

RETHINKING SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

by

Alison Joy Myers

An education leadership portfolio submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

This Education Leadership Portfolio (ELP) examines the research linking superintendent leadership to student achievement, reviews the current superintendent evaluation practices in Delaware’s public school districts as well as other states, and proposes a more standardized superintendent evaluation process in the state of Delaware.

This ELP involved conducting interviews with board members from eleven of Delaware’s nineteen public school districts to determine the current goal-setting and evaluation practices. Subsequently, interviews were held with key educational leaders from other states to gain valuable insight into their superintendent goal-setting and evaluation processes. The results of these two sets of interviews were used to create a framework and training materials for use by local school boards in the state of Delaware. The final part of this ELP was obtaining feedback from school board members who reviewed the framework and training program. Their feedback was then used to make improvements to the process.

The Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook and related training materials that were created during this ELP will serve as a resource to Delaware’s local school boards in their efforts to maximize student achievement through continuous monitoring of their superintendent’s leadership performance.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Research over the past 20 years has demonstrated strong, albeit indirect, links between leadership and student achievement (DiPaola, 2010; Leithwood, et. al., 2004; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016; Waters & Marzano, 2007). Recent legislation also “extends accountability for student learning beyond the schoolhouse to the organizations that, in all states, continue to make crucial decisions about the use of resources for school improvement” (Leithwood, 2010, p. 243). In Delaware, the position of school superintendent is tasked with leading these organizations. Knowing that the superintendent plays a vital and influential role in the success of their students would lead one to believe that school boards engage their superintendents in a rigorous evaluation process that focuses on constant improvement within their district; however, this is often not the case. A policy handbook review of the nineteen public and technical school districts in Delaware reveals that only five have a specific superintendent evaluation policy, and only two of those contain any meaningful detail about the process. The fact that school board members are, in many cases, community members with no background in education, and no training in evaluation, further compounds the issue (DiPaola, 2010). This study was designed with the intent of examining the research linking achievement to leadership, reviewing the current evaluation practices in the state’s public school districts, and proposing a more

standardized evaluation process derived from the research on this topic. Interviews with Delaware school board members and key stakeholders from other states were conducted, and the results were used to develop a framework of superintendent standards. A superintendent goal-setting and evaluation handbook with accompanying training videos were created to assist with implementation. Goal-setting and evaluation forms were also developed to streamline the process for local school boards. Finally, a feedback study was performed to make improvements and determine the success of the proposed superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process.

Chapter 2

PROBLEM ADDRESSED

Organizational Context

The state of Delaware is divided into sixteen comprehensive school districts and three technical school districts. Each school district employs one superintendent and is governed by a board of education. The following table lists information about the school boards for each of the nineteen school districts.

Table 1

Local Boards of Education in Delaware

District	Number of Board Members	Member of DSBA	Superintendent Evaluation Policy
Appoquinimink	5	Y	N
Brandywine	7	Y	N
Caesar Rodney	5	N	Y
Cape Henlopen	7	Y	Y
Capital	5	Y	N
Christina	7	Y	N
Colonial	7	Y	N
Delmar	5	N	N
Indian River	10	Y	Y
Lake Forest	5	Y	Y
Laurel	5	Y	Y
New Castle County Vo Tech	7	Y	N
Polytech	6	Y	N
Milford	7	N	N
Red Clay	7	Y	N
Seaford	5	Y	Y

Table 1 continued

Smyrna	5	Y	N
Sussex Tech	7	Y	N
Woodbridge	5	Y	N
<i>Note: DSBA = Delaware School Boards Association</i>			

Qualifications for school board members are dictated by state code, Title 14, Chapter 10, Subchapter III, which proclaims, “each member shall be a citizen of the State and resident of the school district in which elected or appointed and shall be qualified to vote at a school election in that district at the time of such election or appointment” (14 Del. C. §1052). School board members serve five-year terms (seven years for technical districts) and are required to attend training on due process regulation and school finance oversight (14 Del. C. §1049B, 1052).

Sixteen of the nineteen districts listed hold membership in the Delaware School Boards Association (DSBA), which was founded in 1946, to help local boards meet the needs of their communities through orientation/training, development of legislative priorities, coordination of legal services, and by acting as liaison with state agencies (DSBA, n.d.). DSBA provides an orientation seminar that follows the National School Board Association publication *The Key Work of School Boards* (NSBA, 2015). This guidebook briefly covers the areas of vision, accountability, policy, community leadership, and board/superintendent relationships. While this guidebook gives some direction to new board members, it does not go into depth regarding superintendent evaluation, and in general school board member training is predominantly handled within the individual districts.

My experience stems from being a member of the Cape Henlopen Board of Education. Our board is comprised of seven members, four that represent designated areas within the district, and three at-large members. The board shares its mission and vision with the school district, but developed its own philosophy, which focuses on “the total personal development of each student” (Cape, n.d.). Until three years ago, the Cape Henlopen Board of Education had no specific evaluation process or tool to evaluate superintendent performance. It was at that time that the board recognized a link between superintendent performance and student achievement, and in order to stay true to the board’s philosophical goal stated above, developed a formal evaluation process for the superintendent with the purpose of maximizing superintendent performance as a means to enhance the personal development of the students in the district.

Organizational Role

I was elected to the Cape Henlopen Board of Education as an at-large member and began my five-year term on July 1, 2014. During the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years, I served as the vice president of the board. Throughout my four years on the board, I have served on the budget oversight, technology, facilities taskforce, buildings/grounds, and safety/climate committees. My role as a board member primarily consists of creating and editing policies that govern the practices of the school district, but also includes voting on the contract extensions for all administrative employees and the superintendent.

After recognizing the need for a structured goal-setting and evaluation process for the superintendent, I presented a training session for my fellow board members at our summer retreat in 2016. The training focused on the links between superintendent leadership and student achievement as a basis for the goal-setting process and proposed the use of a customizable template, based on the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II) for Administrators, as the evaluation tool. Our board worked together with our superintendent to set goals and priorities for the year and determined the data we would need to evaluate the progress mid-year and end-of-year. Finally, I authored, with edits from the board, a superintendent evaluation policy that was approved by unanimous vote on October 13, 2016.

The process of proposing, developing and implementing a formal goal-setting and evaluation process for the superintendent in my district allowed me to apply the knowledge I gained through my University of Delaware coursework, furthering my professional growth. Drawing on my experience in the Cape Henlopen School District, I felt prepared to assist other school boards to develop their own goal-setting and evaluation processes using my prior work as a template. My hope was to inform other school boards of the importance of this process and to improve the leadership of all our state's school districts.

Problem Statement

As a former classroom teacher, I am well-versed on the teacher evaluation process. The DPAS II system offers rubrics for teachers that set goals for the year. Teachers are aware of their principal's expectations and have a defined guide for their

teaching practices. Given my familiarity with the teacher evaluation process, I was surprised that district superintendents were not evaluated using DPAS II or any other Department of Education created evaluation tool. As a school board member, I struggled to find adequate measures of performance for the superintendent that I was now in charge of evaluating. When I joined the board, my fellow Cape Henlopen School Board members informed me that little substantive evaluation had been done in the past. In conversations with school board members from other districts in the state, I found that they too lacked a process of formal goal-setting and evaluation for their superintendents, demonstrating that this was a state-wide issue. While I considered this to be a significant concern, the problem became even more urgent when our board met to discuss our superintendent's contract. While evaluating him, it became evident that there was a clear disconnect between the board's expectations for the superintendent and the superintendent's understanding of what was expected of him. The lack of a formal goal-setting and evaluation process for the superintendent created a situation where his employment was potentially at risk because of a lack of clarity regarding the board's expectations. This disconnect prompted me to look at the research on superintendent evaluation processes, determine their effect on superintendent performance, and ultimately their impact student achievement.

Research studies that link district leadership to student achievement have increased in number and significance over the past 20 years (DiPaola, 2010; Leithwood & Azah, 2017; Leithwood, et. al., 2004; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016; Waters & Marzano, 2007). In their meta-analysis of district leadership research,

Waters and Marzano found that 24% of the variance in student achievement scores was attributable to the superintendent's leadership abilities. Leithwood and McCullough's study defines the characteristics that are most impactful on student achievement. They highlight the communication of vision, mission and goals of the district as a critical aspect of effective leadership, as well as the ability to ensure policies are aligned with those ideals. They also point to consistency in instructional leadership, relevant professional development for staff, productive relationships with stakeholders, and use of evidence-based decision-making as important responsibilities of district leaders. In summary, research suggests that district leadership has significant effects on organizational components, which are proven to improve student achievement (Leithwood & Azah, 2017).

Unfortunately, research has also shown that the lack of a formal evaluation process is not just a deficiency in the Cape District, or the State of Delaware; it is lacking on a broader scale across the nation. DiPaola (2007, p. 18) states the problem is that "superintendents' performance evaluations continue to be too frequently conducted through a highly informal, subjective process, based more on impressions than data." Weber (2007, p. 16) agrees, stating, "evaluation of the superintendent, if done at all, has often been conducted as an anecdotal, verbal exercise in subjective criticism by the board of education."

While a subjective process of evaluation perhaps has some value in evaluating a superintendent's intangibles and overall performance, it should be, at a minimum, balanced with a formal evaluation process that couples clear upfront communication

of predefined goals and expectations with subsequent objective measures to determine if those goals and expectations were met. “Establishing an objective, informative, data-driven evaluation model tied to leadership standards can improve the superintendent’s ability to lead,” which in turn will result in higher student achievement (Opstad, 2010, p. 8).

Improvement Goal

In addressing the issue, it is critical to address the roadblocks to success. DiPaola (2010, p. 5) reminds us that “the shift to the focus on the quality of superintendents’ instructional leadership created a set of unique challenges, not only for superintendents, but also for the boards that evaluate their performance.” He further explains his statement by reminding us that “superintendents are the only school district employees not supervised or evaluated by another licensed professional (p. 7),” pointing out the fact that school board members have varying levels of education and training and often do not have a background in the field of education. Because of this, it is critical that the members of our local school boards have training and/or guidance in the area of goal setting for, and subsequent evaluation of, superintendents. This is an area of need in our state as evidenced in the 2001 study of superintendent evaluation by DiPaola and Stronge. They found that all but eight states provided recommended frameworks and/or an evaluation tool for boards to use in their evaluation process. It came as no surprise to me based on my experience as a school board member in Delaware that we are one of the eight states. DiPaola and Stronge’s study was published 16 years ago, nonetheless this remains the case today in 2018.

Perhaps even more alarming is that research in the interim has revealed the clear benefits of using a formal goal-setting and evaluation processes to improve student achievement (Day, Sammons, Hopkins, Leithwood, & Kington, 2008; DiPaola, 2010; Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010; Waters, & Marzano, 2007). In fairness to our state and based on discussions at state meetings for school board members, I can attest that our state has attempted to standardize the superintendent evaluation process in the past but was met with opposition from the local school boards. Nonetheless, I believe that the push back from local boards can be alleviated if the training and guidance comes from a fellow local school board member. I also believe that each board should have the flexibility to develop their own evaluation that can be focused on the needs of their district. DiPaola (2010. p. 7) agrees stating that “because superintendents encompass a variety of roles that vary from district to district, it is critical that the evaluation process used be developed locally, based on specific job responsibilities and expectations.” The general framework should be standardized across the State; however, the specific goals should be tailored to each district.

Several evaluation frameworks have been developed and were considered when developing an evaluation framework for our state (Corbett & Wilson, 1992; Crowson & Morris, 1992; Dimmock & Wildy, 1992; DiPaola, 2007; Hallinger & Edwards, 1992; Hord, Jolly, & Mendez-Morse, 1992; Opstad, 2010). In addition, The School Superintendents Association (Hoyle, 1993) has published professional standards for the superintendency, and the Council of Chief State School Officers

(1996, 2008) developed a set of professional standards for education leaders. Both proved valuable in the development of my superintendent standards framework. In short, I proposed a process that first evaluated the current goal-setting and superintendent evaluation processes of Delaware's comprehensive school districts and developed a standard framework to be used across the state. A training handbook, along with microlearning videos, were created to assist boards implement the process. Finally, to ensure effectiveness, I obtained feedback from participating boards on the process and made adjustments as appropriate.

Chapter 3

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

In order to address the improvement goal, I started with gathering information that would clarify the current state of superintendent evaluation, both nationally and locally. Using that information, I developed a new process to be implemented in the state of Delaware. Finally, I asked Delaware school board members for feedback, to ensure that the process met the needs of all the districts in our state. These activities are represented by the ten artifacts described below.

My role as a board member heavily influenced my doctoral coursework at the University of Delaware. From my first class, I began to research the superintendency, particularly a superintendent's effect on the success of a school district. Numerous studies demonstrated how superintendents could increase student achievement by focusing on key leadership behaviors (DiPaola, 2010; Leithwood & Azah, 2017; Leithwood, et. al., 2004; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016; Waters & Marzano, 2007). The concepts of goal-setting, visionary leadership, effective data use, and resource management were common threads throughout the research.

These leadership behaviors were captured in the standards frameworks of the National School Boards Association (NSBA) (2015), the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) (DiPaola & Stronge, 2003), and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (1996). They were also used in the research on current

superintendent evaluation practices (DiPaola, 2007; Glass, 2007; Opstad, 2010), although the studies found that, in general, the standards were not being utilized fully or properly. It was clear from the research that a deficit existed in an area that was proven to provide positive results. Superintendents were capable of strong positive influence on the success of the students in their districts, however the school boards who employed them were not evaluating them in a way that ensured the maximum effect. These studies provided a strong rationale for my ELP, so they became my first artifact.

From there, I moved into the examination of superintendent evaluation policies from selected states across the nation to determine if their practices reflected the findings in the research. I analyzed superintendent evaluation policies from eleven states; California, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. I found that they all required the superintendent to be evaluated at least once annually, with many recommending a more continuous approach with a multi-step evaluation cycle. The frameworks used varied widely, employing anywhere from three to eleven standards. Nonetheless, all standards that were included reflected the frameworks put forth by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), and/or the Professional Standards for Education Leaders (PSEL, formerly ISLLC). The complete table of policies is included in Artifact 2.

