SOUTH DAKOTA

PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS PILOT

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INTRODUCTION

Planning for principal evaluation reform in South Dakota commenced in 2010 with the passage of legislation that required school districts to adopt professional principal standards and conduct regular principal evaluations. The same legislation charged the South Dakota Department of Education with the development of a model evaluation tool.

The following year a Principal Evaluation Workgroup comprised of education stakeholders recommended the adoption of six (6) principal performance domains that included 22 evaluation components. As part of the state's application for flexibility from the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), commonly referred to as No Child Left Behind, additional evaluation reform measures were introduced. As part of this waiver application, the state agreed to expand the educator evaluation and professional support systems to incorporate quantitative measures of student growth as one factor in determining and differentiating principal effectiveness.

In 2012 a Principal Evaluation Workgroup developed a draft handbook that promoted evaluation best practices and created a framework for future work of incorporating student growth into the state's evaluation procedures. The following year, the newly formed South Dakota Commission on Teaching and Learning was tasked with continuing the work of the Principal Evaluation Workgroup by providing districts with recommended procedures and practices that satisfy both federal and state requirements. The Commission on Teaching and Learning relied upon input from teachers, school administrators, school board members, education stakeholders, and members of the South Dakota Department of Education to include those recommended procedures and practices that comprise the Principal Effectiveness Handbook.

Recommended procedures and practices presented in the Principal Effectiveness Handbook were piloted in selected South Dakota schools during the 2013-2014 school year. Pilot schools representing school districts of various sizes, geographic locations, and administrative structures were requested to implement and experiment with evaluation systems that utilize multiple measures of professional practice and student growth to determine and differentiate principal

performance. This report summarizes the results of those efforts reported by the principals and their evaluators comprising the pilot schools.

PURPOSES

According to the South Dakota Department of Education website, the South Dakota Principal Effectiveness Pilot seeks to:

1. Assess the quality and relevance of a recommended set of professional practice standards that guide principal evaluation and establish a foundation for principal effectiveness ratings;

2. Assess the relevance of recommended quantitative measures of student growth, which will be used as one significant factor in determining principal effectiveness ratings;

3. Assess administrative procedures, training, and support systems associated with implementing principal evaluation systems that result in summative effectiveness ratings;

4. Identify best practices, challenges and opportunities associated with implementing principal evaluation systems; and

5. Inform any necessary changes to the model principal evaluation system, which will be an option for districts to use as state and federal principal evaluation requirements take effect in the 2014-15 school year.

PRINCIPLES OF THE PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS PILOT

In order to achieve the purposes of the South Dakota Principal Effectiveness Pilot, schools involved in the pilot were requested to implement local principal evaluation systems based on the following five core principles:

1. Standards-Based Evaluations of Professional Practice – pilot participants will implement evaluation systems based in part upon principal performance relative to standards of professional practice. A recommended set of six professional practice standards, complete with 22 indicators of performance, will be assessed and weighted to determine a professional practices rating.

2. Evaluation of Principal Impact on Student Growth – pilot participants will implement evaluation systems that incorporate quantitative measures of student growth as one significant factor in determining principal effectiveness. Pilots will use two recommended quantitative measures, which will be weighted and combined to form a student growth rating. The first recommended measure is based on a principal's efforts to lead teachers in the establishment and accomplishment of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). The second recommended measure relies upon establishing and meeting school-wide improvement goals measured by either the School Performance Index (SPI) or progress narrowing achievement gaps.

3. Summative Principal Effectiveness Ratings – pilot participants will separately determine professional practice and student growth ratings for principals, and then combine the separate ratings into a summative rating that differentiates performance into one of three categories: Below Expectations, Meets Expectations and Exceeds Expectations. Determining principal effectiveness ratings for each principal is required as a part of the state's ESEA Flexibility Waiver.

4. Consistent Evaluation Cycle – the recommended principal evaluation process is an annual cycle, requiring principals to be evaluated each year.

5. Evaluator and Principal Training – Pilot participants will receive training on conducting principal evaluations that include measures of professional practice and student growth.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Participating Schools

The South Dakota Department of Education recruited a diverse group of pilot partners that represented various school enrollment categories, geographic locations, and school administrative structures. Selection of pilot partners conformed to the following broad criteria:

- Six (6) pilot partners will have a district enrollment of 600 or less.

- Four (4) pilot partners will have a district enrollment between 600 and 2,000.

- Two (2) pilot partners will have a district enrollment above 2,000.

- At least three (3) of the 12 pilot partners will be located West of the Missouri River.

- At least one (1) pilot partner will have a combined principal and superintendent position.

Twelve school districts were selected to participate in the Principal Effectiveness Pilot during the 2013-2014 school year. In addition to participating in the research project, administrators from these schools were awarded stipends to attend two pilot training events that focused on evaluating principals and evaluating student growth. These participants also were expected to attend two days of in-district coaching in the principal evaluation process. Each pilot district was permitted to submit district-level or school-level applications. The participating school districts (including specific schools within the district) included the following:

- Alcester-Hudson – junior high and high school
- Bon Homme – all district schools
- Bridgewater-Emery – high school
- Chamberlain – all district schools
- Custer – all district schools
- Groton Area – all district schools
- Harrisburg High School
- McLaughlin – all district schools Elementary School
- Rapid City – Horace Mann Elementary, Grandview Elementary, Southwest Middle School, Central High School, and Stevens High School
- South Central – all district schools
- Wagner – all district schools
- Wessington Springs – all district schools
- Willow Lake – all district schools

Instrumentation

Principal Surveys. Drs. Mark Baron and Fred Aderhold, professors of educational administration at the University of South Dakota, developed a principal survey to gather feedback from participants regarding the implementation of the Principal Effectiveness Pilot process. A panel of individuals from the South Dakota Department of Education and East Dakota Educational Cooperative, as well as several principals from schools not participating in the Principal Effectiveness Pilot carefully reviewed both surveys for form and content. Based on these reviews, appropriate revisions were made to the survey.

The final version of the principal survey consisted of 42 items that addressed administrative procedures, training, and support systems associated with implementing the principal evaluation system; identifying best practices, challenges, and opportunities associated with implementing the principal evaluation system; and, informing any necessary changes to the model principal evaluation system prior to system-wide implementation scheduled for the 2014-2015 school year. Forty items on the principal survey used multiple choice format, while an additional two items were open ended allowing responding principals to express their thoughts in their own words. The principal survey may be found online at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1EgEykfKiJ84pBBTvBe3sWHcZhFk94qe__J3sxdDdMp4/viewform.

Principal and Evaluator Focus Group Interviews. Drs. Baron and Aderhold also created a focus group interview protocol for both principals and those evaluating the principals who participated in the year-long Principal Effectiveness Pilot. The focus group interviews were designed to gather participants' views regarding the overall effectiveness of the pilot implementation as well as providing an opportunity for them to comment on effectiveness of training sessions, and changes they observed in the principal evaluation process over the course of the pilot year.

Both focus group interview protocols were reviewed by members of the South Dakota Department of Education and East Dakota Educational Cooperative, as well as several principals from schools not participating in the Principal Effectiveness Pilot. The final version of the principal interviews consisted of 30

open-ended items, while the final evaluator focus group interview protocol consisted of 32 open-ended items. Additionally, the evaluator focus group interview requested summative ratings of all principals evaluated during the pilot year. Samples of the principal and evaluator focus group interview protocols may be found in Appendices A and B, respectively.

Data Collection

Principal Surveys. Data from the principal surveys were collected initially during February 2014 with a follow-up administration in March. Principals were emailed an invitation to participate that included a link to the principal survey instrument and an attached cover sheet explained the purpose of the survey and provided another link to the survey instrument. The link led directly to the principal survey that was posted online as a Google® form that could be completed and submitted electronically. The data collection period for the principal surveys ended in late March.

Principal and Evaluator Focus Group Interviews. Data from the principal and evaluator focus group interviews were collected during June 2014. Principals at all 24 schools were interviewed electronically. An email with the focus group interview questions and a cover letter was sent to each of these 24 principals. The principals were requested to forward the evaluator focus group interview questions to each of the individuals who had evaluated them as part of the Principal Effectiveness Pilot. Principals and evaluators were requested to write their responses to each interview question and forward the completed interviews back to the researchers.

