to measure performance, and intuitively it would seem to be the case. There are however, several issues with this system that seem to be of concern to principals. These issues might be addressed through a shift in how superintendents think about evaluation and performance.

Even though goal setting by principals is a common practice very few of the principals who were part of this study had their supervisor set goals for them. Several principals set their own performance goals. In spite of not having a supervisor set goals for them, all principals indicated that they knew what was expected of them if they were to receive a satisfactory evaluation. The principals expressed the need to have the challenges and setbacks they faced during the year recognized and weighed in the final evaluation. The principals addressed the disconnect between the day-to-day work and the evaluation process. The superintendents spoke to the desire to leave the people who were doing a good job alone.

Perhaps the setting of goals for principals, if it is done at all, would be done at the end of the year. During the evaluation process, whether conducted in a summative or formative format, the day-to-day work of the principal would be reviewed to see if alignment with the standards was taking place. In the final evaluation, the ISLLC standards could be used in a reflective way to look at the performance during the year and to identify areas of specific strength or areas

where improvement was needed. The unexpected problems and challenges that emerged during the year would become part of a portfolio of work. Analysis of how well or poorly the challenges were met could be viewed from the lens of the ISLLC standards and included in the evaluation to guide professional development.

Making this paradigm shift might solve many of the issues that have been raised about evaluation. The shift might cause the day-to-day work that principals reported was not considered to be directly related and included into the evaluation. Superintendents might now have a framework for looking at administrators who are doing the things they need to do to keep everything running smoothly and for recognizing the major problems that will crop up during the year. The evaluation process would become less structured and checklist based and more interactive and reflective. Having a more personal, interactive and reflective process might help to satisfy the needs expressed by the principals for more time with the evaluator and to use a more 360 degree based evaluation process. Finally, a shift of paradigm as suggested above might go a long way towards addressing the arguments of those who believe the standards are limiting, while at the same time using them for their intended purpose.

The final element that might be addressed through the establishment of a statewide evaluation process based on a set of common standards is the arc of leadership provided by the superintendent might become less critical. While superintendents express differing expectations for their principals, and those areas will vary based on a variety of pressures, a relatively common set of standards to be evaluated against might reduce the lack of clear evaluation expectations expressed by principals about the evaluation process.

Washington state is at a cross roads on the issue of evaluation. There seems to be a consensus that the process for evaluating principals needs to change. Some of that drive for

change is being fueled by the political climate, some is ignited by the economic climate and some is pushed by the need for educational reform. The tools to put in place a legitimate and fair evaluation process that will guide improved student learning do exist. One of those tools is the ISLLC standards.

While it makes a great deal of sense to me that the ISLLC standards be used as the basis for the formation of an evaluation tool in this state, I believe it is unlikely to happen. There are too many competing interests for there not to ultimately be a compromise about what standards are adopted and how they are implemented. When, and if this happens, how institutions of higher learning, educational professional associations, superintendents and those who are being evaluated react will ultimately decide if and when reform will occur.

Limitations

This study was conducted in school districts that would be considered of medium size in Washington. This in and of itself is a limitation. The findings may or may not be applicable to large school districts or to very small school districts. Very large school districts have several layers of management between the principal and the superintendent. In a large school district, one of these central office managers often acts as the evaluator for the principals who serve at a certain grade level or in a certain area. The instrument that is used for evaluation is generally bargained by the principal group or association. The principals who are being evaluated have more resources available to appeal unfavorable evaluations and that appeal is to the superintendent not to the person who actually conducted the evaluation.

The very small school districts of our state tend to be the training grounds for the superintendents, and often principals, who will later serve in medium to large school districts. These superintendents may not have the same levels of experience and training in the evaluation

process as the superintendents in larger districts. They are generally only evaluating one or two principals. They are likely to work much more closely with the principals they are evaluating and to use different influences and criteria to form a summative opinion of performance. Evaluations tend to become more public because fewer people have the ability to influence the criteria used to define principal success or failure. The criteria used may or may not relate to ISLLC standards.

Most of the superintendents had served in other school districts and did reflect on the evaluation process in those districts. All of these reflections involved smaller school districts. Therefore, while it is reasonable to state that some insight was gained into how ISLLC was (or in these cases was not used) in the evaluation process, there can be no assertion that the evaluation processes used in the districts surveyed are applicable to the smaller districts.

The districts studied were selected to balance the east/west geographical divide that exists in Washington. During the research it appeared that there also may be a westside north/south divide. That is, districts that are closer in proximity to Portland, Oregon than Seattle, Washington seem to have a tendency to have high numbers of administrators who are trained in Oregon. If this is indeed the case, this may create another limitation as the administrators trained in these programs are localized and concentrated in a relatively small geographical area. As a result their experience and views may not be representative of administrators trained in Washington based programs.

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Appendix A
Interview Questions

Questions: Superintendents

1. How many years have you evaluated principals?
2. How many years have you been in your current position?
3. What skills do you feel superintendents need to effectively evaluate principals?
4. Please describe the process you use to evaluate principals and how or if ISLLC standards are used in this process.
5. If you are using an ISLLC based process for evaluation of principals, why and how did you develop or discover the document?
6. How effective do you feel the evaluation process is, with regard to guiding development, improving performance and creating a process for removing non-performing principals?
7. How important is the evaluation process in your district to improving principal performance?
8. May I have a copy of any documentation related to evaluation of principals (i.e. board policy, administrative bargaining agreement, forms for evaluation)?

Thank you.

Appendix B
Interview Questions

Interview Questions: Principals

- 1) How long have you been a principal?
- 2) When did you receive your principal certification?
- 3) Was your training based on the ISLLC standards?
- 4) Have you been evaluated this year?
- 5) What is your evaluation based on?
- 6) Do you know what tasks you should be performing to receive a satisfactory evaluation?
- 7) Are the ISLLC standards used to evaluate or guide your performance?
- 8) How do you feel about the evaluation process?
- 9) What would you change?

Thank you.

Appendix C

ISLLC Standards and Functions

Standard 1: *An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.*

Functions:

- A. Collaboratively develop and implement a shared vision and mission
- B. Collect and use data to identify goals, assess organizational effectiveness, and promote organizational learning
- C. Create and implement plans to achieve goals
- D. Promote continuous and sustainable improvement
- E. Monitor and evaluate progress and revise plans

Standard 2: *An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.*

Functions

- A. Nurture and sustain a culture of collaboration, trust, learning, and high expectations
- B. Create a comprehensive, rigorous, and coherent curricular program
- C. Create a personalized and motivating learning environment for students
- D. Supervise instruction
- E. Develop assessment and accountability systems to monitor student progress
- F. Develop the instructional and leadership capacity of staff
- G. Maximize time spent on quality instruction
- H. Promote the use of the most effective and appropriate technologies to support teaching and learning
- I. Monitor and evaluate the impact of the instructional program

Standard 3: *An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.*

Functions:

- A. Monitor and evaluate the management and operational systems
- B. Obtain, allocate, align, and efficiently utilize human, fiscal, and technological resources
- C. Promote and protect the welfare and safety of students and staff
- D. Develop the capacity for distributed leadership
- E. Ensure teacher and organizational time is focused to support quality instruction and student learning.