The last step in gaining context for my ELP, was to investigate the current superintendent evaluation practices in our state. I designed a qualitative research study

that aimed to answer the questions, “how are school boards measuring the job performance of their superintendents”, “what processes are school boards utilizing to set goals for their superintendents”, and “what evaluation tools are school boards employing to evaluate the superintendents’ progress toward the set goals?” My study protocol was submitted to the University of Delaware’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) for human subjects research approval and received an exempt status since I was interviewing elected officials and the results would be reported anonymously. The protocol outlined my plan to interview one board member from each of the nineteen school districts using a ten-question interview script. The interview responses were analyzed thematically by research question with the results being reported both in the next chapter and in Artifact 3.

Next, I interviewed selected individuals from other state school board associations, departments of education, universities, and national associations. The participants of this study all had experience with either the implementation of superintendent evaluation policies and procedures in their state or involvement in research or public policy on the subject. This group served as my panel of experts as I developed a framework and the related training materials for Delaware. Participants provided not only guidance on the development of the process but provided their own materials to use as reference. I quickly discovered that the majority of the work on superintendent evaluation processes in other states was led by the state school board association and not the department of education, which reinforced in my mind why previous efforts by the Delaware Department of Education failed. The details of this

study can be found in Artifact 4, and the results are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

I then moved into designing a superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process for Delaware's school boards. The first step in the development of my proposed process was determining the superintendent standards that would be the foundation of the goal-setting and evaluation process. I considered several factors, including the number of standards to be used in the framework, the items evaluated in each standard, the educational jargon used in the descriptions and rubrics, and the feasibility of monitoring/evaluating each measurable goal. My aim was to design a framework that would adequately cover the broad range of job duties of superintendents, while maintaining a universal level of understandability for board members of varying backgrounds.

To determine the adequate number of standards for the framework, I reexamined sections of my literature review (Artifact 1) and created a list of the leadership qualities that were proven to have the greatest effect on student achievement. From there I studied the standards from AASA, PSEL, DPAS II, and the superintendent standards frameworks from Iowa, Ohio, and Oregon (see Artifact 4), matching the list from the research to the existing frameworks. I determined that the frameworks from AASA and PSEL contained too many standards, making them unwieldy and difficult to understand for those outside of the field of education. I also concluded that the superintendent standards from Oregon and Iowa were too numerous, however each had sections that were useful, such as the rubrics and the lists

of possible evidence for each standard. Ohio's superintendent standards and Delaware's DPAS II system both contained five standards, which covered all the items in my list from the literature review. However, the DPAS II system was not as user-friendly because it employed complex rubrics and contained extensive educational jargon.

Ultimately, I made the decision to use the DPAS II standards for administrators as an outline with sections of the standards from Iowa, Oregon and Ohio to flesh out the descriptions and rubrics. I felt that the familiarity of the DPAS II standards would help transition both superintendents and board members into the new system. In addition, I changed standard 5 of the DPAS II framework from student achievement to the superintendent's goal. The reason for this was two-fold. One, the research included in my literature review (Artifact 1), indicated that the effects of superintendent leadership had strong, but **indirect**, effects on student achievement (DiPaola, 2010; Leithwood, et. al., 2004; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016; Waters & Marzano, 2007), making the inclusion of a student achievement standard illogical and unfair to superintendents. And secondly, the research also indicated that superintendents should have the opportunity to set their own goals (DiPaola, 2010), whether they be personal (their own professional development) or for their school districts. Therefore, standard 5 was transformed into the goal(s) superintendents set for themselves.

The new framework of superintendent standards was then used to create the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook (Artifact 5), the Sample Superintendent Evaluation Policy (Artifact 6), the Sample Goal-Setting Form (Artifact

7), the Sample Evaluation Form (Artifact 8), and the microlearning style training videos linked in the handbook (Artifact 9).

The handbook was intended to serve as a step-by-step instruction manual for the goal-setting and evaluation process. In order to create this artifact, I reviewed the handbooks from other states, taking note of sections that were particularly useful and/or related to the framework of standards that I developed. I then outlined the process that my own school board had used in previous years. Using pages from the existing handbooks I began to fill in the outline. Finally, I created a narrative that would inform fellow board members about the process and assist with its implementation. I realized that the handbook alone would not provide the comprehensive training that was needed in the implementation of this superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process, so I developed a series of microlearning videos.

The microlearning training videos were designed with the busy schedules of school board members in mind. Providing training to school board members poses unique challenges that must be addressed in order to prepare them for the responsibilities of boardsmanship. Being a school board member requires a substantial time commitment to adequately meet the demands of overseeing the district. Often times, school board members work full time jobs and have family commitments with which to contend. Adding time for training is a burden, which has traditionally been complicated by the need to find time that mutually accommodates the schedules of five to seven individuals. In reality finding a mutually agreeable, extended period of time for training is nearly impossible. Therefore, in order to successfully train school

board members, training must be flexible, topic specific, and available on demand. Applying the concept of microlearning was an ideal means by which to meet those needs.

Choosing goals, picking appropriate evidence and coming to a consensus on what success “looks” like are time consuming and overwhelming tasks. My experience in the development of a superintendent evaluation system with my own board mirrored the sentiments of many other board members that I spoke to during the interviews. Determining the appropriate goals and choosing evidence that would support the successful completion of them were next to impossible when starting from scratch. To facilitate this decision-making process, I created the goal-setting and evaluation forms. These tools would provide boards with sample goals and a variety of evidence types to choose from. They would also offer the flexibility to tailor the goals to the needs of each district, which was a reoccurring theme during the board member interviews.

The last item in the training materials is the sample superintendent evaluation policy. Although it is a small part of the process, I would argue that it is of critical importance. The work of a school board member centers around policy-making. It is not only how they oversee the operation of their school districts, but also how they conduct the business of the board. Enacting a specific policy that details the purpose, procedures and timeline for the superintendent evaluation ensures that the process will be consistently implemented from year to year.

The final step in my improvement strategies was to gather feedback on my efforts from fellow board members throughout the state of Delaware. I developed an addendum to my initial study of current superintendent evaluation practices in our state. Participants were sent the set of training materials to review (including the handbook with links to the microlearning videos, the goal-setting form, the evaluation form, and the sample policy), and a five-question feedback form to fill out and return. The results of that study are discussed in the following chapter and in Artifact 10.

Chapter 4

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES RESULTS

The improvement goal of this ELP was to develop a standard framework for the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process, which would be provided to school boards in the state of Delaware, along with training materials that would assist with the successful implementation of the process in their districts. In order to accomplish this improvement goal, three qualitative research studies were designed and carried out. The results of these studies were then used to create a framework and training materials. The first study examined the current superintendent evaluation practices in the state of Delaware (Artifact 3). The second study gathered information about the implementation of similar processes in other states (Artifact 4), and the final study collected feedback from Delaware school board members on the proposed framework and training materials (Artifact 10). Each study provided critical insight into the creation and revision of the training materials detailed in the appendices (Artifacts 5-9).

Current Practices in Superintendent Evaluation in the State of Delaware

The purpose of this study was to collect data on the current superintendent evaluation practices in Delaware's nineteen public school districts. One board member from each school district was asked to participate in a short phone interview discussing their board's methods. The ten-question interview script (found in

Appendix L), focused on the central research question, “How are school boards measuring the job performance of their superintendents?” and the sub-questions, “What processes are school boards utilizing to set goals for their superintendents?” and “What evaluation tools are school boards employing to evaluate the superintendents’ progress toward the set goals?”

Twelve of the nineteen school boards responded to the study invitation. One of those declined to participate, leaving eleven districts included in the results. School boards from all three counties were represented and male and female respondents were similar in number. Race and ethnic data were not collected. The data collected were analyzed thematically and the results presented by research question.

Central question – How are school boards measuring the job performance of their superintendents?

Nine of the board members interviewed indicated their board evaluated their superintendent in the past year. Three of the nine stated that they have regularly evaluated their superintendent for more than four years. Two boards reported that they had not performed a superintendent evaluation in several years and cited other priorities and more pressing issues as reasons. A recurring theme in the responses from all board members was the issue of preparation and training. Board members questioned whether their evaluations accurately measured the performance of the superintendent, but felt unprepared to make changes to the process. One board member expressed confusion relating to the process and asked, “What do we do with the results of the evaluation once we’ve finished. Where do we go from here?”. When

asked if they would be interested in additional guidance and/or training, all eleven board members replied affirmatively.

Sub-question 1 – What processes are school boards utilizing to set goals for their superintendents?

School board members described multiple goal-setting methods. The most popular method was a collaborative goal-setting meeting, where both the superintendent and the school board chose goals together. One board asked the superintendent to develop and present their own goals to the board, who would then either approve or modify if necessary. Other boards used goals directly from DPAS II or from the district's strategic plan or key priorities.

A variety of goals for superintendents were also given by each school board member. Examples include, communication, successful outcome of a referendum, student achievement, advanced placement course offerings and exam pass rates, school drop-out rates, school choice numbers, financial management, CTE offerings, community participation, school safety concerns, school nutrition programs, capital project management, and equality issues. Several board members remarked that goals change each year based upon perceived needs of the district. Every board member interviewed agreed that goals must be personalized to each district and that flexibility in this area was an important component of any goal-setting tool.

Sub-question 2 - What evaluation tools are school boards employing to evaluate the superintendents' progress toward the set goals?

The majority of boards reported using evaluation tools that were created by the board themselves, while two stated they used the DPAS II system in whole or in modified form. However, none of the study participants were certified in the DPAS II system, nor were they aware of any other board member who had obtained certification. Four boards provided the actual evaluation tool. Rating systems ranged from no rating, only a narrative, to a Likert-style scale. The Likert-style scales were divided between using terms that described the superintendent's performance (exemplary, strong, satisfactory, weak) and terms that describe the board's expectations (exceeds expectations, meets expectations, below expectations). No rubrics were used.

Description of the evaluation process differed in terms of methods as well. Six of the board members interviewed stated that the whole board completed the evaluation and met with the superintendent together, but three indicated that the whole board met to discuss the results and subsequently, the board president and vice president met with the superintendent alone to discuss the cumulative results. The timeline for the process; however, was similar in each district. Almost all boards reported that the goal-setting process took place in the summer months, a mid-year evaluation or "check-in" occurred around December/January, and the final evaluation took place at the end of the school year.

Implementation Progress and Pitfalls from Selected States

Gaining insight into the implementation of superintendent goal-setting and evaluation processes in other states in order to successfully implement the proposed

process here in Delaware was the rationale for this study. Through phone interviews, I collected data on the current superintendent goal- setting and evaluation practices in other states. Employees from state education agencies, state school board associations, a national administrator association, and a university professor of educational policy were interviewed. The seven-question interview script (found in Appendix L), focused on the central research question, “How was the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process successfully implemented in other states?” and the sub-question, “What were the major roadblocks to success, and how were they overcome?”

Three of the initial five invitations resulted in interviews. An additional three participants were added based on recommendations from the initial interviewees. Participants represented one state education agency, three state school board associations, one national administrator association, and one university. Respondents were mostly female, with one male included in the study. Racial and ethnic data were not collected. The data collected were analyzed thematically and results presented by research question.

Central question – How was the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process successfully implemented in other states?

Implementation of a superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process began as a state regulation in three states discussed in the interviews; however, it was the state school board association that provided the guidance and training. This practice is common in most states according to the interviewee representing the national administrator association. Members of the state school board associations that were

interviewed described the process as collaborative with state administrator associations or with an educational research foundation, such as The Wallace Foundation. In all cases, a set of superintendent standards were developed using existing frameworks (i.e. Professional Standards for Education Leaders) or from their own state standards for administrators. Guidebooks were published as training tools, and professional development seminars were given at both the state level and to individual boards. Key take-aways from the interviews include sample guidebooks from the state school board associations, the use of both the guidebook and “live” training for member boards, and the use of a standard framework that was flexible to the needs of individual boards.

Sub-question – What were the major roadblocks to success, and how were they overcome?

The major roadblock discussed by all interviewees was a concept that I categorized as “resistance to change”. Interviewees described experiences dealing with school boards that were not inclined to change current practices, which most of the time were boards with an existing evaluation process with which the board members were satisfied. One interviewee lamented that if the existing evaluation was aligned with state regulation, one could not force the board to change, but she hoped that with continued efforts in the area of training sessions during state conferences, more boards would adopt the new framework. Another key take-away from the interviews was the recommendation of Rogers’ book, *Diffusion of Innovations*, as a distribution framework for the new process in Delaware.

Products Developed

As a result of the information gathered in artifacts 1-4, I developed a series of products that would allow me to share the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process with other school boards in the state. I used my newly created superintendent standards to produce The Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook, The School Board Member Learning Series video collection, the goal-setting form, the evaluation form, and the sample superintendent evaluation policy.

The handbook serves as a tangible, start-to-finish, guide for successful implementation of the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process. It includes justification for the process by briefly citing research while also introducing the universal framework and proposed superintendent standards. The handbook details each step in the cycle, from developing a standards-based job description to choosing goals for each standard, to the mid-year review, and end-of-year summative evaluation. The process addresses the concerns raised by fellow board members in regard to flexibility and personalization. The PDF format automatically adjusts from desktop and laptops to iPad and smartphone screens for ease of use. And although the handbook can be printed for those who prefer a hard copy, it is most useful when viewed on a computer or device that is connected to the internet so that viewers can click the link to the microlearning videos that support each step of the process.

Along with the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook, board members are able to navigate the process effectively by using the microlearning training videos as a supportive tool in their work. The Delaware School Board

Member Learning Series videos are three to six minutes long and divide the process into individual steps. They are stored on YouTube and accessible to anyone with an Internet connection. The entire series takes around twenty minutes to complete, but individual videos can be accessed anytime during the process when support is needed on a particular step or topic.

The goal-setting and evaluation forms are also explained in the microlearning videos and provide multiple benefits to school boards and superintendents. First, the forms save administrative time and effort. Information is pre-populated into easy to use drop-down menus that can be customized with a few simple keystrokes. The forms can be saved by year so that an accurate record of past goals and evaluations can be kept. There is also an option to password protect the saved files, allowing the ability to make it secure for the confidential, executive session information it contains. Finally, the evaluation form allows board members to rate each goal and provide valuable feedback during the summative evaluation process.