Summative Principal Ratings. An additional element of the evaluator focus group interview was a request to provide summative evaluations for the principals they evaluated during the pilot year. Data collection for the focus groups ended in late June 2014.

Data Analysis

Principal Surveys. Responses to the multiple choice items comprising the principal and evaluator surveys were analyzed using descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. Responses to the open-

ended items were listed individually and examined for similarities and differences. Similar responses were grouped together and the main themes expressed in these responses determined. All descriptive statistics and initial open-ended response listings utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS, Version 22.0).

Principal and Evaluator Focus Group Interviews. Responses to the open-ended items comprising the principal and evaluator focus group interviews were analyzed using qualitative methodology. Responses to each sub-item of the semi-structured interviews were listed individually and examined for similarities. Similar responses were grouped together and the main themes expressed in these responses were determined.

Summative Principal Ratings. The final data analyzed were the evaluators' summative ratings of their principals utilizing the principal effectiveness pilot evaluation system. Frequencies and percentages of those rated *below expectations*, *meeting expectations*, and *exceeding expectations* were computed.

RESULTS

Results of data analysis are presented in separate sections principal surveys, principal and evaluator focus group responses, and summative principal ratings. Results will be presented as tables or charts with an accompanying narrative summary of the salient findings. *All percentages in tables that do not sum to 100.0 are due to rounding off to the tenths place. Additionally, most narratives that accompany tables combine the two highest and two lowest responses to each item with the neutral or midpoint responses omitted to enhance interpretability of the responses.*

Principal Survey Results

Results from the responses of returned principals' surveys are presented in this section. A total of 18 principals responded to the survey, representing a 75.0% response rate. *Note that the original survey items were given as five-point scale items anchored by "Very Helpful" and "Not Helpful," but for purposes of descriptive narration, responses to the scaled items are presented here as frequencies for each scale point.*

Table 1. How helpful was training on principal effectiveness (held in Pierre in July)?

	No.	%
Did not attend training	3	16.7
Attended training	15	83.3
Very helpful	2	13.3
Helpful	8	53.3
Somewhat helpful	5	33.3
A little helpful	0	0.0
Not helpful	0	0.0

Most principals (83.3%) attended the two sessions held in July. Of those who did attend, two thirds (66.6%) indicated the training was helpful or very helpful. None of the principals indicated the trainings were less than somewhat helpful.

Table 2. How helpful was the training on Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) which was offered the end of July and first of August?

	No.	%
Did not attend training	1	5.6
Attended training	17	94.4
Very helpful	6	35.3
Helpful	7	41.2
Somewhat helpful	4	23.5
A little helpful	0	0.0
Not helpful	0	0.0

Nearly all principals (94.4%) attended the sessions held in July and August regarding SLOs. Of those who did attend, more than three quarters (76.5%) indicated the training was helpful or very helpful. None of the principals indicated the trainings were less than somewhat helpful.

Table 3. Are you aware of the principal professional practice standards (the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals) which include six domains of principal performance and 22 components designed to serve as the foundation of principal evaluations and promote professional growth for principals?

	No.	%
Yes	18	100.0
No	0	0.0

All principals (100.0%) were aware of the principal professional practice standards (the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals).

Table 4. The domain and components on vision and goals are relevant to my job. (Domain 1)

	No.	%
Strongly agree	4	22.2
Agree	10	55.6
Neutral	3	16.7
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

More than three quarters of the principals (77.8%) agreed that the domain and components on vision and goals were relevant to their job. Only one principal (5.6%) did not agree with this statement.

Table 5. The domain and components on instructional leadership are relevant to my job. (Domain 2)

	No.	%
Strongly agree	6	33.3
Agree	11	61.1
Neutral	0	0.0
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Nearly all of the principals (94.4%) agreed that the domain and components on instructional leadership were relevant to their job. Only one principal (5.6%) did not agree with this statement.

Table 6. The domain and components on school management are relevant to my job. (Domain 3)

	No.	%
Strongly agree	7	38.9
Agree	8	44.4
Neutral	2	11.1
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Five out of six principals (83.3%) agreed that the domain and components on school management were relevant to their job. Only one principal (5.6%) did not agree with this statement.

Table 7. The domain and components on safety of students are relevant to my job. (Domain 4)

	No.	%
Strongly agree	8	44.4
Agree	8	44.4
Neutral	1	5.6
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Most of the principals (88.8%) agreed that the domain and components on safety of students were relevant to their job. Only one principal (5.6%) did not agree with this statement.

Table 8. The domain and components on school and community are relevant to my job. (Domain 5)

	No.	%
Strongly agree	6	33.3
Agree	11	61.1
Neutral	0	0.0
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

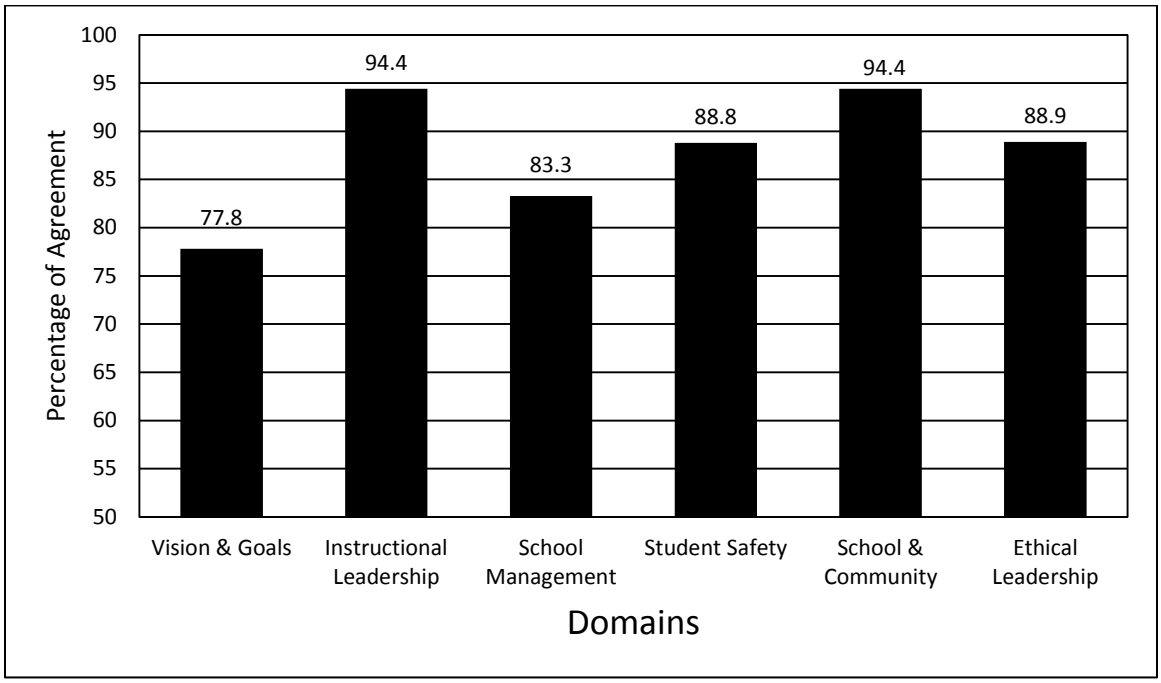
Nearly all of the principals (94.4%) agreed that the domain and components on school and community were relevant to their job. Only one principal (5.6%) did not agree with this statement.

Table 9. The Domain and Components on ethical leadership are relevant to my job. (Domain 6)

	No.	%
Strongly agree	6	33.3
Agree	10	55.6
Neutral	1	5.6
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Most of the principals (88.9%) agreed that the domain and components on ethical leadership were relevant to their job. Only one principal (5.6%) did not agree with this statement.