Standard 4: *An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.*

Functions:

- A. Collect and analyze data and information pertinent to the educational environment
- B. Promote understanding, appreciation, and use of the community's diverse cultural, social, and intellectual resources
- C. Build and sustain positive relationships with families and caregivers
- D. Build and sustain productive relationships with community partners

Standard 5: *An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.*

Functions:

- A. Ensure a system of accountability for every student's academic and social success
- B. Model principles of self-awareness, reflective practice, transparency, and ethical behavior
- C. Safeguard the values of democracy, equity, and diversity
- D. Consider and evaluate the potential moral and legal consequences of decision-making
- E. Promote social justice and ensure that individual student needs inform all aspects of schooling

Standard 6: *An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.*

Functions:

- A. Advocate for children, families, and caregivers
- B. Act to influence local, district, state, and national decisions affecting student learning
- C. Assess, analyze, and anticipate emerging trends and initiatives in order to adapt leadership strategies

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Appendix D

Minimum Criteria for the Evaluation of Certificated Employees, Including Administrators

28A.405.100 - 2010

Minimum criteria for the evaluation of certificated employees, including administrators—
Procedure—Scope—Models—Penalty.

(1)(a) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the superintendent of public instruction shall establish and may amend from time to time minimum criteria for the evaluation of the professional performance capabilities and development of certificated classroom teachers and certificated support personnel. For classroom teachers the criteria shall be developed in the following categories: Instructional skill; classroom management, professional preparation and scholarship; effort toward improvement when needed; the handling of student discipline and attendant problems; and interest in teaching pupils and knowledge of subject matter.

(b) Every board of directors shall, in accordance with procedure provided in RCW 41.59.010 through 41.59.170, 41.59.910 and 41.59.920, establish evaluative criteria and procedures for all certificated classroom teachers and certificated support personnel. The evaluative criteria must contain as a minimum the criteria established by the superintendent of public instruction pursuant to this section and must be prepared within six months following adoption of the superintendent of public instruction's minimum criteria. The district must certify to the superintendent of public instruction that evaluative criteria have been so prepared by the district.

(2)(a) Pursuant to the implementation schedule established in subsection (7) (b) of this section, every board of directors shall, in accordance with procedures provided in Certificated Employees 28A.405.100 (2010 Ed.) [Title 28A RCW—page 201] RCW 41.59.010 through 41.59.170, 41.59.910, and 41.59.920, establish revised evaluative criteria and a fourlevel rating system for all certificated classroom teachers.

(b) The minimum criteria shall include: (i) Centering instruction on high expectations for student achievement; (ii) demonstrating effective teaching practices; (iii) recognizing individual student learning needs and developing strategies to address those needs; (iv) providing clear and intentional focus on subject matter content and curriculum; (v) fostering and managing a safe, positive learning environment; (vi) using multiple student data elements to modify instruction and improve student learning; (vii) communicating and collaborating with parents and [the] school community; and (viii) exhibiting collaborative and collegial practices focused on improving instructional practice and student learning.

(c) The four-level rating system used to evaluate the certificated classroom teacher must describe performance along a continuum that indicates the extent to which the criteria have been met or exceeded. When student growth data, if available and relevant to the teacher and subject matter, is referenced in the evaluation process it must be based on multiple measures that can include classroom-based, schoolbased, district-based, and state-based tools. As used in this subsection, "student growth" means the change in student achievement between two points in time.

(3)(a) Except as provided in subsection (10) of this section, it shall be the responsibility of a principal or his or her designee to evaluate all certificated personnel in his or her school. During

each school year all classroom teachers and certificated support personnel shall be observed for the purposes of evaluation at least twice in the performance of their assigned duties. Total observation time for each employee for each school year shall be not less than sixty minutes. An employee in the third year of provisional status as defined in RCW 28A.405.220 shall be observed at least three times in the performance of his or her duties and the total observation time for the school year shall not be less than ninety minutes. Following each observation, or series of observations, the principal or other evaluator shall promptly document the results of the observation in writing, and shall provide the employee with a copy thereof within three days after such report is prepared. New employees shall be observed at least once for a total observation time of thirty minutes during the first ninety calendar days of their employment period.

(b) As used in this subsection and subsection (4) of this section, "employees" means classroom teachers and certificated support personnel.

(4)(a) At any time after October 15th, an employee whose work is not judged satisfactory based on district evaluation criteria shall be notified in writing of the specific areas of deficiencies along with a reasonable program for improvement. During the period of probation, the employee may not be transferred from the supervision of the original evaluator. Improvement of performance or probable cause for nonrenewal must occur and be documented by the original evaluator before any consideration of a request for transfer or reassignment as contemplated by either the individual or the school district. A probationary period of sixty school days shall be established. The establishment of a probationary period does not adversely affect the contract status of an employee within the meaning of RCW 28A.405.300. The purpose of the probationary period is to give the employee opportunity to demonstrate improvements in his or her areas of deficiency. The establishment of the probationary period and the giving of the notice to the employee of deficiency shall be by the school district superintendent and need not be submitted to the board of directors for approval. During the probationary period the evaluator shall meet with the employee at least twice monthly to supervise and make a written evaluation of the progress, if any, made by the employee. The evaluator may authorize one additional certificated employee to evaluate the probationer and to aid the employee in improving his or her areas of deficiency; such additional certificated employee shall be immune from any civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed with regard to the good faith performance of such evaluation. The probationer may be removed from probation if he or she has demonstrated improvement to the satisfaction of the principal in those areas specifically detailed in his or her initial notice of deficiency and subsequently detailed in his or her improvement program. Lack of necessary improvement during the established probationary period, as specifically documented in writing with notification to the probationer and shall constitute grounds for a finding of probable cause under RCW 28A.405.300 or 28A.405.210.