The final product I developed was a sample superintendent evaluation policy. Since policy work is the main duty of the school board, having a superintendent evaluation policy demonstrates the commitment of the school board to the consistent implementation of the process and the importance of properly monitoring the duties and responsibilities of the superintendents that they employ. The sample policy follows the standard policy format used in the Cape Henlopen School District Board Policy Handbook, which includes an introduction and/or purpose statement, an outline

of the standard framework, procedures and a timeline for completion (Cape Henlopen School District, n.d.).

Feedback on the Process

Feedback provides researchers important information and allows one to gauge the success or failure of a program/study. This study was used to collect and analyze feedback on five artifacts of my ELP, the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook, the YouTube microlearning videos, the goal-setting form, the evaluation form, and the sample superintendent evaluation policy. Participants of this study included the eleven board members who were interviewed for the study, “Current Practices in Superintendent Evaluation in the State of Delaware”. A five-question feedback form was e-mailed, along with the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook, which included the links to the YouTube training videos, the goal-setting form, the evaluation form, and the sample superintendent evaluation policy.

Ten of the eleven school board members from the original study responded to the request for feedback. School boards from all three counties were represented and male and female respondents were similar in number. Race and ethnic data were not collected. Data from the feedback forms were compiled and results organized by the central research question, “How effectively does the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook lead school board members through the process?” and the sub-questions, “What areas of the guide need improvement?” and “What areas are the most helpful?” The results were also used to make improvements to the training

materials and make recommendations for future work in this area (addressed in Chapter 5, Reflection on Improvement Effort Results).

Central question – How effectively does the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook lead school board members through the process?

The Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook, microlearning videos and forms were generally well received by the board members who provided feedback for this study. Participants offered comments such as, “guidebook is a great tool”, “process established is clear and can be performed” and “big step in the improvement of superintendent evaluations.” Most board members indicated that they had already or were anxious to share the work with their fellow board members, and they would suggest using the materials in their current/next evaluation cycle.

Even though the overall response was positive, requests were still made by a few board members for additional “in person” training. One board member questioned, “would it be more efficient and effective for [us] to participate in a face-to-face PD after studying the guidebook? In successive years the videos would suffice.” These comments were not coded as negative toward the framework or process, but should be taken into consideration as an option for future delivery of training.

Sub-question – What areas of the guide need improvement?

Responses to this study question were coded and placed in two categories that emerged from the data. The categories were named “materials improvements” and “process improvements”. Items in the materials improvements category included

minor changes to grammar and aesthetics. The aesthetic portion focused on how the YouTube links were embedded in the handbook. The original handbook listed the URL, which was hyperlinked to the YouTube page. While this method produced the desired result, the look lacked a professional polish. In an effort to remedy this, I created a second handbook that included additional pages where the actual video was embedded. This improved the appearance, but increased the file size considerably, and to the point where it could no longer be sent as a file attachment over e-mail. A second attempt to remedy the situation was made, which returned to the embedded links, this time with a YouTube clip art graphic. A note was included on the introduction page explaining the links. This resulted in a product that had that professional polish, and was a reasonable file size.

Feedback that was categorized as process improvements were more difficult to address. Several board members made comments related to the rubrics, specifically pertaining to the semantics. One board member questioned the difference between the rating categories, stating that “distinguishing between the first two categories (exceeds and meets) is very difficult, however there is a giant leap between “meets” and “below expectations.” Additionally, requests for further training, specifically on creating and/or modifying the rubrics to match the specific goals were made on the feedback forms.

Sub-question- What areas are the most helpful?

Feedback in this area focused mainly on the microlearning videos. Participants valued the ability to access the videos easily and were generally satisfied with the

amount of time it took to complete them. Board members appreciated receiving support from the videos “in real time” and many commented positively on how the process was divided into smaller, more manageable chunks. The concept of “microlearning” seemed to appeal to the busy schedules of most school board members. Several board members expressed an interest in additional training videos, not just on the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process, but on other pertinent/relevant school board issues. The microlearning delivery method for school board member training is an area that should be explored for future use in our state.

Chapter 5

REFLECTION ON IMPROVEMENT EFFORT RESULTS

The goal of this ELP was to create a goal-setting and evaluation process that Delaware school boards could implement with their superintendents. Overall, I feel that my improvement efforts have been successful. The handbook, forms and training videos incorporated the key research findings, meshed with applicable practices from other states, while bearing in mind the needs of Delaware's school boards. I truly believe that this process is an important first step in uniting our districts in an effort to increase student achievement by consistently evaluating the performance of our superintendents.

Reflections on Artifacts 1 and 2

When addressing any problem or issue, it is first vital to gain the proper background information. By understanding the findings of previous research, one is better equipped to approach a current problem, and ultimately arrive at the best solution. Both artifacts, Superintendent Evaluation: A Review of the Literature, and Examination of Superintendent Evaluation Policies from Selected States, provided valuable insight into defining the problem and its importance. While I know that these artifacts will not be used in the same capacity as the handbook and training materials, they served an important role in the overall success of my ELP, and the information contained in them is reflected heavily in the other artifacts

Reflections on Artifact 3

From the time I decided to pursue the topic of superintendent evaluation in the state of Delaware, I knew that the recruitment of participants for my study would be a challenge. As a board member who attended several Department of Education meetings on the topic, I knew that this was a polarizing issue for boards in our state. However, I also knew that in order for my ELP to be successful, I had to convince my fellow board members that their involvement would be a rewarding experience.

After sending out my initial study invitation, I received three responses in the first twenty-four hours from board members who agreed to be interviewed. Unfortunately, the fourth response I received was from a board who declined to participate. I never expected to have all nineteen boards participate, but nonetheless, the response concerned me. After a ten day period I had received a total of seven responses, with six agreeing to participate. In an effort to elicit more participants, I sent out another email, this time to the presidents of the boards who had yet to respond. Instead of sending the formal study invitation again, I sent a more casual email, with the formal invitation attached, explaining who I was (doctoral student and fellow board member) and what I was trying to accomplish with my study. I quickly received five more responses, all agreeing to participate. In hindsight, I would change the initial study invitation to be less formal. I would have instead characterized it as an opportunity for other board members to discuss an issue with a colleague which may have made it more appealing, and by extension, more successful in recruiting participants.

The board members that I spoke with participated with enthusiasm and provided information on their board's process willingly. The overall reaction to my proposed process was positive. Even long-standing board members expressed an interest in a new framework and welcomed the idea of easy to use professional development. My hope is that additional board members will hear about the process, inquire about obtaining the training materials, and eventually implement the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process in their districts.

Reflections on Artifact 4

Artifact 4 was not in my original ELP Proposal, but was added during my proposal defense. The goal of this study was to learn from educational leaders in other states who had experience with implementing administrator evaluation programs. I was not surprised to learn that even in places where the legal requirement for superintendent evaluation originated with the state, it was actually the state school board association that took the responsibility for implementing the guidance and training for the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation processes. In speaking with officials from other state school board associations I was able to gather information about their experiences, and heard objections to the implementation of a new process similar to what I had encountered from boards here in Delaware. It was reassuring to learn that even though there was still resistance to the processes in other states, participation was growing as additional training was offered.

The most valuable parts of this artifact were the implementation and training materials that were provided to me by the other state school board associations. These

guidebooks acted as templates for the materials I created for this ELP. I was able to pull the sections I felt were the most useful, modify them to fit the needs of Delaware school boards, and combine them into the handbook, forms and videos found in Artifacts 5-9. The ability to see the work from other state school board associations and talk with those involved allowed me to benefit from their experience. This artifact added a considerable amount of content to my work, and I am grateful that it was suggested.

Reflections on Artifacts 5-9

Artifacts 5-9 represented the bulk of my improvement efforts, and their completion stretched my abilities both professionally and creatively. When I developed the framework with my own board several years ago, I was confident in my ability to educate my fellow board members about the process, including the rationale for its design. With my ELP, I knew that boards who were reviewing, and attempting to implement my framework and process, would not have the benefit of a live person there to teach them and answer questions. Choosing the appropriate content for the handbook and training videos was a task that required attention to the needs of the audience, which included board members of varying backgrounds and education levels. I also had to be mindful of the amount of time it would take for board members to read the Handbook and complete the training videos. I believed that the materials I created met all of the criteria, but I was still anxious to gather feedback from other board members.

In addition to the content, the creative design of the Handbook and training videos, was a task that pushed me out of my comfort zone. I spent a large amount of time investigating software programs and websites that would assist with the aesthetic portion of the work. Ultimately, I chose Adobe Pro for the handbook and forms, and the GoAnimate website for the training videos. Both provided extremely useful tools, and gave the finished product a “professional” look. But, again, I was still anxious to hear what other board members thought.

Reflections on Artifact 10

The feedback study validated my work, and provided me with a tremendous sense of satisfaction. When I began this ELP, my biggest fear was that other board members wouldn't be interested in my work or that it would not be well received. The responses I collected from the feedback survey proved my fears to be unfounded. One board member wrote, “thank you very much for sending your good work. I definitely benefitted from reading it, have shared it with my board members, and hope to modify our superintendent survey based on your guide and work.” Their comment was echoed by many other board members, who offered positive feedback on the process and materials.

Future Implementation Challenges

I was fortunate that the completion of my ELP was fairly seamless. There were not many impediments that slowed my progress. I would have preferred to have a larger number of school boards participate in my studies, but a relatively low participation rate was expected. However, I do believe that there is room to grow and

improve this process. The work that has yet to be completed, that will enable this framework and training to become an adopted policy in all Delaware school districts, will most definitely be challenging. All of the frameworks I reviewed from other states had committees with numerous members who had worked collaboratively to develop their standards and evaluation processes. The process that I created would benefit from additional review and revision, perhaps from a group of interested board members from around our state and it is my recommendation that the Delaware School Boards Association take the lead in this effort. Recruiting board members from across the state to form the committee, finding mutually agreeable times, reviewing and revising the materials, and gathering data from school boards post implementation will take a tremendous amount of time and effort. However, these challenges will serve to improve the process as a whole and will benefit the school boards, superintendents and ultimately the students in the state of Delaware.

Additionally, I believe that the School Board Member Training Series Videos have the potential to add to the knowledge base of all school board members in Delaware and should be explored as an option for the Delaware School Boards Association to deliver further training on pertinent topics such as the development of scoring rubrics, which was suggested by several board members on their feedback forms. It is clear from my interactions with other Delaware school board members during this study that additional training, delivered by convenient and time conscious methods, is definitely needed and wanted.

Chapter 6

REFLECTION ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

I have a passion for education, and have always thrived on learning new skills, whether it be self-taught or from an instructor. After I completed my master's degree in 2003, I knew that at some point I would pursue my doctorate. In fact, I have always joked with my husband, who is a physician, that he cannot be the only doctor in our house!

In 2009, I left my teaching career to focus full time on my family. Although I love raising my children, the change left a hole in my heart that volunteer work and the PTO could not fill. Being elected to the Cape Henlopen Board of Education in 2014 changed that, and I began to feel the pull of the formal learning environment once again. My work on the board made me realize how much had changed in education since my departure from the field, and I knew that the time was right to begin my doctoral work. I was ready to become a student again. I remember pulling into the Trabant garage for my first class and feeling a sense of being back home.

I was excited about the professional growth as an educational leader I would experience while completing the program. I expected this program would greatly increase my knowledge of the field and my understanding of leadership. The program not only met those expectations, but exceeded them by fostering growth in areas that I didn't anticipate. These expected and unexpected areas of growth, which I will reflect

upon further in this chapter, added to the sum total of an educational experience that has become one of the most rewarding endeavors of my life.

Growth as a Scholar

I began this program with the expectation of scholarly growth. My teaching experience was relatively brief, and I had not held an administrative or leadership position during my tenure. My hope was that this program would provide me with the knowledge required to bridge the gap between my previous teaching position and my new role as a school board member. In each of my classes I was taught to be a critical consumer of research and to approach not only challenges, but every day responsibilities from the perspective of a leader. The practical nature of the Ed.D. Program made it easy for me to apply many of the concepts and skills I learned to my work on the board, and it wasn't long before I felt more confident in my scholarly ability. In short, I was not let down!

There were also many instances of scholarly growth I didn't expect, or even realize I needed. I recall one evening in a course on educational research where the professor had scheduled the librarian to give a lesson on using the library's resources for research. Driving to class that night, I was fairly confident I would not be learning anything new, but to my surprise, I was grossly mistaken. The information I received during that lecture changed the way I seek out and choose research and was a tremendous help during my ELP. I also remember the semester I enrolled in Curriculum Planning and Design, and how apathetic I was about the course material. I was certain I would not be able to relate any of the assignments to either my ELP topic

or my work as a school board member. Again, I was mistaken. Not only did I gain greater insight into the process of creating high quality learning materials, but I was also introduced to the concept of microlearning, which would become the training vehicle of choice for my ELP products.

Growth as a Problem-Solver

My first year in the doctoral program coincided with my second year on the Cape Henlopen Board of Education, and by that time I had already determined that the lack of a goal-setting and evaluation process for the Cape Henlopen School District's superintendent was a significant issue. Courses like Politics and Public Relations in School Systems helped me to understand the job duties of the superintendent that fell outside the role of academic leader. It impressed upon me the importance of stakeholder engagement, a concept that I have incorporated, not only into the superintendent standards in this ELP, but into my own practice as a school board member. Taking Organizational Problem Analysis taught me about the management structures that occur in school districts and how effective superintendents tailor their leadership styles to varied circumstances they encounter. It was during this course that I discovered the research linking leadership and student achievement, and that discovery led to the rationale behind my superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process. But it was not until my two courses with Dr. Archbald that I understood how to take the problem I was facing with my own school board and meld it with my coursework to create this ELP.

In addition to helping with the problem that I faced as a school board member in evaluating our superintendent, the doctoral program also helped me become a better problem solver in general, and afforded me a greater comfort level in taking the lead when addressing other problems that our school board faced. I was elected as vice president of the Cape Henlopen Board of Education at the beginning of the second year of my term. The knowledge I gained from just my first year of classes allowed me to tackle the responsibilities of the vice presidency and create a superintendent evaluation process for my board. As I continued in my coursework, I was also able to implement a new board member training program, which included a newly written school board member handbook for our district. My growth as a problem solver gave me the confidence to lead major improvement efforts that will be a benefit to future board members in my district.