Figure 1. Summary of relevance of domains and components to the Principals' Jobs



A comparative summary reveals that principals considered Instructional Leadership (94.4%) and School and Community (94.4%) to be the most relevant domains and components to their jobs. In contrast, principals rated Vision and Goals (77.8%) to be least relevant to their jobs (albeit more than three quarters agreed that this domain was relevant to their jobs). The domains and components of School Management (83.3%), Student Safety (88.8%), and Ethical Leadership (88.9%) were rated intermediately between the previously reported domains.

Table 10. How helpful are the domains and components of the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals in providing a record of evidence to inform principal personnel decisions?

	No.	%
Very helpful	1	5.9
Helpful	11	64.7
Somewhat helpful	5	29.4
A little helpful	0	0.0
Not helpful	0	0.0

Nearly three quarters of the principals (70.6%) felt that the domains and components of the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals were helpful in providing a record of evidence to inform principal personnel decisions. No principals disagreed with this statement. (*Note – one principal failed to respond to this items and was not counted*.)

Table 11. How helpful are the domains and components of the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals in communicating clearly defined expectations for principals?

	No.	%
Very helpful	2	11.1
Helpful	13	72.2
Somewhat helpful	3	16.7
A little helpful	0	0.0
Not helpful	0	0.0

Five out of six principals (83.3%) felt that the domains and components of the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals were helpful in communicating clearly defined expectations for principals. No principals disagreed with this statement.

Table 12. The evaluation process provides regular, timely and useful feedback that guides professional growth for principals.

	No.	%
Very helpful	4	22.2
Helpful	11	61.1
Somewhat helpful	2	11.1
A little helpful	1	5.6
Not helpful	0	0.0

More than three quarters of the principals (83.3%) indicated agreement that the evaluation process provides regular, timely and useful feedback that guides professional growth for principals (i.e., that the process is helpful for guiding professional growth). Only one principal (5.6%) did not find the process helpful.

Table 13. I understand how student growth factors in to the principal's overall performance rating.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	4	22.2
Agree	10	55.6
Neutral	1	5.6
Disagree	2	11.1
Strongly disagree	1	5.6

Just over three quarters of the principals (77.8%) agreed that they understood how student growth factors in to the principal's overall performance rating. Only about one in six principals (16.7%) did not indicate the same understanding.

Table 14. I understand how the principal evaluation process is used for continual improvement of leadership.

	No.	%
Yes	15	83.3
Somewhat	3	16.7
No	0	0.0

The great majority of principals (83.3%) indicated that they understood how the principal evaluation process is used for continual improvement of leadership. None of the principals responded that they had no understanding of how the process is used.

Table 15. I understand how the principal evaluation process meaningfully differentiates performance using three performance levels.

	No.	%
Yes	15	83.3
Somewhat	3	16.7
No	0	0.0

The great majority of principals (83.3%) also indicated that they understood how the principal evaluation process meaningfully differentiates performance using three performance levels. None of the principals responded that they had no understanding of how the process differentiates performance.

Table 16. Do you believe it is appropriate to use results of teacher-developed Student Learning Objectives as a measure of principal impact on student growth?

	No.	%
Yes	4	22.2
Somewhat	8	44.4
No	6	33.3

Slightly less than one quarter of the principals (22.2%) agreed that they believe it is appropriate to use results of teacher-developed Student Learning Objectives as a measure of principal impact on student growth. One third of the principals (33.3%) did not agree that teacher-developed SLOs are appropriate to use as a measure of principal impact on student growth. The largest group (44.4%) expressed uncertainty regarding this question.

Table 17. Though you did not use SPI or AMO data as a measure of student growth this year, do you believe data from those sources are appropriate to use to measure a principal's impact on student growth?

	No.	%
Yes	2	11.1
Somewhat	9	50.0
No	7	38.9

Only about one in ten principals (11.1%) believed that data from SPI or AMO are appropriate to use to measure a principal's impact on student growth. While more than one third of the principals (38.9%) did not believe these sources are appropriate to use to measure a principal’s impact on student growth, half of the principals (50.0%) expressed uncertainty.

Table 18. I understand how the professional practices rating and the student growth rating are used to determine my overall performance rating.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	4	22.2
Agree	8	44.4
Neutral	6	33.3
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Two thirds of the principals (66.6%) expressed understanding of how the professional practices rating and the student growth rating are used to determine my overall performance rating. None of them indicated that they did not understand.

Figure 2. Describe the process you went through to determine which domains and components would serve as the basis for your professional practice evaluation.

Responses to this open-ended survey item garnered a multitude of responses in the principals' own words. The following list summarizes the approaches to this process culled from the 13 total responses received:

- The district selected six and then we selected two of those as our personal goals for professional practice.

- We used all domains and components.

- My superintendent and I met with my pilot coach who helped us select two of the six domains to focus on.

- We followed the recommendations of a district administrator who served on the Teaching and Learning Commission.

- Our supervisor made suggestions and input was gathered form all district principals.

- Self-assessment with selection of the goals I felt were my greatest area of needed improvement.

- The components chosen followed the shared vision and goals that the superintendent and I had for the district.

- We have not completed the selection of domains and goals in my district yet.

Table 19. The new evaluation system for assessing principal effectiveness establishes clear expectations for how principals will be evaluated.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	1	5.6
Agree	13	72.2
Neutral	4	22.2
Disagree	0	0.0
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

More than three quarters of the principals (77.8%) agreed that the new evaluation system for assessing principal effectiveness establishes clear expectations for how principals will be evaluated. None of the principals disagreed with this statement.

Table 20. The new evaluation system for assessing principal effectiveness generates an accurate assessment of principal performance.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	0	0.0
Agree	12	66.7
Neutral	5	27.8
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Two thirds of the principals (66.7%) expressed agreement that the new evaluation system for assessing principal effectiveness generates an accurate assessment of principal performance. Only one principal (5.6%) did not ascribe to this belief.

Table 21. I assembled a portfolio of artifacts to document my individual professional growth related to the domains and components of the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals.

	No.	%
Yes	4	22.2
No	3	16.7
Just getting started	6	33.3
Plan to by the end of the school year	4	22.2
Have no intention of assembling a portfolio	1	5.6

The largest group of principals (33.3%) were just getting started with assembling a portfolio. The next largest groups indicated that they either had assembled their portfolio of artifacts (22.2%) or planned to have the portfolio assembled by the end of the school year (22.2%). Three of the principals (16.7%) had not begun assembling their portfolio and one principal (5.6%) indicated that they had no intention of assembling a portfolio.

Table 22. My evaluator conducted school visits and observations.

	No.	%
Yes	15	83.3
No	3	16.7

Most principals (83.3%) shared that their evaluators did conduct school visits and observations. Only one in six principals (16.7%) indicated that they were not observed.

Table 23. My evaluator provided ongoing feedback on my individual professional growth.

	No.	%
Yes	13	72.2
No	5	27.8

Nearly three quarters of the principals (72.2%) specified that their evaluator provided ongoing feedback on their individual professional growth. The remaining principals (27.8%) indicated that their evaluators did not provide the same feedback.

Table 24. At the beginning of the year, I completed a self-assessment of my practice and established professional practice goals for the year.

	No.	%
Yes	11	64.7
No	6	35.3

Nearly two thirds of the principals (64.7%) completed a self-evaluation of their practice and established professional practice goals for the year. Just over one third of the principals did not complete a self-evaluation. (*Note – one principal failed to respond to this items and was not counted*.)

Table 25. I developed an action plan to accomplish my professional practice goals for the year.

	No.	%
Yes	11	61.1
No	7	38.9

More than half the principals (61.1%) developed an action plan to accomplish their professional practice goals for the year. Just over one third of the principals (38.9%) did not develop a similar action plan.

Table 26. I was satisfied with the individual professional growth goals I agreed upon with my evaluator.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	0	0.0
Agree	10	58.8
Neutral	5	29.4
Disagree	2	11.8
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

More than half the principals (58.8%) agreed that they were satisfied with the individual professional growth goals they agreed upon with their evaluator. Many fewer principals (11.8%) were not satisfied with their individual growth goals. (*Note – one principal failed to respond to this items and was not counted*.)