(b) Immediately following the completion of a probationary period that does not produce performance changes detailed in the initial notice of deficiencies and improvement program, the employee may be removed from his or her assignment and placed into an alternative assignment for the remainder of the school year. This reassignment may not displace another employee nor may it adversely affect the probationary employee's compensation or benefits for the remainder

of the employee's contract year. If such reassignment is not possible, the district may, at its option, place the employee on paid leave for the balance of the contract term.

(5) Every board of directors shall establish evaluative criteria and procedures for all superintendents, principals, and other administrators. It shall be the responsibility of the district superintendent or his or her designee to evaluate all administrators. Except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, such evaluation shall be based on the administrative position job description. Such criteria, when applicable, shall include at least the following categories: Knowledge of, experience in, and training in recognizing good professional performance, capabilities and development; school administration and management; school finance; professional preparation and scholarship; effort toward improvement when needed; interest in pupils, employees, patrons and subjects taught in school; leadership; and ability and performance of evaluation of school personnel.

(6)(a) Pursuant to the implementation schedule established by subsection (7) (b) of this section, every board of directors shall establish revised evaluative criteria and a fourlevel rating system for principals.

(b) The minimum criteria shall include: (i) Creating a school culture that promotes the ongoing improvement of learning and teaching for students and staff; (ii) demonstrating commitment to closing the achievement gap; (iii) providing for school safety; (iv) leading the development, implementation, and evaluation of a data-driven plan for increasing student achievement, including the use of multiple student 28A.405.100 Title 28A RCW: Common School Provisions [Title 28A RCW—page 202] (2010 Ed.) data elements; (v) assisting instructional staff with alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state and local district learning goals; (vi) monitoring, assisting, and evaluating effective instruction and assessment practices; (vii) managing both staff and fiscal resources to support student achievement and legal responsibilities; and (viii) partnering with the school community to promote student learning.

(c) The four-level rating system used to evaluate the principal must describe performance along a continuum that indicates the extent to which the criteria have been met or exceeded. When available, student growth data that is referenced in the evaluation process must be based on multiple measures that can include classroom-based, school-based, district-based, and state-based tools. As used in this subsection, "student growth" means the change in student achievement between two points in time.

(7)(a) The superintendent of public instruction, in collaboration with state associations representing teachers, principals, administrators, and parents, shall create models for implementing the evaluation system criteria, student growth tools, professional development programs, and evaluator training for certificated classroom teachers and principals. Human resources specialists, professional development experts, and assessment experts must also be consulted. Due to the diversity of teaching assignments and the many developmental levels of students, classroom teachers and principals must be prominently represented in this work. The models must be available for use in the 2011-12 school year.

(b) A new certificated classroom teacher evaluation system that implements the provisions of subsection (2) of this section and a new principal evaluation system that implements the

provisions of subsection (6) of this section shall be phased-in beginning with the 2010-11 school year by districts identified in (c) of this subsection and implemented in all school districts beginning with the 2013-14 school year.

(c) A set of school districts shall be selected by the superintendent of public instruction to participate in a collaborative process resulting in the development and piloting of new certificated classroom teacher and principal evaluation systems during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years. These school districts must be selected based on: (i) The agreement of the local associations representing classroom teachers and principals to collaborate with the district in this developmental work and (ii) the agreement to participate in the full range of development and implementation activities, including: Development of rubrics for the evaluation criteria and ratings in subsections (2) and (6) of this section; identification of or development of appropriate multiple measures of student growth in subsections (2) and (6) of this section; development of appropriate evaluation system forms; participation in professional development for principals and classroom teachers regarding the content of the new evaluation system; participation in evaluator training; and participation in activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the new systems and support programs. The school districts must submit to the office of the superintendent of public instruction data that is used in evaluations and all district-collected student achievement, aptitude, and growth data regardless of whether the data is used in evaluations. If the data is not available electronically, the district may submit it in nonelectronic form. The superintendent of public instruction must analyze the districts' use of student data in evaluations, including examining the extent that student data is not used or is underutilized. The superintendent of public instruction must also consult with participating districts and stakeholders, recommend appropriate changes, and address statewide implementation issues. The superintendent of public instruction shall report evaluation system implementation status, evaluation data, and recommendations to appropriate committees of the legislature and governor by July 1, 2011, and at the conclusion of the development phase by July 1, 2012. In the July 1, 2011 report, the superintendent shall include recommendations for whether a single statewide evaluation model should be adopted, whether modified versions developed by school districts should be subject to state approval, and what the criteria would be for determining if a school district's evaluation model meets or exceeds a statewide model. The report shall also identify challenges posed by requiring a state approval process.

(8) Each certificated classroom teacher and certificated support personnel shall have the opportunity for confidential conferences with his or her immediate supervisor on no less than two occasions in each school year. Such confidential conference shall have as its sole purpose the aiding of the administrator in his or her assessment of the employee's professional performance.

(9) The failure of any evaluator to evaluate or supervise or cause the evaluation or supervision of certificated classroom teachers and certificated support personnel or administrators in accordance with this section, as now or hereafter amended, when it is his or her specific assigned or delegated responsibility to do so, shall be sufficient cause for the nonrenewal of any such evaluator's contract under RCW 28A.405.210, or the discharge of such evaluator under RCW 28A.405.300.

(10) After a certificated classroom teacher or certificated support personnel has four years of satisfactory evaluations under subsection (1) of this section or has received one of the two top ratings for four years under subsection (2) of this section, a school district may use a short form of evaluation, a locally bargained evaluation emphasizing professional growth, an evaluation under subsection (1) or (2) of this section, or any combination thereof. The short form of evaluation shall include either a thirty minute observation during the school year with a written summary or a final annual written evaluation based on the criteria in subsection (1) or (2) of this section and based on at least two observation periods during the school year totaling at least sixty minutes without a written summary of such observations being prepared. A locally bargained short-form evaluation emphasizing professional growth must provide that the professional growth activity conducted by the certificated classroom teacher be specifically linked to one or more of the certificated classroom teacher evaluation criteria. However, the evaluation process set forth in subsection (1) or (2) of this section shall be followed at least once every three years unless this time is extended by a local school district under the bargaining process set forth in chapter 41.59 RCW. The employee or evaluator may require that the evaluation process set forth in subsection (1) or (2) of this section be conducted in any given school year. No evaluation other than the evaluation authorized under subsection (1) or (2) of this section may be used as a basis for determining that an employee's work is not satisfactory under subsection (1) or (2) of this section or as probable cause for the nonrenewal of an employee's contract under RCW 28A.405.210 unless an evaluation process developed under chapter 41.59 RCW determines otherwise.