Growth as a Partner

Throughout this program I have experienced growth as both a scholar and as a problem-solver, which in turn, has made me a better partner. The ability to work collaboratively was something that was emphasized in each of my courses, and I learned valuable lessons such as listening more and talking less, viewing issues through others' lenses, and supporting the efforts of others through distributed leadership. As a school board member, I interact on a regular basis with employees of our district, parents and community members, and local politicians. From representing the school board during the teacher and support staff contract negotiations, to considering parent input during our redistricting process, and interacting with the

public to promote referendums, the partnership skills I gained as a student in the doctoral program helped me to successfully navigate each situation and gain the reputation of someone who is easy to work with.

Beyond becoming a better partner in my role as a school board member while attending the doctoral program, which I anticipated would happen, an unanticipated benefit was the relationships I established with the other doctoral students. Looking back on my three years in the program, I have developed strong attachments to my classmates through group work and discussion, and have grown to rely on their comradery. As the semesters continued, I was able to work with students who held diverse professional roles, and each added to my growth as a partner. I often drew from their expertise and professional experiences for my own work. I hope to keep in contact with my classmates and continue to do my part in nurturing each other's growth as education leaders.

The journey to become a better scholar, problem solver, and partner has been an ongoing theme in my adult life. This doctoral program represents a major step in my professional development and has helped me grow and improve on many levels. It however does not represent the end for me. With my love of learning I can assure you that the journey is not over. As Mahatma Gandhi says, "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever" (Goodreads.com, n.d.).

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Appendix A

RETHINKING SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION: AN ELP PROPOSAL

Overview

Research over the past 20 years has demonstrated strong, albeit indirect, links between leadership and student achievement (DiPaola, 2010; Leithwood, et. al., 2004; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016; Waters & Marzano, 2007). Recent legislation also “extends accountability for student learning beyond the schoolhouse to the organizations that, in all states, continue to make crucial decisions about the use of resources for school improvement” (Leithwood, 2010, p. 243). In Delaware, the position of school superintendent is tasked with leading these organizations. Knowing that the superintendent plays a vital and influential role in the success of the students would lead one to believe that school boards engage their superintendents in a rigorous evaluation process that focuses on constant improvement within their district; however, this is often not the case. A policy handbook review of the nineteen public and technical school districts in Delaware reveals that only five have a specific superintendent evaluation policy, and only two of those contain any meaningful detail about the process. The fact that school board members are, in many cases, community members with no background in education, and no training in evaluation, further compounds the issue (DiPaola, 2010). This study aims to examine the research linking achievement to leadership, to review the current evaluation practices in the state’s

public school districts, and to propose a more standardized evaluation process derived from the research on this topic.

Organizational Context

The state of Delaware is divided into sixteen comprehensive school districts and three technical school districts. Each school district employs one superintendent and is governed by a board of education. The following table lists information about the school boards for each of the nineteen school districts.

Table 2

Local Boards of Education in Delaware

District	Number of Board Members	Member of DSBA	Superintendent Evaluation Policy
Appoquinimink	5	Y	N
Brandywine	7	Y	N
Caesar Rodney	5	N	Y
Cape Henlopen	7	Y	Y
Capital	5	Y	N
Christina	7	Y	N
Colonial	7	Y	U
Delmar	5	N	U
Indian River	10	Y	Y
Lake Forest	5	Y	Y
Laurel	5	Y	Y
New Castle County Vo Tech	7	Y	U
Polytech	6	Y	N
Milford	7	N	N
Red Clay	7	Y	N
Seaford	5	Y	U
Smyrna	5	Y	N
Sussex Tech	7	Y	U
Woodbridge	5	Y	N

Note: DSBA = Delaware School Boards Association, U = Policy Handbook Unavailable

Qualifications for school board members are dictated by state code, Title 14, Chapter 10, Subchapter III, which proclaims, “each member shall be a citizen of the State and resident of the school district in which elected or appointed and shall be qualified to vote at a school election in that district at the time of such election or appointment” (14 Del. C. §1052). School board members serve five-year terms (seven years for technical districts) and are required to attend training on due process regulation and school finance oversight (14 Del. C. §1049B, 1052).

Sixteen of the nineteen districts listed hold membership in the Delaware School Boards Association (DSBA), which was founded in 1946, to help local boards meet the needs of their communities through orientation/training, development of legislative priorities, coordination of legal services, and by acting as liaison with state agencies (DSBA, n.d.). In previous years, DSBA provided an orientation seminar that followed the National School Board Association publication *The Key Work of School Boards* (NSBA, 2015). This guidebook briefly covers the areas of vision, accountability, policy, community leadership, and board/superintendent relationships. While this guidebook gives some direction to new board members, it does not go into depth regarding superintendent evaluation, and in general school board member training is predominantly handled within the individual districts.

My experience stems from being a member of the Cape Henlopen Board of Education. Our board is comprised of seven members, four that represent designated areas within the district, and three at-large members. The board shares its mission and vision with the school district, but developed its own philosophy, which focuses on

“the total personal development of each student” (Cape, n.d.). Until two years ago, the Cape Henlopen Board of Education had no specific evaluation process or tool to evaluate superintendent performance. It was at that time that the board recognized a link between superintendent performance and student achievement, and in order to stay true to the board’s philosophical goal stated above, developed a formal evaluation process for the superintendent with the purpose of maximizing superintendent performance as a means to enhance the personal development of the students in the district.

Organizational Role

I was elected to the Cape Henlopen Board of Education as an at-large member and began my five-year term on July 1, 2014. During the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years, I served as the vice president of the board. Throughout my three years on the board, I have served on the budget oversight, technology, facilities taskforce, buildings/grounds, and safety/climate committees. My role as a board member primarily consists of creating and editing policies that govern the practices of the school district, but also includes voting on the contract extensions for all administrative employees and the superintendent.

After recognizing the need for a structured goal-setting and evaluation process for the superintendent, I presented a training session for my fellow board members at our summer retreat in 2016. The training focused on the research links between superintendent leadership and student achievement as a basis for the goal-setting process and proposed the use of a customizable template, based on the Delaware

Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II) for Administrators, as the evaluation tool. Our board worked together with our superintendent to set goals and priorities for the year and determined the data we would need to evaluate the progress mid-year and end-of-year. Finally, I authored, with edits from the board, a superintendent evaluation policy that was approved by unanimous vote on October 13, 2016.

The process of proposing, developing and implementing a formal goal-setting and evaluation process for the superintendent in my district allowed me to apply the knowledge I gained through my University of Delaware coursework, furthering my professional growth. Drawing on my experience in the Cape Henlopen School District, I feel prepared to assist other school boards to develop their own goal-setting and evaluation processes using my prior work as a template. My hope is to be able to convince other school boards of the importance of this process and to improve the leadership of all our state's school districts.

Problem Statement

As a former classroom teacher, I am well-versed on the teacher evaluation process. The DPAS II system offers rubrics for teachers that set goals for the year. Teachers are aware of their principal's expectations and have a defined guide for their teaching practices. Given my familiarity with the teacher evaluation process, I was surprised that district superintendents were not evaluated using DPAS II or any other Department of Education created evaluation tool. As a school board member, I struggled to find adequate measures of performance for the superintendent that I was now in charge of evaluating. When I joined the board, my fellow Cape Henlopen

School Board members informed me that little substantive evaluation had been done in the past. In conversations with school board members from other districts in the state, I found that they too lacked a process of formal goal-setting and evaluation for their superintendents, demonstrating that this was a state-wide issue. While I considered this to be a significant concern, the problem became even more urgent when our board met to discuss our superintendent's contract. While evaluating him, it became evident that there was a clear disconnect between the board's expectations for the superintendent and the superintendent's understanding of what was expected of him. The lack of a formal goal-setting and evaluation process for the superintendent created a situation where his employment was potentially at risk because of a lack of clarity regarding the board's expectations. This disconnect prompted me to look at the research on superintendent evaluation processes, determine their effect on superintendent performance, and ultimately their impact student achievement.

Research studies that link district leadership to student achievement have increased in number and significance over the past 20 years (DiPaola, 2010; Leithwood & Azah, 2017; Leithwood, et. al., 2004; Leithwood & McCullough, 2016; Waters & Marzano, 2007). In their meta-analysis of district leadership research, Waters and Marzano found that 24% of the variance in student achievement scores was attributable to the superintendent's leadership abilities. Leithwood and McCullough define the characteristics that are most impactful on student achievement. They highlight the communication of vision, mission and goals of the district as a critical aspect of effective leadership, as well as the ability to ensure policies are

aligned with those ideals. They also point to consistency in instructional leadership, relevant professional development for staff, productive relationships with stakeholders, and use of evidence-based decision-making as important responsibilities of district leaders. In summary, research suggests that district leadership has significant effects on organizational components, which are proven to improve student achievement (Leithwood & Azah, 2017).

Unfortunately, research has also shown that the lack of a formal evaluation process is not just a deficiency in the Cape District or the State of Delaware; it is lacking on a broader scale across the nation. DiPaola (2007, p. 18) states the problem is that “superintendents' performance evaluations continue to be too frequently conducted through a highly informal, subjective process, based more on impressions than data.” Weber (2007, p. 16) agrees, stating, “evaluation of the superintendent, if done at all, has often been conducted as an anecdotal, verbal exercise in subjective criticism by the board of education.”

While a subjective process of evaluation perhaps has some value in evaluating a superintendent’s intangibles and overall performance, it should be, at a minimum, balanced with a formal evaluation process that couples clear upfront communication of predefined goals and expectations with subsequent objective measures to determine if those goals and expectations were met. “Establishing an objective, informative, data-driven evaluation model tied to leadership standards can improve the superintendent’s ability to lead,” which in turn will result in higher student achievement (Opstad, 2010, p. 8).

Improvement Goal

In addressing the issue, it is critical to address the roadblocks to success. DiPaola (2010, p. 5) reminds us that “the shift to the focus on the quality of superintendents’ instructional leadership created a set of unique challenges, not only for superintendents, but also for the boards that evaluate their performance.” He further explains his statement by reminding us that “superintendents are the only school district employees not supervised or evaluated by another licensed professional (p. 7),” pointing out the fact that school board members have varying levels of education and training and often do not have a background in the field of education. Because of this, it is critical that the members of our local school boards have training and/or guidance in the area of goal-setting for, and subsequent evaluation of, superintendents. This is an area of need in our state as evidenced in the 2001 study of superintendent evaluation by DiPaola and Stronge. They found that all but eight states provided recommended frameworks and/or an evaluation tool for boards to use in their evaluation process. It came as no surprise to me based on my experience as a school board member in Delaware that we are one of the eight states. DiPaola and Stronge’s study was published 16 years ago, nonetheless this remains the case today in 2017. Perhaps even more alarming is that research in the interim has revealed the clear benefits of using a formal goal-setting and evaluation processes to improve student achievement (Day, Sammons, Hopkins, Leithwood, & Kington, 2008; DiPaola, 2010; Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010; Waters, & Marzano, 2007). In fairness to our state and based on discussions at state meetings for school board

members, I can attest that our state has attempted to standardize the superintendent evaluation process in the past but was met with opposition from the local school boards. Nonetheless, I believe that the push back from local boards can be alleviated if the training and guidance comes from the Delaware School Boards Association (DSBA), in conjunction with a fellow local school board member. I also believe that each board should have the flexibility to develop their own evaluation that can be focused on the needs of their district. DiPaola (2010, p. 7) agrees stating that “because superintendents encompass a variety of roles that vary from district to district, it is critical that the evaluation process used be developed locally, based on specific job responsibilities and expectations.” The general framework should be standardized across the State; however, the specific goals should be tailored to each district.

Several evaluation frameworks have been developed and can be considered when developing an evaluation framework for our state (Corbett & Wilson, 1992; Crowson & Morris, 1992; Dimmock & Wildy, 1992; DiPaola, 2007; Hallinger & Edwards, 1992; Hord, Jolly, & Mendez-Morse, 1992; Opstad, 2010). In addition, The School Superintendents Association (Hoyle, 1993) has published professional standards for the superintendency, and the Council of Chief State School Officers (1996, 2008) developed a set of professional standards for education leaders. Both will prove valuable in the development of our state framework. In short, I am proposing a process that first evaluates the current goal-setting and superintendent evaluation processes of Delaware’s comprehensive school districts and develops a standard framework to be used across the state. I would then provide training on the framework

through DSBA and assist individual districts with implementation. Finally, to ensure effectiveness, I would obtain feedback from participating boards on the process and make adjustments as appropriate.