Table 27. I feel adequately informed about the new evaluation system.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	1	5.6
Agree	10	55.6
Neutral	6	33.3
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

About three out of five principals (61.2%) felt adequately informed about the new evaluation system. Only one principal (5.6%) expressed dissatisfaction with the system.

Table 28. I feel that the new evaluation system takes too much time.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	8	44.4
Agree	5	27.8
Neutral	4	22.2
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Nearly three quarters of the principals (72.2%) felt that the new evaluation system takes too much time. Only one principal (5.6%) disagreed regarding the time required to use the new system.

Table 29. I feel prepared to use the new evaluation system.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	3	16.7
Agree	9	50.0
Neutral	5	27.8
Disagree	1	5.6
Strongly disagree	0	0.0

Two thirds of the principals (66.7%) felt prepared to use the new evaluation system. Only one principal (5.6%) did not feel prepared to use the new system.

Table 30. My evaluator had the knowledge and skills to coach me through this process.

	No.	%
Strongly agree	4	22.2
Agree	5	27.8
Neutral	5	27.8
Disagree	3	16.7
Strongly disagree	1	5.6

Half the principals (50.0%) agreed that their evaluator had the knowledge and skills to coach them through this process. Nearly one quarter of the principals (22.3%) did not feel that their evaluator had that knowledge and skills.

Table 31. I plan to complete the online course offered by USD relating to the domains and components.

	No.	%
Yes	3	16.7
Not sure	7	38.9
No	8	44.4

Only one in six principals (16.7%) planned to complete the online course offered by USD relating to the domains and components. While nearly half of the principals (44.4%) indicated they were not planning to complete the course, the remaining principals (38.9%) were uncertain regarding this question.

Table 32. Please identify the sources of data or evidence used in the evaluation process.

	No.	%
Principal self-assessment	10	58.8
School improvement goals	10	58.8
Professional development plans	9	52.9
Student assessment data	9	52.9
Student growth data	8	47.1
Teacher surveys	6	35.3
Parent surveys	4	23.5
Feedback from nonprofessional staff	2	11.8
Student surveys	1	5.9

The greatest number of principals (58.8%) indicated that principal self-assessment and school improvement goals were the primary sources of data or evidence used in the evaluation process. This was followed by professional development plans (52.9%) and student assessment data (52.9%). Only one principal (5.9%) identified student surveys as a source of data or evidence, and only one principal mentioned feedback from nonprofessional staff (5.9%). (*Notes – one principal failed to respond to this items and was not counted*; *response percentages sum to greater than 100.0 due to multiple selections.*)

Table 33. Does this evaluation system take more of your time that the system you were previously using?

	No.	%
Yes	16	88.9
About the same	2	11.1
No	0	0.0

Nearly all of the principals (88.9%) indicated that this evaluation system take more of their time that the system you were previously using. The remaining principals (11.1%) believed the new system takes about the same amount of time as the previous system they were using.

Table 34. Is this evaluation system more effective in developing your skills as a leader than the system you were previously using?

	No.	%
Yes	10	55.6
About the same	6	33.3
No	2	11.1

Just over half the principals (55.6%) suggested that this evaluation system more effective in developing your skills as a leader than the system they were previously using. Only about one in ten principals (11.1%) disagreed with this perception.

Table 35. What is your school district name?

	No.	%
Alcester-Hudson	1	5.6
Bon Homme	1	5.6
Bridgewater-Emery	1	5.6
Custer	2	11.1
Groton Area	1	5.6
McLaughlin	2	11.1
Rapid City	4	22.2
South Central	1	5.6
Wagner	3	16.7
Wessington Springs	1	5.6
Willow Lake	1	5.6

Table 36. What is the highest degree you have earned?

	No.	%
Masters	14	77.8
Educational Specialist	4	22.2

More than three quarters of the principals (77.8%) participating in the survey had earned master's degrees. The remainder (22.2%) possessed the educational specialist degree.

Table 37. Which grade levels do you supervise?

	No.	%
Elementary (Grades PK-5)	10	55.6
Middle Level (Grades 6-8)	11	61.1
High School (Grades 9-12)	9	50.0

Note – percentages sum to greater than 100.0% due to individuals supervising multiple grade levels

Similar numbers of principals reported supervising elementary grades (55.6%), middle level grades (61.1%), and high school grades (50.0%).

Table 38. How many years will you have been a principal at the end of the current school year?

	No.	%
5 years or less	9	50.0
6-10 years	4	22.2
11-20 years	2	11.1
21 or more years	3	16.7

Principals having 5 or fewer years (50.0%) comprised half the participant group. The remaining principals were split fairly evenly among 6-10 years (22.2%), 21 or more years (16.7%), and 11-20 years (11.1%).

Table 39. In general, the effect of the new principal evaluation system on my professional development has been:

	No.	%
Positive	10	55.6
Negative	0	0.0
No effect	4	22.2
Don't know	4	22.2

More than half of the principals (55.6%) felt that the effect of the new principal evaluation system on their professional development had been positive. In contrast, none of the principals believed the new system had a negative impact on their professional development.

Figure 3. What additional training or support will you as principal need in implementing the Principal Effectiveness Model?

Responses to this open-ended survey item garnered a multitude of responses in the principals' own words. The following list summarizes the most frequently mentioned training or support needs from the 14 total responses received:

- Additional training for teachers regarding how to archive their artifacts into *Teachscape*.

- More training on developing my own goals and helping teachers develop their goals as well.

- Assistance from my evaluator on how to organize my documentation in a more efficient manner.

- A yearly online refresher course would be useful.

- More time to complete teacher evaluations while preparing for my own evaluation.

- None needed.

Figure 4. Finally, please share any thoughts or comments you have regarding the Principal Effectiveness Pilot project.

- Although the feedback is valuable, the time it takes to evaluate just a few of the elements takes more time than supervisors in fairly large districts have to spend on supervision of principals.

- The pilot has helped me understand all of the aspects of the new evaluation system. It will help me lead my teachers through the new system and enhance accountability when I have to evaluate my teachers.

- I feel more comfortable with the elements of the teacher effectiveness system than with the principal effectiveness system.

- I would prefer the principal effectiveness pilot to have been implemented more gradually to avoid any sudden shifts in how the system will be applied.

- Too much emphasis on the student growth goals or smarter balanced assessment may cause principals to encourage their teachers to set their student learning goals too low. Professional practice should be a greater focus than student growth in the new evaluation system.

- Overall, this has been a good process – I feel that our teachers' SLOs this year have been good. We were fortunate to already have been implementing the basic Danielson framework.

- It encouraged me to do more self-reflecting about my practice than I used to do. I'm not sure if that is a positive or negative outcome.

- Our district had to opt out of the principal effectiveness pilot which will cause me to have to do more work next year than if we had remained in the pilot.

- The number of meetings between principal and evaluator has to be reduced to make the time commitment more realistic.

Principal Focus Group Results

Results from the principal focus groups are summarized in this section. Each open-ended focus group interview question is presented followed by a summation of the various responses shared by the principals. *Please note that the four responding principals produced a small sample size representing dissimilar viewpoints. There were two outliers, one district already using a similar model as the one used in the pilot, and another school where there was little reference to an evaluation model. Due to the small sample and dissimilarities, the summary statements should be generalized with caution.*

1. Bigger picture questions

a. How has your evaluation differed this year from previous years? Was there a noticeable difference in the quality of your evaluation last year compared to this year?

- Generally there were more evaluation conversations between the evaluator and the principal.
- The evaluation conversations were more focused and of richer quality supported by the collection of artifacts.
- Outliers reported no change due to a satisfactory evaluation model being in place or there was no change from an ineffective model.

b. How has the process of being evaluated changed this year from prior years?

- For most principals there was more dialogue and conversation about expectations.

c. Has your experience in the pilot resulted in a more meaningful discussion with your evaluator? In what ways?

- Most schools reported more meaningful discussions due to the use of a framework and more opportunity for conversations with the evaluator.

d. How has participation in the pilot impacted your ability to practice principal leadership?