[2010 c 235 § 202; 1997 c 278 § 1; 1994 c 115 § 1; 1990 c 33 § 386; 1985 c 420 § 6; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 114 § 3; 1975 1st ex.s. c 288 § 22; 1969 ex.s. c 34 § 22. Formerly RCW 28A.67.065.] Finding—2010 c 235: See note following RCW 28A.405.245. Construction of chapter—Employee's rights preserved: See RCW 41.59.920. Construction of chapter—Employer's responsibilities and rights preserved: See RCW 41.59.930.

Criteria used for evaluation of staff members to be included in guide: RC

Appendix E

WSSDA Model Policy 5240 – Evaluation of Staff

EVALUATION OF STAFF

A. Evaluation of Non-administrative Certificated Staff

Evaluation of the performance and/or accomplishments of individual staff members is an important process in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the school district. Staff is expected to perform the duties identified in their job descriptions in addition to any additional responsibilities that may be assigned by their administrator.

The superintendent shall develop a system for evaluating staff. Such a system shall provide for supervisory assignments for staff evaluation; observations; evaluation of new staff; criteria and related forms to be used for evaluating teachers, educational staff associates, and classified staff; observation and evaluation procedures; and probationary action; and non-renewal procedures. All principals and administrators with staff evaluation responsibilities shall be appropriately trained and shall be expected to demonstrate the necessary skills to implement the staff evaluation plan of the district. The district may require the teacher to take in-service training provided by the district in the area of teaching skills needing improvement. The superintendent shall annually assess the quality of evaluation that exists in each administrative unit.

The performance of staff shall be observed for a period of thirty (30) or more minutes at least twice per year for the purpose of evaluation except that new staff, certificated and classified, shall be at least observed for the purpose of evaluation once for a period of thirty (30) minutes or more within ninety calendar days after commencement of employment. Staff whose performance does not meet minimum requirements shall be informed of the deficiencies and afforded the opportunity to improve.

After a staff member has four (4) years of satisfactory evaluations in the district, the administrator may use a short form of evaluation, the locally bargained evaluation process emphasizing professional growth, a regular evaluation or any combination thereof. A short form evaluation includes either a thirty (30) minute observation during the school year with a written summary or a final annual written evaluation based on established criteria and based on at least two (2) observation periods totaling at least sixty (60) minutes without a written summary of such observations. At least once every three (3) years, unless extended by the local collective bargaining agreement, a regular evaluation shall be conducted except that in any given year the staff member or the supervisor may elect to conduct a regular evaluation that is used as a basis for determining that a staff member's work is unsatisfactory or serve as the basis for determining that there is probable cause for non-renewal, unless the locally bargained evaluation process provides otherwise.

B. Evaluation of Administrative Staff

Each administrator shall be evaluated annually in order to provide guidance and direction to the administrator in the performance of his/ her assignment. Such evaluation shall be based

on his/her job description, accomplishment of annual goals and performance objectives, and established evaluative criteria.

The superintendent shall develop procedures for these evaluations. Prior to the beginning of the school year, the superintendent shall inform the administrator of the criteria to be used for evaluation purposes, including the adopted goals for the district. Such criteria shall include: performance statements dealing with leadership; administration and management; school financing; professional preparation; effort toward improvement; interest in students, staff, citizens and programs; and staff evaluation.

Both staff members involved in the evaluation conference shall sign the written report and retain a copy for their respective records. The person being evaluated shall have the right to submit and attach a written disclaimer to his/her evaluation following the conference.

C. Evaluation of Classified Staff

Criteria for evaluating classified staff shall be based upon the job description of the specific assignment.

| | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| Cross References: | Board Policy 5230 | Job Descriptions/Responsibilities |
| | Board Policy 5280 | Termination of Employment |
| | Board Policy 5520 | Staff Development |
| Legal References: | RCW 28A.405.100 | Minimum criteria for the evaluation of certificated employees, including administrators — Procedure — Scope — Penalty |
| | RCW 28A.405.110 | Evaluations — Legislative findings |
| | RCW 28A.405.120 | Training for evaluators |
| | RCW 28A.405.130 | Training in evaluation procedures required |
| | WAC 392-191-010 | Minimum evaluation criteria — certificated classroom teachers |
| | WAC 392-191-020 | Minimum evaluation criteria — certificated support personnel |
| | WAC 392-191-035 | Conduct of the Evaluation |
| | WAC 392-191-045 | Use of Evaluation Results |

Adoption Date:

School District Name

Revised: 04.01.98; 12.20.00

Classification: Essential

Appendix F

Minimum Criteria for the Evaluation of Certificated Employees, Including Administrators

28A.405.100 - 2011

Minimum criteria for the evaluation of certificated employees, including administrators — Procedure — Scope — Models — Penalty.

(1)(a) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the superintendent of public instruction shall establish and may amend from time to time minimum criteria for the evaluation of the professional performance capabilities and development of certificated classroom teachers and certificated support personnel. For classroom teachers the criteria shall be developed in the following categories: Instructional skill; classroom management, professional preparation and scholarship; effort toward improvement when needed; the handling of student discipline and attendant problems; and interest in teaching pupils and knowledge of subject matter.

(b) Every board of directors shall, in accordance with procedure provided in RCW 41.59.010 through 41.59.170, 41.59.910 and 41.59.920, establish evaluative criteria and procedures for all certificated classroom teachers and certificated support personnel. The evaluative criteria must contain as a minimum the criteria established by the superintendent of public instruction pursuant to this section and must be prepared within six months following adoption of the superintendent of public instruction's minimum criteria. The district must certify to the superintendent of public instruction that evaluative criteria have been so prepared by the district.

(2)(a) Pursuant to the implementation schedule established in subsection (7)(b) of this section, every board of directors shall, in accordance with procedures provided in RCW 41.59.010 through 41.59.170, 41.59.910, and 41.59.920, establish revised evaluative criteria and a four-level rating system for all certificated classroom teachers.

(b) The minimum criteria shall include: (i) Centering instruction on high expectations for student achievement; (ii) demonstrating effective teaching practices; (iii) recognizing individual student learning need and developing strategies to address those needs; (iv) providing clear and intentional focus on subject matter content and curriculum; (v) fostering and managing a safe, positive learning environment; (vi) using multiple student data elements to modify instruction and improve student learning; (vii) communicating and collaborating with parents and [the] school community; and (viii) exhibiting collaborative and collegial practices focused on improving instructional practice and student learning.

(c) The four-level rating system used to evaluate the certificated classroom teacher must describe performance along a continuum that indicates the extent to which the criteria have been met or exceeded. When student growth data, if available and relevant to the teacher and subject matter, is referenced in the evaluation process it must be based on multiple measures that can include classroom-based, school-based, district-based, and state-based tools. As used in this subsection, "student growth" means the change in student achievement between two points in time.