Table 3

Description of Planned Artifacts

#	Artifact	Type	Audience	Description	Timeline/Status
1	Superintendent Evaluation, A Review of the Literature	Literature Synthesis	School Boards and Department of Education	This paper synthesizes the existing literature on superintendent evaluation. The paper is divided into three sections, the links between leadership and student achievement, the current superintendent evaluation practices, and proposed evaluation and standards models.	Draft submitted with proposal and accepted 2/1/18
2	Examination of superintendent Evaluation Policies from Selected States	Policy Review/ Comparison	School Boards and Department of Education	Policies from California, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia will be reviewed and compared in order to inform Delaware school boards on the current practices across the country. Policy components will be used as reference for Delaware's policy.	Draft submitted with proposal and accepted with additional states, 2/1/18

Table 3 continued

3	Current Practices in Superintendent Evaluation in the State of Delaware	Qualitative Research Study	School Board Members	The research protocol defines the study parameters and interview questions that will provide more in-depth information about the current superintendent evaluation practices in the state of Delaware. Data gleaned from the interviews will be used to create the goal-setting and evaluation forms. The study will be summarized for use in the guide on the topic.	Draft of Protocol submitted with proposal and accepted 2/1/18, Interviews to be completed Spring 2018 and presented with final defense
4	Lessons Learned from Superintendent Evaluation Implementation	Qualitative Research Study	School Board Members	Structured interviews with stakeholders from other states/organizations who have implemented a superintendent evaluation process. The goal is collect data on implementation process, training, barriers, and successes to help inform the process here in Delaware.	Develop Spring 2018, present at final defense.
5	The School Board Members' Guide to Effective Superintendent Evaluation	Guide Book	School Board Members and Department of Education	This guide provides a concise review of evaluation practices in Delaware compared to other states and proposes a standard goal-setting and evaluation tool. Data from the school board member interviews (ELP Artifact #3), policies from other states (Artifact # 2), and key take-aways from implementation in other states (Artifact #4) will be used.	Develop Spring 2018, Present at final defense

Table 3 continued

6	Evaluation of the Superintendent (sample policy)	Policy Document	School Boards	This sample policy will be provided to school boards to assist with the development of their own policy.	Develop Spring 2018, Present at final defense
7	School Board/ Superintendent Goal-Setting Form	Web Tools/ Documents	School Boards	This will be an interactive form, where board members can choose goals from a “pull-down” menu, which will be populated into one concise form for printing. The form will also include suggestions for data collection and time-lines.	Develop Spring 2018, Present at final defense
8	School Board/ Superintendent Evaluation Form	Web Tools/ Documents	School Boards	This evaluation tool will allow school board members to rate the superintendent on the goals chosen with the goal-setting form. Ratings and feedback will be compiled into one document for presentation to the superintendent.	Develop Spring 2018, Present at final defense
9	Implementing a Formal Goal-Setting and Evaluation Process for School Boards	Professional Development Products	School Boards	This presentation will serve to inform board members about the process of superintendent goal-setting and evaluation. This informative presentation will be given during a DSBA meeting and offered to boards as a professional development/board retreat training program. It will also include a brief summary for the ELP committee to justify the chosen presentation format.	Develop Spring 2018, Present at final defense

Table 3 continued

10	Implementation Survey for School Boards	Program Evaluation	School Boards	This tool will assess the level of implementation and provide feedback to improve the process in future years.	Develop Spring 2018, Present at final defense
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Appendix B

ARTIFACT 1: SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION, A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Research in the field of education has long focused on student achievement and the variables that influence it. Traditionally, district leadership was not a variable that researchers considered impactful. However, numerous studies over the past twenty years have proven leadership does matter, and its effects are significant (Leithwood, Patten, & Jantzi, 2010; Waters & Marzano, 2007). The realization that superintendent leadership can have positive effects on student achievement has placed an additional layer of accountability on school districts and the boards that govern them. In an effort to quantify the role of the superintendent, national organizations like the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) and the National School Boards Association (NSBA) have developed superintendent performance standards, but the research shows they are not widely implemented by local school boards on their superintendent evaluations (Opstad, 2010). This literature review summarizes the research on superintendent evaluation in three categories: the links between leadership and student achievement, proposed standards and evaluation models, and current superintendent evaluation practices.

Links Between Leadership and Student Achievement

The majority of the literature linking superintendent leadership to student achievement has been synthesized by two groups of educational researchers, Kenneth Leithwood and colleagues from The Wallace Foundation, and Timothy Waters and Robert Marzano, writing for Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL). An additional study from The Wallace Foundation investigating central office effects on learning improvement also provides links that can be applied to the superintendent's position. Finally, several smaller studies investigating the effects of leadership on principal and teacher efficacy prove indirect, but strong links to student achievement.

In 2004, Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, and Wahlstrom embarked on a six-year study titled, *The Learning from Leadership Project*. The study gathered five categories of evidence on the topics of leadership and learning: qualitative case studies, large-scale quantitative studies of leadership effects on schools and students, and on the effects of specific leadership practices, studies of leadership effects on student engagement, and finally, studies of leadership succession practices (Leithwood, et. al., 2010). In addition, they performed their own case studies, and conducted thousands of surveys. Their findings indicated that “leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn in school” (Leithwood, et. al., 2004, p. 1). While the study focused on school principals, it also took a close look at district level leadership. They postulated that “significant effects on student learning depend on creating synergy across a range

of human and institutional resources, so that the overall impact adds up to something worthwhile...leaders are uniquely positioned to ensure these synergistic effects” (Wahlstrom, et. al., 2010, p. 2). The effects on student achievement were most evident when district level leadership focused on sharing the mission, vision and goals of the district, provided coherent instructional guidance and relevant professional development for all employees, used data and evidence to inform decision-making, aligned policies with the vision, mission, and goals, and cultivated productive relationships with all stakeholders.

During this same time period, Waters and Marzano (2007) were conducting their own research on the effects of district leadership on student achievement. Using all available studies involving district level leadership from 1970 to 2005 ($n=14$), they performed a meta-analysis, which concluded that the correlation between leadership and achievement was .24 at a 95% confidence interval (significant at $p=.05$). To interpret this correlation in terms of student achievement, Waters and Marzano calculated, if a superintendent improves their leadership abilities by one standard deviation, then student achievement in their district would improve almost 10 percentage points. Waters and Marzano went on to define five superintendent responsibilities that had statistically significant correlations to student achievement. These responsibilities were collaborative goal-setting, non-negotiable goals for achievement and instruction, board alignment with and support of district goals, monitoring of achievement and instruction goals, and the effective use of resources to support achievement and instruction goals (Waters & Marzano, 2007). They later

reported in a follow-up article in a 2007 issue of *School Administrator* (p 14) that the study also demonstrated a “bonus” result, identifying a correlation between superintendent tenure and student achievement at a correlation coefficient of .19. Furthermore, they determined that the positive effects of tenure length on student achievement could be appreciated as early as two years into a superintendent’s tenure. They ultimately concluded that, since it is the school board that determines the duration of a superintendent’s tenure, the correlation between superintendent tenure and student achievement puts a substantial responsibility on the school board to maintain stability in the superintendent position.

Honig, et. al. (2010) studied district office staff in Atlanta, New York City, and Oakland, California, and determined that positive effects on student learning were achieved through five dimensions of central office behavior. The dimensions were learning-focused partnerships between the central office and district principals, assistance to those partnerships by all staff, reorganizing central office units to support teaching and learning, intentional efforts (stewardship) of the overall process, and use of evidence throughout the central office. While not every dimension fell under the sole responsibility of the superintendents in the three districts studied, they played a crucial role in the process of central office transformation for district-wide improvement in teaching and learning.

There are also studies that cite the effects of leadership on principal and teacher efficacy. Self-efficacy is a construct developed by Albert Bandura (1997) and can be defined as one’s belief in him/herself. Collective efficacy refers to belief in a

group's capabilities to achieve a purpose. Leithwood and Jantzi's 2008 article stated that most leadership effects are indirect, therefore it was incumbent on researchers to determine the "many links in the chain connecting state, district and school leadership to learning" (p. 496). Principal and teacher efficacy is one such link. A meta-analysis of previous research along with the results of their own surveys resulted in a correlation coefficient of .61 for district leadership and collective efficacy beliefs of educators, and .32 for district leadership and educator self-efficacy beliefs, both significant at the $p=.01$ level. Additionally, Leithwood et al. (2010) cite collective efficacy as having a significant positive effect on student achievement. Leithwood and Azah (2017) and Leithwood and McCullough (2016) also list collective and self-efficacy as two important factors in their studies on high-performing school districts.

Proposed Standards and Evaluation Models

The implications of the above findings have shifted the focus of policy-makers at the federal, state and local level to the importance of the superintendent's instructional leadership. In response, regulations such as No Child Left Behind extended accountability for student performance beyond the classroom to the district office, requiring that school boards evaluate their superintendents on a regular basis (Leithwood, 2010). This shift in accountability of, and focus on, superintendents "created a set of unique challenges, not only for superintendents, but also for the boards that evaluate their performance" (DiPaola, 2010, p. 5). DiPaola (2010) asserts that local school boards are often comprised of community members, who are untrained in educational evaluation. The presence of a link between superintendent

leadership and student achievement, highlights the fact that untrained school board members performing personnel evaluations on superintendents is a flawed approach. Guidance for both superintendents and school board members is necessary and has come from several national sources, including AASA and the NSBA.

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) produces reports on the state of the superintendency and has done so every decade since 1923 (Glass, 2007). These reports have identified key performance evaluation practices and aided in the development of the *Superintendent Evaluation Handbook* in 2003 by DiPaola and Stronge. The handbook describes eight standards with corresponding performance indicators to assist both superintendents and school boards in evaluating performance. These standards cover the domains of leadership and district culture, policy and governance, communications and community relations, organizational management, curriculum planning and development, instructional management, human resources management, and values and ethics of leadership.

Similarly, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) recognized that school boards across the country needed guidance on the topic of superintendent evaluation, and they identified eight key action areas that mirror the domains of AASA's standards. These are: vision, standards, assessment, accountability, alignment, climate, collaboration, and continuous improvement (NSBA, 2015). Many, but not all, of the NSBA's state affiliates have produced sample evaluation tools that are made available to their local school boards. The sample tools take into account the specific legal requirements for superintendent evaluation in their respective state. For

example, Illinois and Texas require the use of student achievement data in the evaluation of the superintendent's performance (DiPaola, 2007). A closer look at the evaluation requirements and sample tools is located in Appendix C.

A third source of superintendent standards is the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards (ISLLC), which was first developed in 1996 by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). These six standards were updated in 2008 to encompass the full range of job duties performed by educational leaders. Each standard is comprised of functions or descriptions of behaviors that promote the successful implementation of each standard. Many states including Delaware have used these standards in their current administrator evaluation systems (The Wallace Foundation, n.d.).

The standards and frameworks developed by AASA, NSBA and CCSSO provide valuable starting points for local boards in their efforts to design and implement their own superintendent evaluation tools. However, several researchers have advocated for the inclusion of other factors based on the superintendent's actual job description. Glass (2007) recommend that school boards use the evaluation process as an opportunity to clarify the duties and performance expectations for their superintendent. Banks and Maloney (2007) agree, citing the practice in their school district of annually reviewing the job description of both the superintendent and the board as a valuable part of their evaluation process. In addition to performance objectives based on job descriptions, Mathews (2001) and Caruso (2015) both discuss the inclusion of a goal set by the superintendent as a component of the evaluation, and

DiPaola (2010, p. 10) states, “one goal of the evaluation process must be focused on the professional growth of the superintendent.” It would appear that an ideal evaluation process would incorporate not only the nationally recommended standards, but also components that are developed cooperatively between school boards and their superintendents and focus on the unique goals of their districts.

Current Superintendent Evaluation Practices

While the research on the links between leadership and student achievement are clear in their findings, the literature on current evaluation practices continues to show wide variation in methods. In a study performed by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), it was found that most school boards performed at least one evaluation annually (Glass, 2007). However, 5% of the 1,338 superintendents surveyed stated they received no formal evaluation within the past year. While the percentage of superintendents that confirmed having an annual evaluation was high, DiPaola (2007) claims that “superintendent’s performance evaluations continue to be too frequently conducted through a highly informal, subjective process, based more on impressions than data” (p. 18).

Opstad found similar results in his 2010 study of small school districts in Washington State. After interviewing superintendents and board presidents from six school districts, Opstad found that four of the six districts used informal evaluation tools that were not clearly tied to job descriptions, mutually set goals, or achievement data. The superintendents included in the study communicated concerns that the goals and expectations of the board were not “explicitly expressed...nor reflected in the

evaluation tool” (p. 66). Most of the superintendents interviewed did not have current written job descriptions, and those that did claimed the descriptions were not used in their evaluations. Another significant finding from Opstad’s study was that none of the school boards interviewed had knowledge of the ISLLC standards for the superintendent or their suggested use in superintendent evaluation tools.

Dissertation studies by Adams (2011), Mortensen (2009), Pitts (2010) and Sackos (2009) examined the superintendent evaluation practices in the states of Iowa, Idaho, California, and Arizona respectively. Their findings mirrored those of Opstad. The school boards included in their studies performed at least one annual evaluation, but most were informal and did not employ recommended superintendent performance standards. Interestingly, Adams’ (2011) study raised concerns regarding the validity of school board members responses on the topic of use of standards in superintendent evaluation. He compared the evaluation tools provided by school boards to the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and found that even though 83% of districts reported implementation of the standards as part of their evaluation, closer examination revealed there was less than 20% alignment within the evaluations. This disconnect had been previously identified by Pitts (2010) who found that school board members in Northern California failed to properly implement recommended superintendent performance standards in their evaluations. Pitts went on to suggest that the lack of proper implementation related to the inadequate training of school board members in the evaluation process and the proper use of standards. In summary, current research

reveals that the use of standards in the superintendent evaluation process is not always employed, and when it is, the execution is frequently suboptimal.

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Appendix C

ARTIFACT 2: EXAMINATION OF SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION POLICIES FROM SELECTED STATES

In the winter of 2015, I attended a Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) workshop for school board members on the topic of superintendent evaluation. The intent of the meeting was to gather input from board members on a statewide superintendent evaluation system. During this meeting it was clear that DDOE had researched the policies of other states, so this fall I contacted DDOE to request the information they had reviewed during their research process. I was able to obtain several documents, including the superintendent evaluation policies from the three main states on which DDOE had focused: Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Virginia (Shannon Holston, personal communication, November 2017). There was some incomplete information from Missouri, Ohio, and West Virginia, however, I accessed more in-depth documents from their respective Department of Education websites. I also included Texas and California, since I had personal discussions with board members from those states during the most recent National School Board Association conference in Denver (March 2017). Finally, I added the states of Illinois, Iowa, and Kentucky at the request of my ELP committee.

In total, I examined Superintendent Evaluation policies from eleven states; California, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio,

Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. The information was entered into Table 4, and placed into columns with the headings; Framework, Performance Criteria, Determination of Performance Level, Timeline, and Other Important Features. I found that all eleven states required the superintendent to be evaluated at least once annually, with many recommending a more continuous approach with a multi-step evaluation cycle. While all but one provided a model evaluation, Missouri and Iowa, *required* the use of their model evaluation. Most states allowed for modification of the model by local school boards, or development of a separate evaluation within certain parameters. The frameworks used varied widely, and anywhere from three to eleven standards were employed. Nonetheless, all the standards reflected the frameworks put forth by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), and/or the Professional Standards for Education Leaders (PSEL, formerly ISLLC). The inclusion of student achievement data was either required or recommended by all states. Virginia's policy requires a weighted calculation of the superintendent's final score, with 40% coming from student achievement (2012). Other notable features of some evaluation policies were the inclusion of superintendent self-evaluations and stakeholder feedback, termed "360-degree" evaluations, and the inclusion of suggested evidence or artifact lists. Finally, the reporting of the final evaluation to the public varied from state to state. Some required the process to be conducted in open session, while others allowed it to be discussed in executive session with the results made public at a later time.