- Some principals reported that they have always been observing in classrooms and working closely with staff so the was little change from before.

- One principal reported the benefit of focusing on growth and not a threat of being rated.

e. How do you feel about using measures of student growth when determining your evaluation score?

- The principals reported in a range of "love it" to "totally against using student growth to measure principals and/or teachers."

- There are concerns when the SLOs are team driven and not individual teachers.

f. Do you believe the new evaluation system will generate a positive impact on student learning in your building?

- 75% of those reporting said "yes."

g. In what ways, if any, has the implementation of the new principal effectiveness system changed relationships with your evaluator?

- Principals reported little or no change in relationships with the evaluator.

2. Follow-up to attitude surveys

a. Has the new evaluation system impacted the way you reflect on your building-level leadership? In what ways?

- Most principals reported a better focus on school improvement strategies due to self-reflection and pre/post discussions centered on professional growth.

b. Has the new evaluation system guided your professional growth? If so, in what ways?

- The professional growth related to past criterion-based models and/or district-wide improvement strategies.

c. How well do the principal practice domains align with principal leadership responsibilities?

- All principals agreed that the domains align very well with principal leadership responsibilities.

d. How well is your evaluator able to coach your professional growth? How do you know?

- Most principals reported that their evaluator was an effective coach due to modeling, suggestions, and time for discussion.

e. What are your feelings regarding the amount of time required to participate in the principal evaluation process? Do you think there are improvements that could be made to the system to decrease the time burden on principals and evaluators? Would your suggested changes reduce the opportunity to receive useful feedback?

- There was uncertainty in the responses to this question, perhaps due to the limited involvement in the new evaluation process.

- One person's response was confused with the teacher evaluation pilot.

3. Perceived effectiveness of implementation

a. Do you feel the feedback you have received from your evaluator through the evaluation has been helpful?

- Most (75%) of the principals felt the feedback from the evaluator was helpful.

b. Do you feel the evaluation system is providing an accurate assessment of principal leadership in your school?

- Most principals agree that the evaluation system is providing an accurate assessment of leadership.

- One principal felt the model was inadequate when it comes to dealing with staff and the hiring process.

c. Do you feel prepared for this new evaluation system?

- All principals felt prepared for the new evaluation system.

d. Put yourself in the position of a principal from another school district that will begin this work next year. After your first year, what would you tell that principal to expect?

- Expect to spend more time in the classroom, more time writing evaluations, and better conversations with your teachers about their goals and challenges.

- Make sure and save artifacts to support your work that you did in student achievement, staff development, and school climate.

- It will require management and openness. Figure out a management process early, keep track as the year goes, and make sure your evaluator takes time to use the evaluation system with you.

- Be open with your conversations with the superintendent and be open-minded.

4. Evaluation Domains and Components

a. How many of the six principal effectiveness domains and 22 components did you use in your evaluation?

- All principals reported using all or most of the domains and components.

b. Did you use the six principal effectiveness domains and 22 components as the evaluation criteria?

- 50% of the principals used all domains and components and 50% used selected domains and components.

c. What is your impression of the way in which the new principal effectiveness model asks evaluators and principals to collect evidence of effective leadership and student learning? Are the requirements for evidence collection realistic?

- Principals urged caution related to artifact collection, acknowledging the value of the artifacts as well as the demands for time needed to manage and lead in the school building.

- Keep artifact collection realistic.

d. What specific evidence or artifacts did your evaluator use for your evaluation?

- Spreadsheets of data, agendas and attendance at staff meetings, PBIS handbook, PLC data cycle, bulletins, school improvement plans, team meeting notes, staff meetings, assessment data, newsletters, staff communications logs, discipline referrals, data from ICU, ACT, graduation rate, staff retention, student retention, summer school data, student surveys.

e. Do you feel the evaluation process and self-reflection will be different next year now that you have completed your first principal evaluation?

- 75% felt the evaluation process and self-reflection will be different next year.

f. How much time would you estimate it took you to participate in your personal evaluation process?

- Principals reported a range of 2 – 20 hours.

5. Perceived effectiveness of training

a. Did you participate in training related to the new evaluation system? Did you complete training on the Principal Effectiveness Model?

- Most principals reported participating in the training related to the new evaluation and Principal Effectiveness Model.

b. Did you participate in the online course on the Principal Effectiveness Domains and Components?

- 75% did <u>not</u> participate in the online course on the Principal Effectiveness Domains and Components.

c. Did you receive training in designing and/or evaluating Student Learning Objectives?

- All principals reported being trained in the use of SLOs.

d. Thinking about the trainings you have completed, what could be done to make them more effective?

- The one principal who took the online course thought it was good in that it opened dialogue about principal evaluation.

- The online course should be offered sooner in the year and it should discuss management processes.

- Teachers would benefit from SLO training at a building or subject matter level.

e. Put yourself in the position of a supervisor in a district that has not been through a pilot. What training would you recommend to them to help them prepare for this evaluation system?

- Some principals referenced the Danielson model, *Teachscape*, and teacher evaluations, showing confusion with the differences between the Teacher Effectiveness Pilot and the Principal Effectiveness Pilot.

6. Baseline Data / Principal Summative Ratings

a. How many times have you been engaged in evaluation conversations with your evaluator this year compared to last year?

- The norm was four (4) evaluation conversations.

b. How difficult was it for you and your evaluator to incorporate student achievement data (SLO's) in the evaluating rating?

- Most principals reported the use of student achievement data as not difficult.

- One principal pointed out the difficulty caused by the deadlines when SLOs were due and when evaluations were due, and the resulting two month difference that exists.

c. How much did the student growth measures impact your overall evaluation rating?

- The range of responses existed from "not at all" to "somewhat negative."

7. What additional comments or suggestions do you have regarding the Principal Effectiveness Pilot?

- This is a good process that will be better the second year.

- It is crucial that the evaluator have the training in the Principal Effectiveness and Evaluation Model.

- Remove student growth from the model – it can't be measured in time.

Evaluator Focus Group Results

Results from the evaluator focus groups are summarized in this section. Each open-ended focus group interview question is presented followed by a summation of the various responses shared by the evaluators. *Please note that the four responding evaluators produced a small sample size representing dissimilar viewpoints. There were two outliers, one district already using a similar model as the one used in the pilot, and another school where there was little reference to an evaluation model. Due to the small sample and dissimilarities, the summary statements should be generalized with caution.*

1. Bigger picture questions

a. How has the evaluation of your principal differed this year from previous years? Was there a noticeable difference in the quality of the evaluation you conducted last year when compared to this year?

- Evaluators reported favorably on the process, describing the evaluation as more focused, research-based, and supported by artifacts.

b. How has the process of evaluating your principal changed this year from prior years?

- The new process was more comprehensive and detailed, with a focus on student achievement.

c. Has your experience in the pilot resulted in more meaningful discussion with your principal? In what ways?

- The response from the evaluators was an overwhelming "yes" – there were more meaningful discussions with principals.

- Quality conversations focused on critical job responsibilities, the principal leadership domains and elements, and student achievement including SLOs.

d. How has participation in the pilot impacted your ability to evaluate principal leadership?

- Evaluators felt that due to the principal standards (domains) and along with the artifacts submitted, the evaluation process was much more objective and much less subjective. As a result, the feedback and discussions were more professional.

e. Do you believe the new evaluation system will generate a positive impact on student learning?

- All evaluators agreed that that new evaluation system would generate a positive impact on student learning.

f. In what ways, if any, has the implementation of the new principal effectiveness system changed relationships with your principals?

- The new principal effectiveness system has provided the opportunity for objective conversations centered on the standards and building level goals and needs.

2. Follow-up to attitude surveys

a. Has the new evaluation system impacted the way you reflect on building level leadership? In what ways?

- The responses to this question were unique to individual schools, ranging from no impact to causing a new focus in decision making and pre/post assessments.

b. How well do the principal practice domains align with principal leadership responsibilities?