(3)(a) Except as provided in subsection (10) of this section, it shall be the responsibility of a principal or his or her designee to evaluate all certificated personnel in his or her school. During each school year all classroom teachers and certificated support personnel shall be observed for the purposes of evaluation at least twice in the performance of their assigned duties. Total observation time for each employee for each school year shall be not less than sixty minutes. An employee in the third year of provisional status as defined in RCW 28A.405.220 shall be observed at least three times in the performance of his or her duties and the total observation time for the school year shall not be less than ninety minutes. Following each observation, or series of observations, the principal or other evaluator shall promptly document the results of the observation in writing, and shall provide the employee with a copy thereof within three days after such report is prepared. New employees shall be observed at least once for a total observation time of thirty minutes during the first ninety calendar days of their employment period.

(b) As used in this subsection and subsection (4) of this section, "employees" means classroom teachers and certificated support personnel.

(4)(a) At any time after October 15th, an employee whose work is not judged satisfactory based on district evaluation criteria shall be notified in writing of the specific areas of deficiencies along with a reasonable program for improvement. During the period of probation, the employee may not be transferred from the supervision of the original evaluator. Improvement of performance or probable cause for nonrenewal must occur and be documented by the original evaluator before any consideration of a request for transfer or reassignment as contemplated by either the individual or the school district. A probationary period of sixty school days shall be established. The establishment of a probationary period does not adversely affect the contract status of an employee within the meaning of RCW 28A.405.300. The purpose of the probationary period is to give the employee opportunity to demonstrate improvements in his or her areas of deficiency. The establishment of the probationary period and the giving of the notice to the employee of deficiency shall be by the school district superintendent and need not be submitted to the board of directors for approval. During the probationary period the evaluator shall meet with the employee at least twice monthly to supervise and make a written evaluation of the progress, if any, made by the employee. The evaluator may authorize one additional certificated employee to evaluate the probationer and to aid the employee in improving his or her areas of deficiency; such additional certificated employee shall be immune from any civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed with regard to the good faith performance of such evaluation. The probationer may be removed from probation if he or she has demonstrated improvement to the satisfaction of the principal in those areas specifically detailed in his or her initial notice of deficiency and subsequently detailed in his or her improvement program. Lack of necessary improvement during the established probationary period, as specifically documented in writing with notification to the probationer and shall constitute grounds for a finding of probable cause under RCW 28A.405.300 or 28A.405.210.

(b) Immediately following the completion of a probationary period that does not produce performance changes detailed in the initial notice of deficiencies and improvement program, the employee may be removed from his or her assignment and placed into an alternative assignment for the remainder of the school year. This reassignment may not displace another employee nor

may it adversely affect the probationary employee's compensation or benefits for the remainder of the employee's contract year. If such reassignment is not possible, the district may, at its option, place the employee on paid leave for the balance of the contract term.

(5) Every board of directors shall establish evaluative criteria and procedures for all superintendents, principals, and other administrators. It shall be the responsibility of the district superintendent or his or her designee to evaluate all administrators. Except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, such evaluation shall be based on the administrative position job description. Such criteria, when applicable, shall include at least the following categories: Knowledge of, experience in, and training in recognizing good professional performance, capabilities and development; school administration and management; school finance; professional preparation and scholarship; effort toward improvement when needed; interest in pupils, employees, patrons and subjects taught in school; leadership; and ability and performance of evaluation of school personnel.

(6)(a) Pursuant to the implementation schedule established by subsection (7) (b) of this section, every board of directors shall establish revised evaluative criteria and a four-level rating system for principals.

(b) The minimum criteria shall include: (i) Creating a school culture that promotes the ongoing improvement of learning and teaching for students and staff; (ii) demonstrating commitment to closing the achievement gap; (iii) providing for school safety; (iv) leading the development, implementation, and evaluation of a data-driven plan for increasing student achievement, including the use of multiple student data elements; (v) assisting instructional staff with alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state and local district learning goals; (vi) monitoring, assisting, and evaluating effective instruction and assessment practices; (vii) managing both staff and fiscal resources to support student achievement and legal responsibilities; and (viii) partnering with the school community to promote student learning.

(c) The four-level rating system used to evaluate the principal must describe performance along a continuum that indicates the extent to which the criteria have been met or exceeded. When available, student growth data that is referenced in the evaluation process must be based on multiple measures that can include classroom-based, school-based, district-based, and state-based tools. As used in this subsection, "student growth" means the change in student achievement between two points in time.

(7)(a) The superintendent of public instruction, in collaboration with state associations representing teachers, principals, administrators, and parents, shall create models for implementing the evaluation system criteria, student growth tools, professional development programs, and evaluator training for certificated classroom teachers and principals. Human resources specialists, professional development experts, and assessment experts must also be consulted. Due to the diversity of teaching assignments and the many developmental levels of students, classroom teachers and principals must be prominently represented in this work. The models must be available for use in the 2011-12 school year.

(b) A new certificated classroom teacher evaluation system that implements the provisions of subsection (2) of this section and a new principal evaluation system that implements the provisions of subsection (6) of this section shall be phased-in beginning with the 2010-11 school year by districts identified in (c) of this subsection and implemented in all school districts beginning with the 2013-14 school year.

(c) A set of school districts shall be selected by the superintendent of public instruction to participate in a collaborative process resulting in the development and piloting of new certificated classroom teacher and principal evaluation systems during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years. These school districts must be selected based on: (i) The agreement of the local associations representing classroom teachers and principals to collaborate with the district in this developmental work and (ii) the agreement to participate in the full range of development and implementation activities, including: Development of rubrics for the evaluation criteria and ratings in subsections (2) and (6) of this section; identification of or development of appropriate multiple measures of student growth in subsections (2) and (6) of this section; development of appropriate evaluation system forms; participation in professional development for principals and classroom teachers regarding the content of the new evaluation system; participation in evaluator training; and participation in activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the new systems and support programs. The school districts must submit to the office of the superintendent of public instruction data that is used in evaluations and all district-collected student achievement, aptitude, and growth data regardless of whether the data is used in evaluations. If the data is not available electronically, the district may submit it in nonelectronic form. The superintendent of public instruction must analyze the districts' use of student data in evaluations, including examining the extent that student data is not used or is underutilized. The superintendent of public instruction must also consult with participating districts and stakeholders, recommend appropriate changes, and address statewide implementation issues. The superintendent of public instruction shall report evaluation system implementation status, evaluation data, and recommendations to appropriate committees of the legislature and governor by July 1, 2011, and at the conclusion of the development phase by July 1, 2012. In the July 1, 2011 report, the superintendent shall include recommendations for whether a single statewide evaluation model should be adopted, whether modified versions developed by school districts should be subject to state approval, and what the criteria would be for determining if a school district's evaluation model meets or exceeds a statewide model. The report shall also identify challenges posed by requiring a state approval process.