Table 4

Superintendent Evaluation Policies

	Framework	Performance Criteria	Determination of Performance Level	Timeline	Other Important Features
California	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State allows local boards to develop and implement evaluations under the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) - California School Boards Association provides guidance and suggested format for evaluations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Superintendent Governance Standards (11), created in 2001 by ACSA Superintendents Committee and the CSBA Superintendents Advisory Council - Progress toward district goals also included 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board and Superintendent develop success indicators for each goal/standard - Superintendent completes a self-evaluation - Board assesses performance of the superintendent individually, then meets to come to a consensus - Superintendent receives one final evaluation report that represents the consensus of the board - Evaluation is a narrative, not categorical or numerical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - March, board receives evaluation packet - April, board meets to discuss individual evaluations and come to consensus - May, meet with superintendent to discuss evaluation, start to develop next year's goals - June-Aug, finalize goals and report in open session, superintendent reports on action plans - December/January, mid-year progress report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goal Setting for upcoming year, and review of the previous year's evaluation summary is completed in open session

Table 4 continued

Illinois	- Framework and guidebook provided by IASB	- Provides PSEL and AASA standards for use in four categories, board/superintendent relations, implementation of the district's strategic initiatives, district leadership and management, and community relations	- Guidebook assists with process of setting goals and with rating process, including a comment section for each goal	- Suggests an annual review and a mid-year check up -Gives a sample calendar in the appendices that outlines a continuous process	- Gives wording/formatting for a superintendent evaluation policy to be adopted by districts
Iowa	- State law (Senate File 227, 2007) requires school boards to evaluate superintendents annually based on the six Iowa Standards for School Leaders -Model process developed by Iowa School Leaders in association with IASB, SAOI and The Wallace Foundation	-Six standards, Iowa Standards for School Leaders (ISSL), Shared Vision, Culture of Learning, Management, Family and Community, Ethics, and Societal Context	-Each standard has several criteria with descriptors and examples of evidence/artifacts to support each -Either meets or doesn't meet with a section to document evidence and reflection	-Summative evaluation during initial year of employment, annual formative assessment based on the superintendent's Individual Professional Development Plan after the initial year, and three-year summative evaluation based on ISSL standards	-List of possible evidence/artifacts for each criterion is extremely helpful -Each standard has a section for reflective conversation with possible discussion questions for the board to ask the superintendent in their on-going conversation

Table 4 continued

Kentucky	<p>-Kentucky Next Generation Superintendent Effectiveness Standards</p> <p>-Aligned with ISLLC Standards, Performance Planning and Review for Superintendent Evaluation, and Standards for Quality School Systems</p> <p>-Based on NC Standards for Superintendents, and research from McREL's <i>School District Leadership that Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement (2006)</i></p>	<p>- Seven Standards, Strategic leadership, instructional leadership, cultural leadership, human resource leadership, managerial leadership, external development leadership, and micro political leadership</p>	<p>-Based on a scale from exemplary to accomplished, developing, and growth required</p> <p>-Requires a self-assessment of the superintendent</p>	<p>-Required to discuss with board and enter into ASSIST system once per semester</p>	<p>- Change in regulations in 2014 required at least 1 hour of training in superintendent evaluation</p> <p>-Online tool named ASSIST</p> <p>-Provides a list of suggested artifacts</p>
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Table 4 continued

Massachusetts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State provides model system with forms/templates - Boards can choose to modify, however the evaluation criteria and rubric must be approved by the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation, which includes Statewide Standards and Indicators for Effective Administrative Leadership (4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State developed rubric for each standard - Three categories of evidence to support the rating in each standard, multiple measures of student growth, judgements based on observations and artifacts, and additional evidence - Rating categories of proficient, exemplary, needs improvement, and unsatisfactory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Five-step evaluation cycle over one or two years; self-assessment, analysis/goal setting, and plan development, implementation of the plan, mid-cycle goals review, and summative evaluation 	
Missouri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State provides evaluation form with recommended standards and performance indicators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Missouri Superintendent Standards (7), based on the Interstate Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality indicators are given for each standard, with descriptors of levels; candidate, emerging superintendent, developing superintendent, proficient superintendent, and distinguished superintendent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Process follows a five-step cycle; reflect and plan, identify indicators, baseline performance, new strategies and feedback, and follow-up performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A minimum of two indicators must address student learning, but no more than three indicators at a time (recommended)

Table 4 continued

North Carolina	- State provides model system with forms/templates	- North Carolina Standards for Superintendents (7)	- Rubrics provided for each of the seven standards - Performance ratings are not demonstrated, developing, proficient, accomplished, and distinguished	- Process begins with superintendent self-evaluation, develops goals for improvement and creates plan to reach goals - Superintendent and board meet to discuss self-evaluation, goals and plan - Consolidated Performance Assessment; board and superintendent compile and review data throughout the year - Board rates superintendent individually based on consolidated performance assessment; then discusses and reports as one - Board and super meet again to review documents	- Ratings are compiled and the median score is used
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Table 4 continued

Ohio	- State provides model system with forms and timeline	- Ohio Standards for Superintendents (5), draws from current research, particularly Waters & Marzano (2007)	- Uses meets or does not meet criteria but requires supporting narratives for each standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish baseline before process begins - June – September, identify annual district objectives and develop work plans - December – January, conduct a formative assessment (mid-year evaluation) - June, conduct a summative evaluation (end of year evaluation) 	- Recommends that boards and superintendents review job description/contract at the start of each cycle (perform a job duty analysis to convert to standards based job descriptions)
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Table 4 continued

Texas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State requires a written evaluation of superintendent performance at least once per year and provides guidance on the use of student achievement data. - Final criteria and instruments are left up to local boards - The Texas Association of School Boards (TASB) provides a sample instrument with templates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two-part evaluation, Priority Performance Goal (can change each year), and Assessment of Ongoing Responsibilities (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three level rating scale; exceptional, proficient, and needs improvement - Comments can be made on any item, however they are required whenever a rating of needs improvement is given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No formal timeline provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TASB changed its sample evaluation in 2006 to reflect the concerns of boards (not knowing/ understanding what constitutes “good practice”, inability to perform “formal observations”, etc.), evaluation now lists “look-for” items that board members would see in their normal interactions with the superintendent that would support a rating
Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - State provides model system with forms/templates - Boards can choose to modify their existing evaluation system but must use the 7 performance standards prescribed by the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Superintendents (7) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rubrics are provided, which describe performance at each of the four levels; exemplary, proficient, developing/needs improvement, and unacceptable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formative assessment can and should happen at any point during the year, summative evaluation once per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Suggested data sources include 360-degree evaluation methods, and self-evaluations - Final ratings are comprised of a weighted average, 10% for standards 1-6 and 40% for standard 7 (student performance)

Table 4 continued

West Virginia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires local school boards to evaluate on an annual basis with an instrument that must be approved by the State Superintendent and the State Board and contain criteria detailed in the regulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No recommended framework or evaluation criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Decided upon by districts and approved or modified by the state board of education - Can include areas of community relations, school finance, personnel relations, curricular standards and programs, and overall leadership - Performance is determined mainly upon student achievement results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annually, before September 15th, boards must develop written goals with timelines for each - Annually, before June 30th, boards must assess the superintendent (including student achievement goals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation process takes place in executive session but will be made public after - Process takes place before March 1st, if the superintendent's contract expires June 30th - Evaluation may include other sources such as community members and school employees - School board members and superintendents are required to attend evaluation training given by the WV School Boards Association and the WV Association of School Administrators
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Appendix D

ARTIFACT 3: CURRENT PRACTICES IN SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION IN THE STATE OF DELAWARE

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to collect data on the current superintendent evaluation practices in Delaware's nineteen public school districts. One board member from each school district was asked to participate in a short phone interview discussing their board's methods. The data collected were used to help create sample goal-setting and evaluation forms and to aid in the development of the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook and The Delaware School Board Member Learning Series videos.

Research Questions

Central question – How are school boards measuring the job performance of their superintendents?

Sub-questions – What processes are school boards utilizing to set goals for their superintendents? What evaluation tools are school boards employing to evaluate the superintendents' progress toward the set goals?

Methodology

Participants

Participants of this study hold the position of school board member in the state of Delaware. Qualification for school board members are dictated by state code, Title

14, Chapter 10, Subchapter III, which proclaims, “each member shall be a citizen of the State and resident of the school district in which elected or appointed and shall be qualified to vote at a school election in that district at the time of such election or appointment” (14 Del. C. §1052). Participants were expected to represent a wide variety of ages, genders and ethnicities.

I employed a purposive sampling technique. An email invitation to participate in the study was sent to all school board members from the nineteen school districts in Delaware. Three weeks later, a follow up email was sent to the board presidents from each district that had yet to respond.

Data Collection Tools

This study utilized a short interview script (found in Appendix L). I developed the interview questions so that they focused on addressing the central research question, and the two sub-questions. Questions were crafted using the guidance put forth by the ERIC/AE Staff in their 1997 article on the design of structured interview questions and the textbook, *Evaluation*, by Carol Weiss (1998). The interview script was first “tested” on two former school board members from the Cape Henlopen school district and one current school board member from another school district to ensure the questions were clear and elicited responses that answered the central research question. No changes were made to the script after the “testing” interview sessions.

Procedures

First, the research protocol and the proper forms, were submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review. The protocol received an approval as an “exempt” study under category three. Research in category three includes: “(3) Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under category 2, if (a) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office, or (b) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.” (University of Delaware, n.d.).

Following IRB review, prospective study participants were contacted by email and interview dates and times were scheduled. Interviews were conducted by phone using the interview protocol. Responses were audio recorded and/or notes were taken during the interviews. Follow up emails were sent three weeks later to the board presidents of districts who had yet to respond. Additional interviews were scheduled and conducted. When all interviews were completed, the audio was transcribed and analyzed along with the notes taken during the interviews.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using the iterative method described in Tracy’s book, *Qualitative Research Methods* (Ch. 9, 2012). First, data were reviewed for emerging themes, and primary codes were added to the main codebook. Data were reviewed again to refine the codebook and develop second-level codes (p194). Finally, an

analysis outline was constructed, which begin answering the main and sub research questions using the data gathered from the interviews (p197).

Ethical Considerations

Maintaining the anonymity of the study participants was the main ethical consideration in the study. Since I was the sole researcher, coding the interviewees for identification purposes was not necessary. However, any identifying information given during the interview was redacted in the transcript.

Potential Research Bias

Potential research bias existed in this study due to my role as a school board member in the Cape Henlopen school district (a comprehensive, public school district in southern Delaware). To minimize any potential bias, the interview script was tested on two former board members from the Cape Henlopen School District and one current board member from another school district, who provided feedback on the interview questions. Additionally, during data analysis I focused on the reporting of facts as stated by the respondents and limiting my interpretation.

Results

Twelve of the nineteen school boards responded to the study invitation. One of those declined to participate, leaving eleven districts included in the study. School boards from all three counties were represented and male and female respondents were almost equal in number. Race and ethnic data were not collected. The data collected were analyzed thematically and the results presented by research question.

Central question – How are school boards measuring the job performance of their superintendents?

Nine of the interviewees indicated their board evaluated their superintendent in the past year. Three of the nine stated that they have regularly evaluated their superintendent for more than four years. Two boards reported that they had not performed a superintendent evaluation in several years and cited other priorities and more pressing issues as reasons. A reoccurring theme in the responses from all board members was the issue of preparation and training. Board members questioned whether their evaluations accurately measured the performance of the superintendent but felt unprepared to make changes to the process. One board member expressed confusion relating to the process and asked, “What do we do with the results of the evaluation once we’ve finished. Where do we go from here?”. When asked if they would be interested in additional guidance and/or training, all eleven board members replied affirmatively.

Sub-question 1 – What processes are school boards utilizing to set goals for their superintendents?

School board members described multiple goal-setting methods. The most popular method was a collaborative goal-setting meeting, where both superintendent and school board chose goals together. One board asked the superintendent to develop and present their own goals to the board, who would then either approve or modify if necessary. Other boards used goals directly from DPAS II or from the district’s strategic plan or key priorities.

A variety of goals for superintendents were also given by each school board member. Examples include: communication, successful outcome of a referendum, student achievement, advanced placement course offerings and exam pass rates, school drop-out rates, school choice numbers, financial management, CTE offerings, community participation, school safety concerns, school nutrition programs, capital project management, and equality issues. Several board members remarked that goals change each year based upon perceived needs of the district and every board member interviewed agreed that goals must be personalized to each district and that flexibility in this area was an important component of any goal-setting tool.

Sub-question 2 - What evaluation tools are school boards employing to evaluate the superintendents' progress toward the set goals?

The majority of boards reported using evaluation tools that were created by the board themselves, while two stated they used the DPAS II system in whole or in modified form. However, none of the study participants were certified in the DPAS II system, nor were they aware of any other board member who had obtained certification. Four boards provided the actual evaluation tool. Rating systems ranged from no rating, only a narrative, to a Likert-style scale. The Likert-style scales were divided between using terms that described the superintendent's performance (exemplary, strong, satisfactory, weak) and terms that describe the board's expectations (exceeds expectations, meets expectations, below expectations). No rubrics were used.

Description of the evaluation process differed as well in terms of methods. Six of the board members interviewed stated that the whole board completed the evaluation and met with the superintendent together, but three indicated that the whole board met to discuss the results and subsequently, the board president and vice president met with the superintendent alone to discuss the cumulative results. The timeline for the process, however, was similar in each district. Almost all boards reported that goal-setting took place in the summer months, a mid-year evaluation or “check-in” occurred around December/January, and the final evaluation took place at the end of the school year.