- Evaluators felt that the principal practice domains aligned very well with the principal leadership responsibilities.

c. What is your impression of the way in which the new principal effectiveness model asks evaluators and principals to collect evidence of effective leadership and student learning? Are the requirements for evidence collection realistic?

- While evaluators could see the benefit of artifact collection, they were concerned about the time it takes to collect all of the artifacts.

- An evaluator reported that principals submitted 20-30 artifacts each.

- Perhaps a structure could be developed that would make artifact collection, submission, and reading more efficient.

d. How well do the six principal domains and 22 indicators assist you in coaching the principal's profession growth?

- The domains and indicators were very helpful in the coaching process, leading to focused and in-depth discussions.

e. What are your feelings about the amount of time required to participate in the evaluation process? Do you think there are improvements that could be made to the system to decrease the time burden on principals and administrators? Would your suggested changes reduce the opportunity to receive useful feedback?

- Generally, the evaluators felt the process was more time consuming, but worthwhile.

- One evaluator expressed a desire to allow flexibility in the evaluation process within the district as along as the basic framework was used in the evaluation process.

- Evaluators agreed that improvements could be made in the process, but no specific ideas were submitted.

3. **Perceived effectiveness of implementation**

   a. Do you feel the feedback you have shared with your principal through the evaluation process been helpful?

      - While there is the limitation of only one year in the process, evaluators believed the feedback given was helpful.

   b. Do you feel the system is providing an accurate assessment of principal leadership in your principal's school?

      - 75% of the evaluators felt the system provided an accurate assessment of principal leadership.

   c. How difficult was it for you and your principal to incorporate student achievement data in the evaluating rating? Please explain.

      - Most evaluators (75%) did not use student achievement data in the evaluation rating.

      - Evaluators acknowledged the need to spend more time in incorporating achievement data into the evaluation rating.

   d. How do you feel about student growth being included in the evaluation score?

      - Evaluators agreed that using student growth in the evaluation score ranged from essential to acceptable.

      - Student growth should be one of the indicators, but not the main one.

   e. Do you feel prepared for this new evaluation system?

      - Responses ranged from "yes" to "somewhat" in terms of being prepared for the new evaluation system.

f. Do you feel the evaluation process and self-reflection will be different next year now that you have completed your first principal evaluation using the new domains and indicators?

- Evaluators feel the evaluation process and self-reflection will be different next year now that they have been through the process once.

g. Put yourself in the position of an evaluator from another school district that will begin this work next year. After your first year, what would you tell that evaluator to expect? (verbatim comments)

- If the process is to be worthwhile and truly meaningful (not just a check list), he/she needs to expect to spend a significant amount of time on the process. In my opinion, the criteria checklist will not be meaningful without an accompanying narrative. I spent a considerable amount of time writing a narrative to accompany each rubric. Our principals would probably tell you that the narrative meant more to them than the checklist of criteria within each rubric. If an evaluator takes the time to work with each principal, he/she will come away with a much greater understanding and appreciation of what our principals do every day in the field. We can't help our principals become better nor can we adequately meet their needs if we don't have an in depth understanding of the challenges they face every day.

- Start the process in September by establishing goals and expectation.

- Get involved with other evaluators and have discussions and make sure you do your homework.

- Buy new running shoes. If you are not willing to put in the time to do effective evaluation, don't do it at all. It makes a sham of the system.

4. Evaluation Domains and Indicators

a. How did you use the six principal effectiveness domains and 22 components as the evaluation criteria?

- The domains and components were used as the guide and focus for evaluations.

b. What specific evidence or artifacts did you use when evaluating your principal?

- Conversations with staff; staff and student attendance; participation in admin team meetings; staff agendas; student growth data, surveys, teacher evaluations, walk through forms(principal of teacher) with feedback; visits to classrooms, lunchrooms, hallways, extracurricular events; observations of principal in leadership roles; completion of *Teachscape* Certification and other continuing ed opportunities; PBIS data; AP scores; ACT/SAT scores; visits to PLC team work; student work samples; discipline data; crisis plans; evidence of work with parents; grant work; principal-supplied evidence; pre and post test results.

c. How much time would you estimate it took you to participate in the evaluation process using the six effectiveness domains and 22 indicators?

- On average, evaluators spent about 7 – 9 hours per administrator in the evaluation process.

5. Perceived Effectiveness of Training

a. Did you participate in training related to the new evaluation system? Did you complete training on the Principal Effectiveness Model?

- 50% attended the training; 50% did not attend the training.

b. Did you participate in the online course on the Principal Effectiveness Domains and Components?

- Only 25% of the evaluators participated in the online course on the principal domains and components.

- 75% of the evaluators <u>did not</u> participate in the online course.

c. Did you receive training in designing and/or evaluating Student Learning Objectives?

- 50% of the evaluators reported participating in the training related to SLOs.

d. Thinking about the trainings you have completed, what could be done to make them more effective?

- Provide opportunities for evaluators to receive training comparable to what principals have done to receive their *Teachscape* certification.

- Provide opportunities for evaluators to participate in simulation activities related to principal evaluation.

- Make sure the same message is delivered, especially if different presenters are being used.

e. Put yourself in the position of an evaluator in a district that has not been through a pilot. What training would you recommend to them to help them prepare for this evaluation system? (verbatim comments)

- Spend time with the new PEP manual; attend any trainings offered, i.e. ones in Pierre as well as the online course. Become part of a group of evaluators (maybe from a region) who work together to develop a better understanding of the model and how to implement with principals. Facilitate a principal group as well. I learned so much from the principals with whom I worked this year.

- Face-to-face training.

- Attend all the training possible.

6. Baseline Data / Principal Summative Ratings

a. How many times have you been engaged in evaluation conversations with your principal when comparing this year to last year?

- Evaluators did not report a specific number of evaluation conversations but did acknowledge the conversations were more frequent in number and in depth.

b. Did you use the principal effectiveness domains and indicators as the evaluation criteria?

- 100% of the evaluators used the principal effectiveness domains and indicators as the evaluation criteria.

c. What percentage of the principal staff have been evaluated this year?

- Evaluators reported a range of 50 – 100% of the principal staff as being evaluated this year.

d. How much did the student growth measures impact your overall evaluation rating?

- One evaluator reported that the student growth measures greatly impacted the evaluation rating.

- For 75% of the evaluators, student growth measures were not considered, or minimally considered, in the evaluation rating.

7. What additional comments or suggestions do you have regarding the Principal Effectiveness Pilot?

- There will need to be training on the principal effectiveness system for new superintendents.

- The model needs to be modified so it is more manageable given all of the other responsibilities of evaluators.

- There needs to be more clarity regarding the number and quality of artifacts.

- The evaluation tool and process is good and promotes professional growth, but there should be flexibility granted to schools on how to implement the process while adhering to the framework domains and components.

- Schools are in the process of implementation, and additional time is needed to grow into the program.

Summative Principal Ratings

Evaluators also were requested to provide information regarding the number of principals they evaluated using the pilot principal evaluation system and how many of their principals received ratings of *below expectations*, *meeting expectations*, and *exceeding expectations*. As most of the summative ratings had not yet been completed at the time of the face-to-face focus group meetings, follow-up emails were sent to the evaluators requesting this information.

A total of four evaluators provided their summative principal evaluation ratings. These are summarized in the following table. Individual school names are excluded for purposes of confidentiality.

	Below Expectations		Meeting Expectations		Exceeding Expectations	
School	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0
B	0	0.0	1	50.0	1	50.0
C	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	100.0
D	0	0.0	1	100.0	0	0.0
TOTAL	0	0.0	2	40.0	3	60.0

Responding evaluators provided summative evaluation ratings for a total of five principals among their four schools. The majority of principals (60.0%) were rated by their evaluators as *exceeding expectations*. The remaining principals (40.0%) received *meeting expectations* ratings from their evaluators. None of the evaluators rated their principals as *below expectations*.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions emerged from a review of the results of data analysis of the principal surveys, as well as from responses garnered through the focus group discussions. Principal conclusions culled from their surveys and focus groups are presented first, followed by the evaluator focus group conclusions.