(8) Each certificated classroom teacher and certificated support personnel shall have the opportunity for confidential conferences with his or her immediate supervisor on no less than two occasions in each school year. Such confidential conference shall have as its sole purpose the aiding of the administrator in his or her assessment of the employee's professional performance.

(9) The failure of any evaluator to evaluate or supervise or cause the evaluation or supervision of certificated classroom teachers and certificated support personnel or administrators in accordance with this section, as now or hereafter amended, when it is his or her specific assigned or delegated responsibility to do so, shall be sufficient cause for the nonrenewal of any such

evaluator's contract under RCW 28A.405.210, or the discharge of such evaluator under RCW 28A.405.300.

(10) After a certificated classroom teacher or certificated support personnel has four years of satisfactory evaluations under subsection (1) of this section or has received one of the two top ratings for four years under subsection (2) of this section, a school district may use a short form of evaluation, a locally bargained evaluation emphasizing professional growth, an evaluation under subsection (1) or (2) of this section, or any combination thereof. The short form of evaluation shall include either a thirty minute observation during the school year with a written summary or a final annual written evaluation based on the criteria in subsection (1) or (2) of this section and based on at least two observation periods during the school year totaling at least sixty minutes without a written summary of such observations being prepared. A locally bargained short-form evaluation emphasizing professional growth must provide that the professional growth activity conducted by the certificated classroom teacher be specifically linked to one or more of the certificated classroom teacher evaluation criteria. However, the evaluation process set forth in subsection (1) or (2) of this section shall be followed at least once every three years unless this time is extended by a local school district under the bargaining process set forth in chapter 41.59 RCW. The employee or evaluator may require that the evaluation process set forth in subsection (1) or (2) of this section be conducted in any given school year. No evaluation other than the evaluation authorized under subsection (1) or (2) of this section may be used as a basis for determining that an employee's work is not satisfactory under subsection (1) or (2) of this section or as probable cause for the nonrenewal of an employee's contract under RCW 28A.405.210 unless an evaluation process developed under chapter 41.59 RCW determines otherwise.

[2010 c 235 § 202; 1997 c 278 § 1; 1994 c 115 § 1; 1990 c 33 § 386; 1985 c 420 § 6; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 114 § 3; 1975 1st ex.s. c 288 § 22; 1969 ex.s. c 34 § 22. Formerly RCW 28A.67.065.]
Finding—2010 c 235: See note following RCW 28A.405.245. Construction of chapter—
Employee's rights preserved: See RCW 41.59.920. Construction of chapter—Employer's
responsibilities and rights preserved: See RCW 41.59.930.
Criteria used for evaluation of staff members to be included in guide: RCW 28A.150.230.
Additional notes found at www.leg.wa.gov

Appendix G

Washington State Principal and Teacher Evaluation Pilot and the Sig Merit Program

The Washington State Legislature has taken a significant interest in evaluation. One result of this interest is Engrossed Second Substitute Bill 6696 (E2SSB 6696) which was signed into law on March 29, 2010 and became effective on June 10, 2010.

Susan Mielke of the Washington State Senate Committee Services, prepared a memorandum to explain the implications of this new law. Several sections of the memorandum, dated December 6, 2010 are included in verbatim form below in the following text (excerpts are noted by italics).

There are two separate Teacher/Principal evaluation efforts currently taking place in Washington. Both efforts are enabled by E2SSB 6696, which was passed in the 2010 legislative session. There are two distinct Parts of E2SSB 6696 that are relevant to the teacher/principal evaluation efforts: Part II, which establishes state teacher/principal evaluation pilot districts that uses state funds; and Part I, which creates a state accountability process that uses federal funds (the federal grant requires the use of an evaluation system).

Part I of E2SSB is described in the Memorandum cited above as follows: *Part I of the legislation provides the authority for the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the State Board of Education to implement a state accountability system that recognizes successful schools and establishes a state process for school districts that are eligible for federal Title I funds and have the persistently lowest-achieving schools to access a federal School Improvement Grant (SIG). The SIG is to implement one of four federal intervention models. In 2010, the state accountability system is voluntary but becomes a required action beginning in 2011.*

- *Teacher/Principal Evaluation & Student Growth: The SIG has an additional requirement for recipients that choose the transformation or turnaround model to "implement rigorous, transparent and equitable evaluation systems for teachers and principals that are developed with staff and **use student growth as a significant factor.**" The SIG defines student growth as, "the change in achievement for an individual student between two or more points in time. For grades in which the State administers summative assessments in reading/language arts and mathematics, student growth data must be based on a student's score on the State's assessment. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms."*

- *Timeline: SIG recipients must have an evaluation model developed by the end of the 2010-11 school year to be implemented in the 2011-12 school year.*

- *Participating school districts: Forty-seven schools in 27 districts were eligible to apply for a SIG. Applications were submitted for 41 of the schools. Eighteen schools in nine districts were approved to receive SIGs for the 2010-11 school year ranging from \$447,641 to \$4,500,001 (based on the district plan to implement the required elements of the federal intervention models.) A SIG is for one-year but can be renewed for up to two additional years. The SIG*

recipients, which are being are (sic) called MERIT schools (Models of Equity and Excellence through Rapid Improvement and Turnaround).

As stated in the memorandum, Merit schools have an option of using one of four strategies for improvement. The memorandum identifies Turnaround, Restart, Closure and Transformation as the options. They are defined as follows:

- *Turnaround.* Includes replacing the principal and rehiring no more than 50% of the school's staff, adopting a new governance structure, and implementing an instructional program that is research-based and vertically aligned from one grade to the next as well as aligned with the state's academic standards.
- *Transformation.* Includes replacing the principal, developing teacher and principal leader effectiveness, implementing comprehensive instructional reform strategies, extending learning time, creating community connections, providing operating flexibility, and sustained support.
- *School Closure.* The district closes the school and enrolls the students who attended the school in other higher-achieving schools in the district.
- *Restart Model.* The district converts the school or closes it and reopens it under the management of an education management organization (EMO) that has been selected through a rigorous review process. Note that while charter school operators and charter management organizations (CMOs) constitute a restart under the federal guidelines, these are not currently authorized by the Washington State Legislature.