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Appendix E

ARTIFACT 4: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS AND PITFALLS FROM SELECTED STATES

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to collect data on the current superintendent goal-setting and evaluation practices in other states. Employees from state education agencies, state school board associations, a national administrator association, and a university professor of educational policy were interviewed. The data collected were used to help create sample goal-setting and evaluation forms and aided in the development of The Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook and the Delaware School Board Member Learning Series videos.

Research Questions

Central question – How was the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process successfully implemented in other states?

Sub-question – What were the major roadblocks to success, and how were they overcome?

Methodology

Participants

Participants of this study included employees of state education agencies, state school board associations, a national administrator association, and a university

professor of educational policy. Participants were expected to represent a wide variety of ages, genders and ethnicities.

I employed a snowball sampling technique. An email invitation to participate in the study was sent to five people, based on the recommendations of my ELP committee. During the interview process, respondents were asked to recommend other potential participants, who were then invited to participate.

Data Collection Tools

This study utilized a short interview script found in Appendix L. I developed the interview questions so that they focused on addressing the central research question, and the sub-question. Questions were crafted using the guidance put forth by the ERIC/AE Staff in their 1997 article on the design of structured interview questions and the textbook, *Evaluation*, by Carol Weiss (1998).

Procedures

First, the research protocol and the proper forms, were submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review. The protocol received an approval as an “exempt” study under category three. Research in category three includes: “(3) Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under category 2, if (a) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office, or (b) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.” (University of Delaware, n.d.).

Following IRB review, prospective study participants were contacted by email and interview dates and times were scheduled. Interviews were conducted by phone, using the interview protocol. Responses were audio recorded and/or notes were taken during the interviews. Follow up emails were sent to other recommended participants and additional interviews were scheduled and conducted. When all interviews were completed, the audio was transcribed and analyzed along with the notes taken during the interviews.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the iterative method described in Tracy's book, *Qualitative Research Methods* (Ch. 9, 2012). First, data were reviewed for emerging themes, and primary codes were added to the main codebook. Data was reviewed again to refine the codebook and develop second-level codes (p. 194). Finally, an analysis outline was constructed, which begin answering the main and sub research questions using the data gathered from the interviews (p. 197).

Ethical Considerations

Maintaining the anonymity of the study participants was the main ethical consideration in the study. Since I was the sole researcher, coding the interviewees for identification purposes was not necessary. However, any identifying information given during the interview was redacted in the transcript.

Potential Research Bias

Potential research bias existed in this study due to my role as a school board member in the Cape Henlopen school district (a comprehensive, public school district

in southern Delaware). To minimize potential bias, during the data analysis I focused on the reporting of facts as stated by respondents and limiting my interpretations.

Results

Three of the initial five invitations resulted in interviews. An additional three participants were added on the recommendation of the initial interviewees.

Participants represented one state education agency, three state school board associations, one national administrator association, and one university. Respondents were mostly female, with one male included in the study. Racial and ethnic data were not collected. The data were analyzed thematically and results presented by research question.

Central question – How was the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process successfully implemented in other states?

Implementation of a superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process began as a state regulation in three states discussed in the interviews, however, it was the state school board association that provided the guidance and training. This practice is common in most states according to the interviewee representing the national administrator association. Members of the state school board associations described the process as collaborative with state administrator associations or with an educational research foundation, such as The Wallace Foundation. In all cases, a set of superintendent standards were developed using existing frameworks (i.e. Professional Standards for Education Leaders) or from their own state standards for administrators. Guidebooks were published as training tools and professional development seminars,

given at both the state level and to individual boards, were created. Key take-aways from the interviews include sample guidebooks from the state school board associations, the use of both the guidebook and “live” training for member boards, and the use of a standard framework that flexible to the needs of individual boards.

Sub-question – What were the major roadblocks to success, and how were they overcome?

The major roadblock discussed by all interviewees was a concept that I categorized as “resistance to change”. Interviewees described experiences dealing with school boards that were not inclined to change current practices, which most of the time were boards who had an existing evaluation, which members were satisfied with, even if it was not the same caliber as the new recommended evaluation. One interviewee lamented that if the existing evaluation was aligned with state regulation, one could not force the board to change, however, she hoped that with continued efforts in the area of training sessions during state conferences, more boards would adopt the new framework. Another key take-away from the interviews was the recommendation of Rogers’ book, *Diffusion of Innovations*, as a distribution framework for the new process in Delaware.

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Appendix F

ARTIFACT 5: SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION HANDBOOK

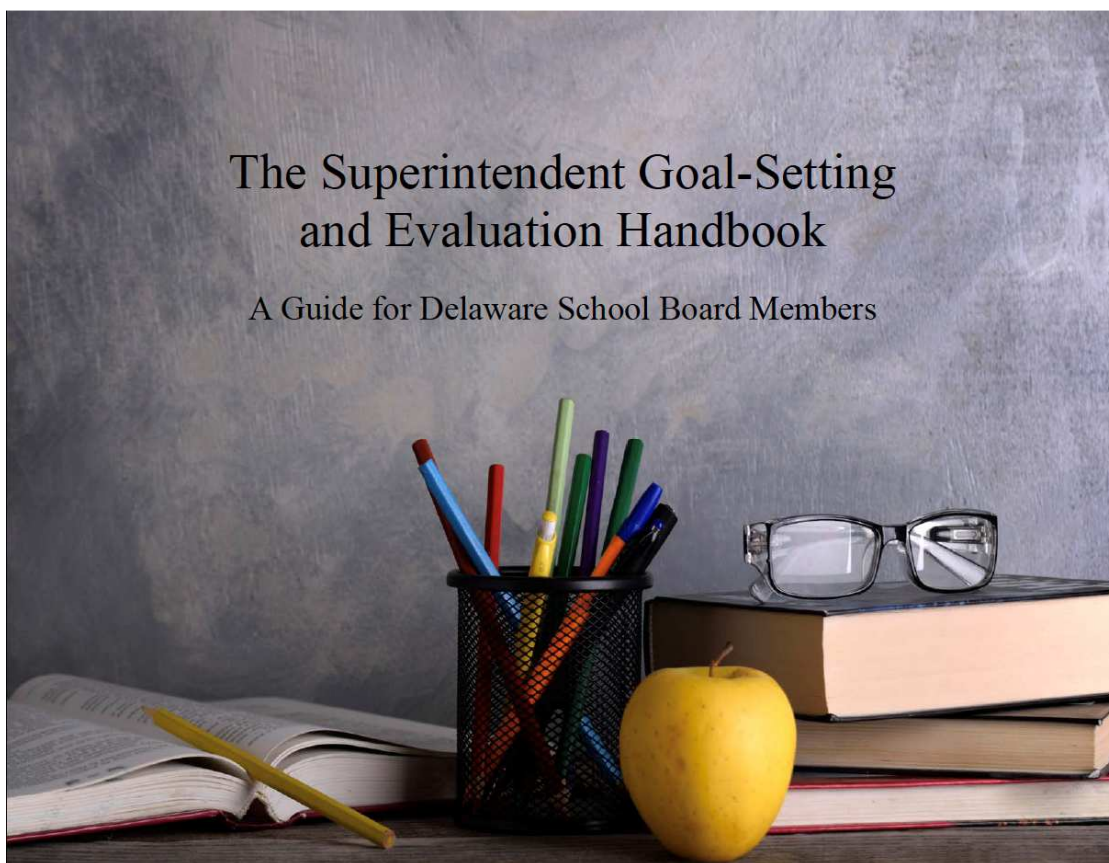


Figure 1 Handbook Cover

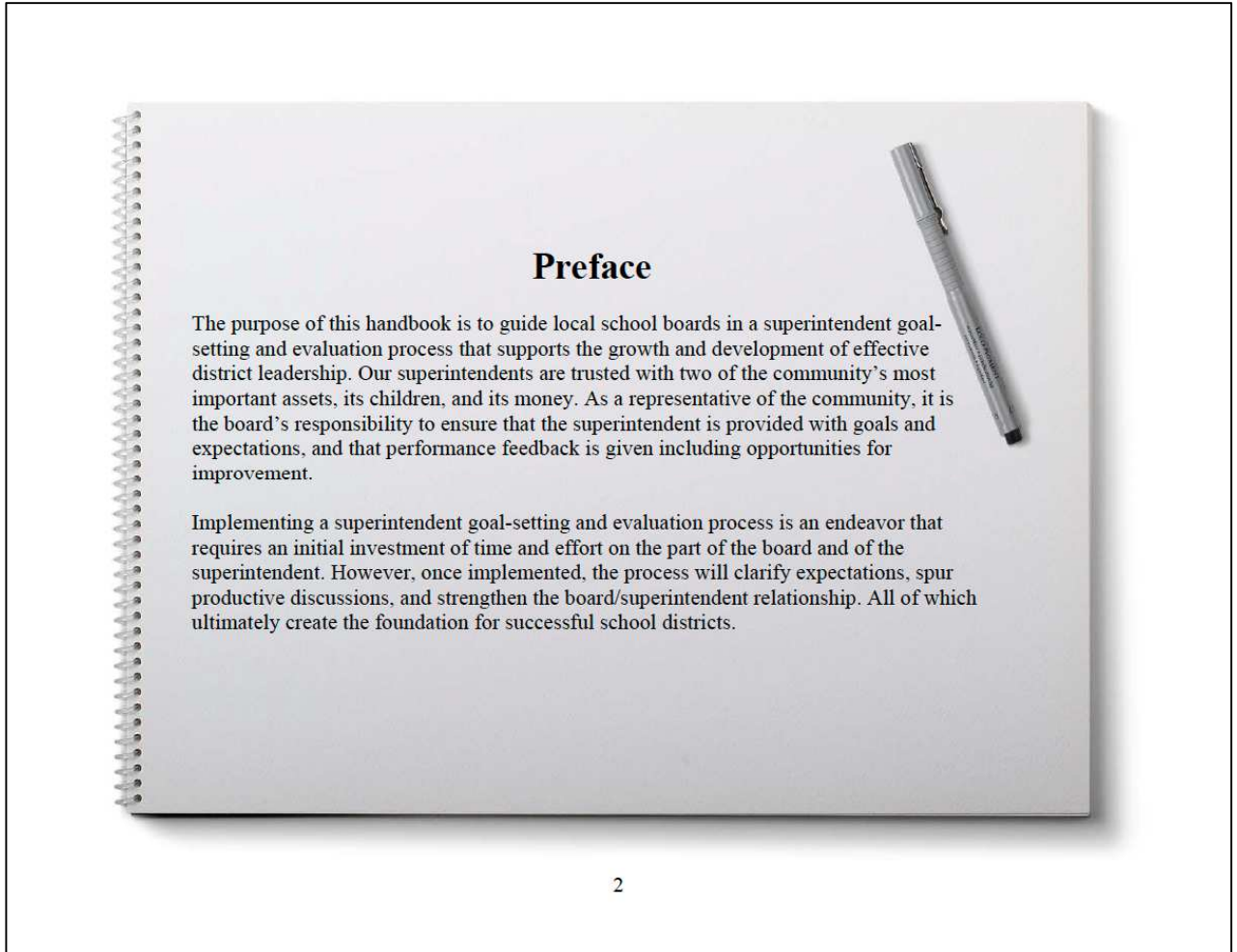


Figure 2 Handbook, Page 2

Introduction

Research over the past 20 years has demonstrated strong, albeit indirect, links between leadership and student achievement.ⁱ In their meta-analysis of district leadership research, Waters and Marzano found that 24% of the variance in student achievement scores was attributable to the superintendent's leadership abilities.ⁱⁱ Recent legislation also extends accountability for student learning beyond the schoolhouse to the organizations that, in all states, continue to make crucial decisions about the use of resources for school improvement.ⁱⁱⁱ

In Delaware, the position of school superintendent is tasked with leading these organizations. Superintendents hold a position equivalent to the chief executive officer in the private sector. They are charged with administering the organization according to the policies adopted by the school board. The purpose of evaluating the superintendent is not to micromanage the organization, but to provide oversight and public assurance that the district's policies are being effectively implemented.^{iv} Without formal monitoring and evaluation, it is difficult to know whether superintendents are carrying out their leadership responsibilities.

Additionally, the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process provides four main benefits to the district. One, it keeps the focus on accountability. Two, it provides an opportunity to strengthen the board/superintendent relationship. Three, it offers valuable feedback to the superintendent, which assists in their own professional development. And four, it enables the board to make informed decisions on the employment contract of their superintendent.^v

This handbook will offer school boards a new approach to superintendent goal-setting and evaluation, that will fit the needs of every district by allowing for flexibility and personalization. The use of this process will create opportunities for boards and superintendents to target areas for continuous improvement in their districts.


*Note: This handbook is interactive! When ever you see this symbol,  click to open the YouTube training videos that are specifically designed to assist with the implementation of the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Process.