Principal Survey Conclusions

1. Overall, most principals completed the state-sponsored trainings. Of those who completed the trainings, the majority found them useful in preparing for the Principal Effectiveness Pilot.

2. While most principals considered all six domains of the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals to be relevant to their jobs, instructional leadership (Domain 2) and school and community relations (Domain 5) stood out as being most relevant.

3. Principals considered the domains and components of the South Dakota Framework for Effective Principals helpful in terms of their professional development and expectations for their performance.

4. While most principals understood how student growth factors into their performance evaluation, far fewer principals believed that the use of Student Learning Objectives should be used as a measure of principal effectiveness.

5. Most principals understood how the new principal evaluation process generates an accurate assessment of principal performance, differentiates levels of performance, and may be used for continual improvement of leadership.

6. Most principals worked with their supervisors to examine district learning goals in order to determine which domains and components would comprise their professional evaluations.

7. Principals admitted being at varying points in assembling a portfolio of artifacts related to the domains and components of their evaluations.

8. While a small majority of principals felt informed about the new evaluation system and prepared to implement it, a larger segment of the principals agreed that the new system takes too much time to implement in their schools. Nearly all principals admitted that the new system takes more time to implement than their previous evaluation systems.

9. Principal self-assessments and school improvement goals provided that greatest sources for evidence used in the principal evaluation process. The smallest number of principals considered stakeholder feedback as a source for identifying sources of evidence for their evaluations

10. Principals expressed mixed feelings that the new evaluation system is more effective than their previous systems in developing their skills as leaders and on their professional development in general.

11. Principals mentioned additional training and assistance with teacher documentation for *Teachscape* and on working with their own evaluators to develop goals as the most needed areas of ongoing support.

12. In their final comments, principals were generally positive regarding the potential benefits of implementing the new evaluation system, but expressed concerns regarding the time required to implement the new system.

Principal Focus Group Conclusions

1. Principals generally conceded that the new evaluation system provides more useful feedback from, and greater more meaningful interaction with their evaluators.

2. While most principals admitted that the new evaluation system will have a positive impact on student learning in their buildings, they have very mixed emotions regarding the use of Student Learning Objectives as a component in their own evaluations.

3. Most principals believed that their evaluators were competent to assess their performances and this competency among evaluators would lead to enhanced professional development.

4. Principals' advice to other principals not part of the pilot process related mainly to being prepared to spend more time implementing the process and assuring that they collect an abundance of artifacts to support evaluations.

5. Principals expressed optimism that having completed the pilot this year will lead to changes during the next school year.

6. Principal feedback was primarily negative regarding the use of student growth and SLOs as part of their evaluation process.

Evaluator Focus Group Results

1. Evaluators reported that the new evaluation system produced more detailed and comprehensive evidence of principal performance supported by observable artifacts. Discussions with principals regarding their evaluations also were more meaningful.

2. Evaluators credited the new domains and components with providing a more objective evaluation of their principals.

3. Although evaluators applauded the use of artifacts and documentation, they agreed with the principals that the time commitment for doing so would be much greater than in the past. While more time consuming, most evaluators felt the time spent would be worthwhile in terms of effectiveness of evaluation.

4. Evaluators generally agreed that the domains and components would be very useful in the evaluation and coaching processes with their principals.

5. Evaluators expressed mixed feelings regarding the incorporation of student growth data and SLOs as elements of the principals' evaluations. They also felt that if properly integrated into the entire process, student growth indicators could be useful as long as they were not given too much weight.

6. Evaluators' advice to those not having yet participated in the process was mainly be prepared for the additional time and evidence collection necessary, but the process would be useful if the evaluators were willing to put in the needed additional time.

7. Evaluators used a wide variety of evidence and artifacts in the principal evaluation process.

8. Evaluators suggested that receiving training comparable to the principals' training would be useful. Also, consistency across training presenters would be helpful.

9. When asked for additional comments, evaluators mentioned the need for ongoing training, clarity in the number and types of artifacts to be collected, and consideration for reducing the amount of time needed to implement the evaluations.

Appendix A

Principal Focus Group Protocol

PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS PILOT – PRINCIPAL END-OF-YEAR SURVEY

(June 9, 2014)

Dear South Dakota Principal Effectiveness Pilot Principal,

Greetings. As a principal at one of the South Dakota Principal Effectiveness Pilot schools, you are invited to participate in an end-of-year survey to determine your perceptions regarding the first year of implementation of the Pilot process. Please recall that the Principal Effectiveness Pilot seeks to assess the quality and relevance of a recommended set of professional practice standards; assess the relevance of recommended quantitative measures of student growth which will be used as one measure of principal effectiveness; assess administrative procedures, training, and support systems associated with implementing the principal evaluation system; identify best practices, challenges, and opportunities associated with implementing principal evaluation systems; and, inform any necessary changes to the model principal evaluation system that will be implemented state-side next school year. The end-of-year survey is designed to allow you the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the first year of implementation of the Principal Effectiveness Pilot process from a principal's perspective.

This survey is being sent to all principals and their evaluators in the pilot schools that agreed to participate in the pilot and the research associated with the pilot. As participants in the Principal Effectiveness Pilot, your school/district agreed that you would participate in the research project. If you have any concerns or questions regarding the survey or the research project, please feel free to contact either of us via the telephone number or email address listed below.

Would you consider taking approximately 30 minutes to complete the attached survey? The study will provide valuable feedback regarding the first year of implementation of the SD Principal Effectiveness Pilot to the SD Department of Education and the East Dakota Educational Cooperative. Your opinion is highly regarded and the information you provide will be very valuable to the success of the Pilot implementation. Receipt of your completed survey indicates your consent to aggregate your responses with all others that are received.

To provide you maximum flexibility and convenience, please complete the survey in one of the following methods. (1) Write your answers on the actual survey form below each of the questions, save that completed form as a Word document, and attach it to a return email. (2)

Simply list the number and letter of each survey question and write your response next to the appropriate letter on a Word document, save that completed form as a Word document, and attach it to a return email. (3) Simply list the number and letter of each survey question and write your response next to the appropriate letter as an email message and send the completed email message. Whichever method you choose, please respond using phrases or short sentences for your responses – long formal sentences are not required. Bullet lists or similar formats would be fine. *Your completed survey should be emailed back to either Mark Baron or Fred Aderhold no later than June 13, 2014.*

Please be assured that the information received will be held confidential and will be treated with the utmost professional discretion. As all data will be confidential and reported by group analysis only, there is no risk to you individually or to your school. Your assistance in this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark Baron

University of South Dakota

Vermillion, SD 57069

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SURVEY QUESTIONS:

1. Bigger picture questions:
   a. How has your evaluation differed this year from previous years? Was there a noticeable difference in the quality of your evaluation last year compared to this year?
   b. How has the process of being evaluated changed this year from prior years?
   c. Has your experience in the pilot resulted in a more meaningful discussion with your evaluator? In what ways?
   d. How has participation in the pilot impacted your ability to practice principal leadership?
   e. How do you feel about using measures of student growth when determining your evaluation score?
   f. Do you believe the new evaluation system will generate a positive impact on student learning in your building?
   g. In what ways, if any, has the implementation of the new principal effectiveness system changed relationships with your evaluator?

2. Follow-up to attitude surveys:
   a. Has the new evaluation system impacted the way you reflect on your building-level leadership? In what ways?
   b. Has the new evaluation system guided your professional growth? If so, in what ways?
   c. How well do the principal practice domains align with principal leadership responsibilities?
   d. How well is your evaluator able to coach your professional growth? How do you know?
   e. What are your feelings ~~about~~ regarding the amount of time required to participate in the principal evaluation process? Do you think there are improvements that could be made to the system to decrease the time burden on principals and evaluators? Would your suggested changes reduce the opportunity to receive useful feedback?

3. Perceived effectiveness of implementation:
   a. Do you feel the feedback you have received from your evaluator through the evaluation has been helpful?
   b. Do you feel the evaluation system is providing an accurate assessment of principal leadership in your school?
   c. Do you feel prepared for this new evaluation system?

d. Put yourself in the position of a principal from another school district that will begin this work next year. After your first year, what would you tell that principal to expect?