The Memorandum referenced above further describes the Teacher/Principal Evaluation pilot and as defined by Part II of the Engrossed Senate Bill 6696 (E2SSB 6696):

Part II of the legislation requires developing, piloting, and implementing new state classroom teacher and principal four-level rating evaluation systems with specified minimum criteria.

Teacher/Principal Evaluation & Student Growth: *Under E2SSB 6696 when student growth data (showing a change in student achievement between two points in time) is available for principals and available and relevant to the teacher and subject matter it must be based on multiple measures, if referenced in the evaluation.*

Timeline: *The teacher/principal evaluation pilots will be conducted during the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years. By July 1, 2011, OSPI must report to the Legislature, including recommendations for whether a single statewide evaluation model should be adopted, whether modified versions should be subject to state approval, what the criteria would be for state approval, and challenges posed by requiring a state approval process. By July 1, 2012, OSPI must report on the status of the implementation. The new evaluation systems must be implemented in all school districts beginning in 2013-14.*

Participating school districts: The legislation required the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to choose the pilot districts and required the pilot districts to have an agreement with the local teacher and principal associations to collaborate with the district to pilot the new teacher and principal evaluation systems. OSPI created a steering committee of representatives from the OSPI, Governor's office, Washington State PTA, Washington Education Association, Association of Washington School Principals, and Washington Association of School Administrators to recommend the districts to be the pilot districts to Superintendent Dorn.

There are eight participating districts and one consortium of eight districts with the regional ESD. For the 2010-11 school year, districts received between \$100,000 and \$180,000 (based on student enrollment) for the first year of the two year pilot to support state and district level work.

The criteria that must be used as the basis to evaluate principals is outlined in the memorandum and is listed below:

The revised evaluation criteria must include: creating a school culture that promotes the ongoing improvement of learning and teaching for students and staff; demonstrable commitment to closing the achievement gap; providing for school safety; leading the development, implementation, and evaluation of a data-driven plan for increasing student achievement, including the use of multiple student data elements; assisting instructional staff with alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment with state and local district learning goals; monitoring, assisting, and evaluating effective instruction and assessment practices; managing both staff and fiscal resources to support student achievement and legal responsibilities; and partnering with the school community to promote student learning

Comparing the criteria listed above to the ISLLC standards reveals that the mandated criteria and the ISLLC standards are aligned in some areas. Creating a school culture that promotes the ongoing improvement of learning and teaching for students and staff is ISLLC standard 2. Demonstrating a commitment to closing the achievement gap could be interpreted as ISLLC standard 1. Providing for school safety is and managing the fiscal resources and legal responsibilities could be aligned with standard 3. Partnering with the school community to promote student learning is contained within ISLLC standard 4.

The criteria required by E2SSB 6696 does not appear to align with ISLLC standard 5: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner. Standard 6: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

It could be argued that another point of departure between the ISLLC standards and the criteria outlined in E2SSB 6696 is the emphasis that is placed on the use of data. The evaluative criteria emphasizes that the principal use data extensively to make decisions and guide student improvement. The ISLLC standards (2008) do not place this emphasis on the use of data. One of the functions under standard 4 is the ability to collect and analyze data and information pertinent to the educational environment.

The Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) in the publication: “Evaluating Principal Leadership in the Performance-Based School” (AWSP 2010), reorganizes the criteria established by E2SBB 6696 and presents eight evaluation criteria for principals. These eight criteria are:

- 1) **Creating a Culture:** Influence, establish and sustain a school culture conducive to continuous improvement for students and staff.
- 2) **Ensuring School Safety:** Lead the development and annual update of a comprehensive safe schools plan that includes prevention, intervention, crisis response and recovery.
- 3) **Planning with Data:** Lead the development, implementation and evaluation of the data driven plan for improvement of student achievement.
- 4) **Aligning Curriculum:** Assist instructional staff in aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment with state and local learning goals.
- 5) **Improving Instruction:** Monitor, assist and evaluate staff implementation of the school improvement plan, effective instruction and assessment practices.
- 6) **Managing Resources:** Manage human and fiscal resources to accomplish student achievement goals.
- 7) **Engaging Communities:** Communicate and partner with school community members to promote student learning.
- 8) **Closing the Gap:** Demonstrate a commitment to closing the achievement gap.

AWSP does recognize that the ISLLC standards are important and the basis of the principal training and certification. Beginning on page 13 of the publication “Evaluating Principal Leadership in the Performance-Based School” (AWSP 2010), AWSP provides an analysis of how the criteria they have adopted align with the ISLLC standards. That analysis follows:

ISLLC Standard 1: Vision

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students through facilitating a shared vision of learning.

Evaluation Criterion 1: Creating a Culture

Influence, establish and sustain a school culture conducive to continuous improvement for students and staff.

ISLLC Standard 2: Instruction

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students through sustaining a culture of student learning and staff professional growth.

Evaluation Criterion 1: Creating a Culture

Influence, establish and sustain a school culture conducive to continuous improvement for students and staff.

Evaluation Criterion 5: Improving Instruction

Monitor, assist and evaluate staff implementation of the School Improvement Plan, effective instruction and assessment practices.

ISLLC Standard 3: Safety

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students through ensuring a safe, efficient and effective learning environment.

Evaluation Criterion 1: Creating a Culture

Influence, establish and sustain a school culture conducive to continuous improvement for students and staff.

Evaluation Criterion 2: Ensuring School Safety

Lead the development and annual update of a comprehensive safe schools plan that includes prevention, intervention, crisis response and recovery.

Evaluation Criterion 3: Planning with Data

Lead the development, implementation and evaluation of the data-driven plan for improvement of student achievement.

Evaluation Criterion 6: Managing Resources

Manage human and fiscal resources to accomplish student achievement goals.

ISLLC Standard 4: Collaboration

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students through collaboration working with diverse communities and mobilizing community resources.

Evaluation Criterion 7: Engaging Communities

Communicate and partner with school community members to promote student learning.

ISLLC Standard 5: Integrity

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students through acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner, ISLLC Standard 5 does not match precisely with one specific evaluation criterion. AWSP believes that this language describes a leader's quality as opposed to his or her responsibility. We believe ISLLC Standard 5 is critical and applies to each of the eight evaluation criteria.

ISLLC Standard 6: Outreach

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students through understanding and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. ISLLC Standard 6 does not match precisely with one specific evaluation criterion. To try to better understand the intent of the standard, AWSP turned to the original "functions" that accompanied the ISLLC Standards. It appears that the intent of this standard is to influence the world outside the school. We do believe that *Criterion 7, Engaging Communities*, speaks to this standard; however, we did not include advocacy and the influencing of state policy in this document.

Appendix H

Superintendent of Public Instruction Press Release and Survey Data

OLYMPIA — April 6, 2011 — The first district-level survey showing how teachers and principals are being evaluated was released today, State Superintendent Randy Dorn said.

A total of 289 out of the state's 295 school districts completed the survey, which is required by the federal government. The survey can be found at the bottom right of the following Web page: <http://www.k12.wa.us/Communications/StimulusPackage/FiscalStabilization.aspx>.

“Getting this initial data is a great first step,” Dorn said. “Evaluations are a national issue. In Washington, we’ve had the same evaluation system for more than 25 years. Judged by today’s standards, the system is neither fair nor meaningful. We need a system that looks at performance in multiple ways. The work we’re doing now will get to that point, and I think other states will look to us as a model.”

[State law passed in 2010](#) directed the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to establish a four-tier evaluation system by 2013-14. (Currently, most districts have a two-tier system: satisfactory and unsatisfactory.) To get to that new system, the Legislature directed OSPI to develop and pilot different evaluation systems in 2010-11 and 2011-12.

[Eight districts and one consortium of districts](#) were chosen for the pilots.

The survey data show that 59,022 of 59,481 teachers – and 2,578 of 2,619 principals – were given a satisfactory rating in 2009-10. That same year, 209 districts of the 289 that completed the survey used a two-tier system to rate its teachers. The numbers mirror national data released.

Many teachers and administrators agree that current evaluation systems are deeply flawed. OSPI, the American Institutes for Research and the state’s nine educational service districts recently conducted 10 educator forums. More than 350 people attended, including teachers, principals, administrators, parents and community members. Attendees were asked about evaluation systems. Some of the criticisms include:

- The two-tiered system is not helpful;
- Classroom observations are pre-planned, leading to observations that don’t represent actual classroom practices; and
- Feedback isn’t provided to teachers and principals until the end of the school year, when it is too late to adjust teaching in response.

“This is very important work,” Dorn said. “It’s work that doesn’t just benefit teachers, it benefits students, too. A better evaluation system will lead to better teaching, and better teaching will lead to better learning.”

| Washington State School District Teacher and Principal Evaluation System Survey Results | | | |
|--|---|--|-------------------|
| 2009-2010 | | | |
| Data as of 4/6/2011 | | | |
| | | Certificated Classroom Teachers | Principals |
| 1. | Results of performance evaluations for certificated classroom teachers and principals: Count of satisfactory and unsatisfactory teachers and principals: | Count of Teachers and Principals | |
| | Satisfactory | 59,022 | 2,578 |
| | Unsatisfactory | 459 | 41 |
| 2. | Description of Rating System: Did you use a rating system that consisted of only two ratings (Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory)? | Count of Districts | |
| | Yes | 209 | 196 |
| | No | 80 | 93 |
| 3. | System Capabilities: Do you have a system that is capable of collecting counts at the criteria level? | | |
| | Yes | 81 | 68 |
| | No | 208 | 221 |
| | If "Yes", is the capability currently being used? | 60 | 50 |
| | Is the system is electronic? | 21 | 14 |
| 4. | Evaluation Criteria: Did you evaluate based on the criteria set forth in the RCW? | | |
| | Yes | 282 | 277 |
| | No | 7 | 12 |
| 5. | Question 5 requested specific attachments. There is nothing to report for this question | | |

| | | | | |
|----------|---|-----|--|-----|
| 6 | Frequency of observations: What is the district's minimum required observations for each of the following? | | | |
| | Provisional Teachers | | | |
| | Once a Year | 2 | | |
| | Twice a Year | 179 | | |
| | Three Times a Year | 85 | | |
| | Other | 23 | | |
| | Continuing Teachers | | | |
| | Once a Year | 33 | | |
| | Twice a Year | 237 | | |
| | Three Times a Year | 8 | | |
| | Other | 11 | | |
| | PGO Teachers | | | |
| | Once a Year | 89 | | |
| | Twice a Year | 94 | | |
| | Three Times a Year | 15 | | |
| | Other | 91 | | |
| | Principals | | | |
| | Once a Year | | | 107 |
| | Twice a Year | | | 68 |
| | Three Times a Year | | | 13 |
| | Other | | | 101 |
| | | | | |
| 7 | Methodology: Select methodologies used in evaluation process (multiple items may be selected): | | | |
| | Principal observation | 274 | | |
| | Superintendent observation | 53 | | 219 |
| | District office personnel observation | 37 | | 76 |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---|-----|--|-----|
| | Teacher evaluation | | | 27 |
| | Self evaluation | 77 | | 78 |
| | Student evaluation | 9 | | 4 |
| | Peer evaluation | 6 | | 3 |
| | Other | 11 | | 56 |
| | | | | |
| 8 | Participants: Select the expected participants for evaluation process (multiple items may be selected): | | | |
| | School Board | 13 | | 62 |
| | Superintendent | 75 | | 236 |
| | Principal | 268 | | 95 |
| | Teachers | 119 | | 27 |
| | Aides/Paraprofessionals | 7 | | 12 |
| | Student | 4 | | 3 |
| | Parents/Guardians | 2 | | 3 |
| | Other | 20 | | 51 |
| | | | | |
| 9 | Feedback Protocol: Select the feedback protocols used in evaluation process (multiple items may be selected): | | | |
| | In-person review | 282 | | 266 |
| | Written documentation delivered to participant | 277 | | 257 |
| | Team collaboration and presentation | 11 | | 17 |
| | Other | 8 | | 17 |
| | | | | |
| 10 | Results: Indicate whether the results of the evaluation system are used in following processes (multiple items may be selected): | | | |
| | Professional Development | 257 | | 241 |
| | Compensation | - | | 27 |

| | | | |
|----------|---|-----|-----|
| | Promotion | 24 | 52 |
| | Establishment of probationary period | 244 | 171 |
| | Probable cause for non-renewal of contract | 268 | 234 |
| | Instructional improvement | 278 | 135 |
| | Leadership improvement | 111 | 255 |
| | Other | 7 | 17 |
| | | | |
| 1 | Achievement: Are student achievement outcomes used | | |
| 1 | in evaluations? | | |
| | Yes | 33 | 63 |
| | If "Yes": Student achievement outcome included in collective bargaining agreement | 5 | 5 |
| | No | 256 | 226 |
| | | | |
| 1 | AYP: Is Adequate Yearly Progress used in principal | | |
| 2 | retention? | | |
| | Yes | | 41 |
| | No | | 248 |
| | | | |