4. Evaluation Domains and Components:

a. How many of the six principal effectiveness domains and 22 components did you use in your evaluation?
b. Did you use the six principal effectiveness domains and 22 components as the evaluation criteria?
c. What is your impression of the way in which the new principal effectiveness model asks evaluators and principals to collect evidence of effective leadership and student learning? Are the requirements for evidence collection realistic?
d. What specific evidence or artifacts did your evaluator use for your evaluation?
e. Do you feel the evaluation process and self-reflection will be different next year now that you have completed your first principal evaluation?
f. How much time would you estimate it took you to participate in your personal evaluation process?

5. Perceived effectiveness of training

a. Did you participate in training related to the new evaluation system? Did you complete training on the Principal Effectiveness Model?
b. Did you participate in the online course on the Principal Effectiveness Domains and Components?
c. Did you receive training in designing and/or evaluating Student Learning Objectives?
d. Thinking about the trainings you have completed, what could be done to make them more effective?
e. Put yourself in the position of a supervisor in a district that has not been through a pilot. What training would you recommend to them to help them prepare for this evaluation system?

6. Baseline Data / Principal Summative Ratings:

a. How many times have you been engaged in evaluation conversations with your evaluator this year compared to last year?
b. How difficult was it for you and your evaluator to incorporate student achievement data (SLO's) in the evaluating rating?
c. How much did the student growth measures impact your overall evaluation rating?

7. What additional comments or suggestions do you have regarding the Principal Effectiveness Pilot?

Thank you for participating. Your responses will remain confidential and will not be reported in a way that allows anyone to identify you or your school based on them.

School: _____

Principal: _____

Appendix B

Evaluator Focus Group Protocol

PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS PILOT – PRINCIPAL EVALUATOR END-OF-YEAR SURVEY

(June 9, 2014)

Dear South Dakota Principal Effectiveness Pilot Principal Evaluator,

Greetings. As an evaluator of a principal at one of the South Dakota Principal Effectiveness Pilot schools, you are invited to participate in an end-of-year survey to determine your perceptions regarding the first year of implementation of the Pilot process. Please recall that the Principal Effectiveness Pilot seeks to assess the quality and relevance of a recommended set of professional practice standards; assess the relevance of recommended quantitative measures of student growth which will be used as one measure of principal effectiveness; assess administrative procedures, training, and support systems associated with implementing the principal evaluation system; identify best practices, challenges, and opportunities associated with implementing principal evaluation systems; and, inform any necessary changes to the model principal evaluation system that will be implemented state-side next school year. The end-of-year survey is designed to allow you the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the first year of implementation of the Principal Effectiveness Pilot process from a principal evaluator's perspective.

This survey is being sent to all principals and their evaluators in the pilot schools that agreed to participate in the pilot and the research associated with the pilot. As participants in the Principal Effectiveness Pilot, your school/district agreed that you would participate in the research project. If you have any concerns or questions regarding the survey or the research project, please feel free to contact either of us via the telephone number or email address listed below.

Would you consider taking approximately 30 minutes to complete the attached survey? The study will provide valuable feedback regarding the first year of implementation of the SD Principal Effectiveness Pilot to the SD Department of Education and the East Dakota Educational Cooperative. Your opinion is highly regarded and the information you provide will be very valuable to the success of the Pilot implementation. Receipt of your completed survey indicates your consent to aggregate your responses with all others that are received.

To provide you maximum flexibility and convenience, please complete the survey in one of the following methods. (1) Write your answers on the actual survey form below each of the

questions, save that completed form as a Word document, and attach it to a return email. (2) Simply list the number and letter of each survey question and write your response next to the appropriate letter on a Word document, save that completed form as a Word document, and attach it to a return email. (3) Simply list the number and letter of each survey question and write your response next to the appropriate letter as an email message and send the completed email message. Whichever method you choose, please respond using phrases or short sentences for your responses – long formal sentences are not required. Bullet lists or similar formats would be fine. *Your completed survey should be emailed directly back to either Mark Baron or Fred Aderhold no later than June 13, 2014. Please do not email your responses back to your principal.*

Please be assured that the information received will be held confidential and will be treated with the utmost professional discretion. As all data will be confidential and reported by group analysis only, there is no risk to you individually or to your school. Your assistance in this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark Baron
University of South Dakota
Vermillion, SD 57069
Phone: 605.677.5437
Email: Mark.Baron@usd.edu

Dr. Fred Aderhold
University of South Dakota
Vermillion, SD 57069
Phone: 605.677.5801
Email: Frederick.Aderhold@usd.edu

SURVEY QUESTIONS:

1. Bigger picture questions:
   a. How has the evaluation of your principal differed this year from previous years? Was there a noticeable difference in the quality of the evaluation you conducted last year when compared to this year?
   b. How has the process of evaluating your principal changed this year from prior years?
   c. Has your experience in the pilot resulted in more meaningful discussion with your principal? In what ways?
   d. How has participation in the pilot impacted your ability to evaluate principal leadership?
   e. Do you believe the new evaluation system will generate a positive impact on student learning?
   f. In what ways, if any, has the implementation of the new principal effectiveness system changed relationships with your principals?

2. Follow-up to attitude surveys:

   a. Has the new evaluation system impacted the way you reflect on building level leadership? In what ways?
   b. How well do the principal practice domains align with principal leadership responsibilities?
   c. What is your impression of the way in which the new principal effectiveness model asks evaluators and principals to collect evidence of effective leadership and student learning? Are the requirements for evidence collection realistic?
   d. How well do the six principal domains and 22 indicators assist you in coaching the principal's profession growth?
   e. What are your feelings about the amount of time required to participate in the evaluation process? Do you think there are improvements that could be made to the system to decrease the time burden on principals and administrators? Would your suggested changes reduce the opportunity to receive useful feedback?

3. Perceived effectiveness of implementation:

   a. Do you feel the feedback you have shared with your principal through the evaluation process been helpful?
   b. Do you feel the system is providing an accurate assessment of principal leadership in your principal's school?
   c. How difficult was it for you and your principal to incorporate student achievement data in the evaluating rating? Please explain.
   d. How do you feel about student growth being included in the evaluation score?
   e. Do you feel prepared for this new evaluation system?

f. Do you feel the evaluation process and self-reflection will be different next year now that you have completed your first principal evaluation using the new domains and indicators?
g. Put yourself in the position of an evaluator from another school district that will begin this work next year. After your first year, what would you tell that evaluator to expect?

4. Evaluation Domains and Indicators:

a. How did you use the six principal effectiveness domains and 22 components as the evaluation criteria?
b. What specific evidence or artifacts did you use when evaluating your principal?
c. How much time would you estimate it took you to participate in the evaluation process using the six effectiveness domains and 22 indicators?

5. Perceived Effectiveness of Training

a. Did you participate in training related to the new evaluation system? Did you complete training on the Principal Effectiveness Model?
b. Did you participate in the online course on the Principal Effectiveness Domains and Components?
c. Did you receive training in designing and/or evaluating Student Learning Objectives?
d. Thinking about the trainings you have completed, what could be done to make them more effective?
e. Put yourself in the position of an evaluator in a district that has not been through a pilot. What training would you recommend to them to help them prepare for this evaluation system?

6. Baseline Data / Principal Summative Ratings:

a. How many times have you been engaged in evaluation conversations with your principal when comparing this year to last year?
b. Did you use the principal effectiveness domains and indicators as the evaluation criteria?
c. What percentage of the principal staff have been evaluated this year?
d. What was the summative rating for the principal you evaluated who is participating in the Principal Effectiveness Pilot? (Check the correct rating below):

Below Expectations: _____

Meeting Expectations: _____

Exceeding Expectations: _____

e. How much did the student growth measures impact your overall evaluation rating?

7. What additional comments or suggestions do you have regarding the Principal Effectiveness Pilot?

Thank you for participating. Your responses will remain confidential and will not be reported in a way that allows anyone to identify you or your school based on them.

School: _____

Evaluator: _____