Figure 3 Handbook, Page 3

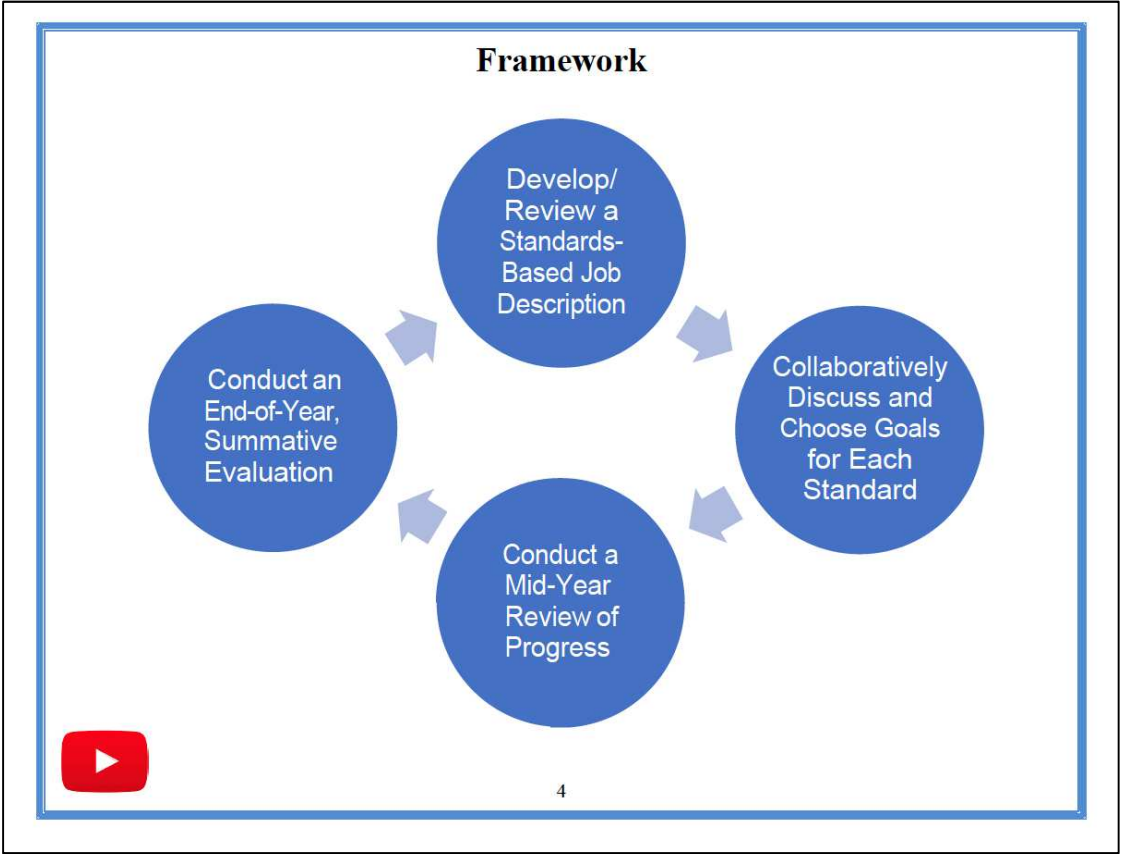


Figure 4 Handbook, Page 4

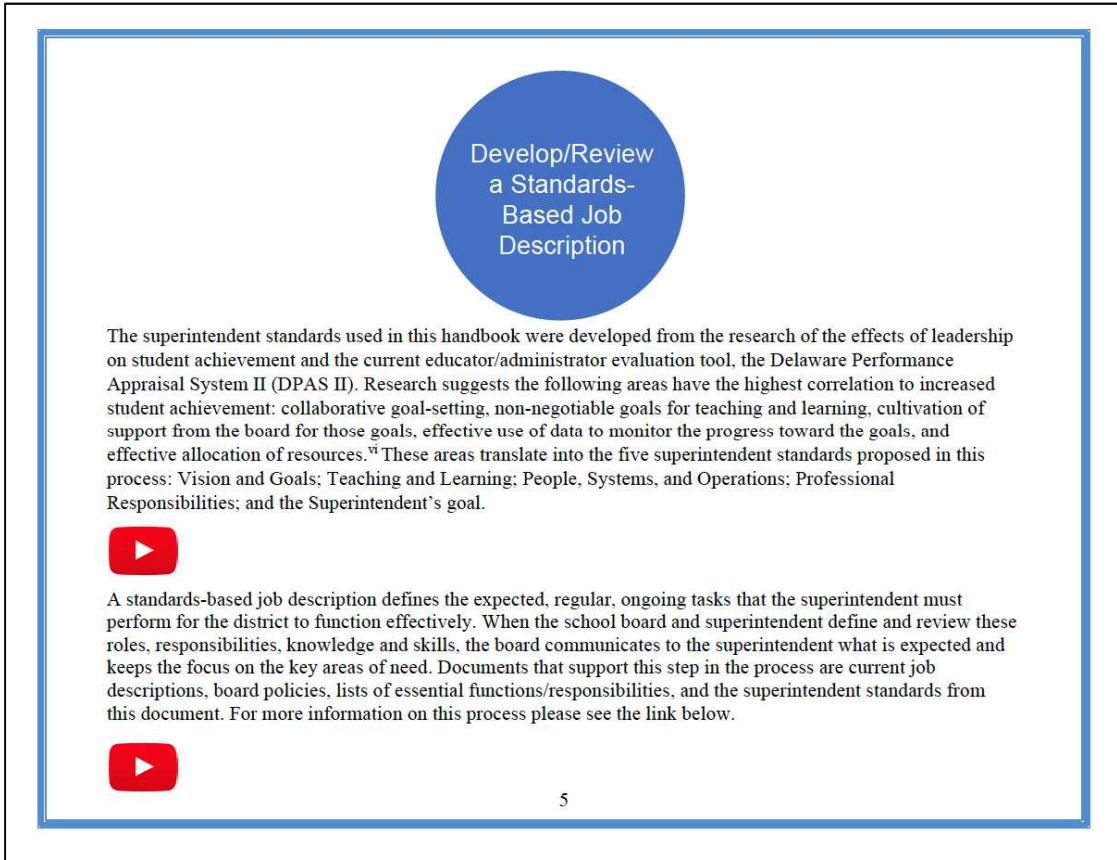




Figure 5 Handbook, Page 5



Performance evaluations are most effective when they are designed and used for communicating future expectations, not simply for reviewing past performance. It is almost impossible for superintendents to meet the expectations of the board if they are not clearly communicated. Accordingly, if the board fails to set goals and expectations, they cannot accurately gauge the progress of the district.^{viii}

The goal-setting process begins with the discussion of three key questions, “Where are we now?”, “Where do we want to go?”, and “How shall we get there?”^{viii} These conversations can begin with broad, long-term goals, but ultimately needs to be narrowed to the work to be done in the next 12 months. For example, the long-term goal of providing school facilities that create a modern learning environment, would be matched with a superintendent goal of creating a facilities taskforce and creating a facilities plan that addresses construction, finance and technology/curriculum needs. This goal would fall under the standard of People, Systems, and Operations.

An important part of the goal-setting process is agreeing on the evidence the board will need in order to monitor performance. The goal-setting form provides suggestions and allows for the manual entry of evidence not listed. When choosing the type of evidence needed, the board should keep in mind that information comes with a price tag. Even when information is available from internal sources, the process of gathering and compiling it into comprehensible form requires district office staff time and effort. The board and superintendent should take into account the amount of resources that can reasonably be devoted to the task.^{ix}



6

Figure 6 Handbook, Page 6

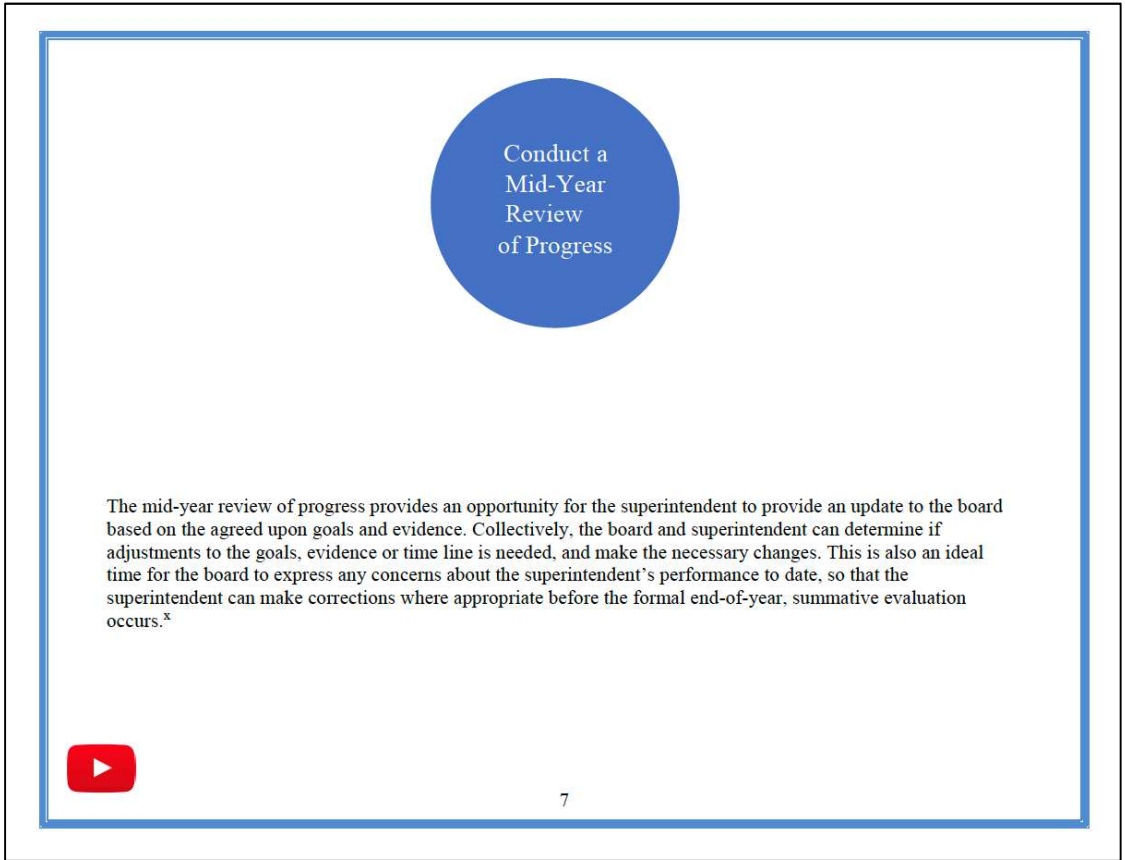



Figure 7 Handbook, Page 7

Conduct an
End-of-Year,
Summative
Evaluation

An end-of-year, summative evaluation of the superintendent's performance should be conducted with the goal of providing clear feedback that can be used towards future planning and goal-setting.²¹ The process starts with the superintendent compiling all required evidence and completing a self-assessment. This is then given to all board members so that they can review the documents and complete individual evaluation forms. These forms are given to the board president and/or vice president, who compiles the ratings and comments for each standard. At this time, the board should schedule time to review the compiled ratings and comments as a group. The final document from this meeting should be provided to the superintendent for him/her to review. A final meeting should be scheduled with the superintendent and either the board president and vice-president, or the board as a whole to hear the superintendent's opinion of, and reaction to, the evaluation. Depending on time constraints, a preliminary discussion of new goals can be completed at this meeting as well.



8

Figure 8 Handbook, Page 8

Conclusion

“Given the growing body of research on superintendent leadership, and the changing leadership roles needed as schools shift into the 21st century, the need for more relevant, meaningful superintendent evaluation is critical.”^{xii} Research shows that school boards and superintendents that place a premium on clear communication of predefined goals and expectations, with subsequent objective measures to determine if those goals and expectations are met, realize an improved level of student achievement in their districts.^{xiii} The purpose of this Handbook is to be a vehicle by which Delaware school boards and superintendents can interact at a high level.

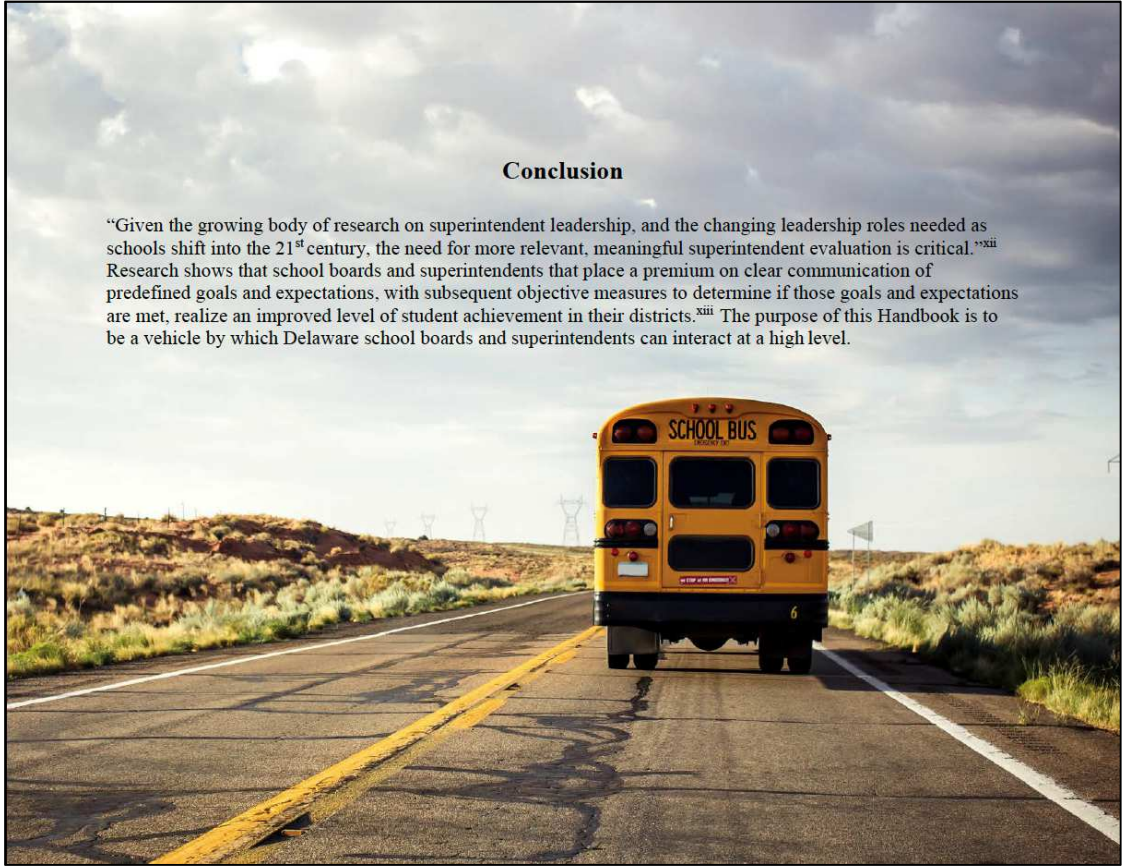


Figure 9 Handbook, Page 9

Suggested Timeline^{xiv}

Step 1		
Develop/Review a Standards-Based Job Description	As Needed	A standards-based job description is developed/reviewed to define the expectations and responsibilities of the superintendent.
Step 2		
Collaboratively Discuss and Choose Goals for Each Standard	July/August	School Board and Superintendent meet to review standards and choose key areas of growth as goals for each standard. Evidence is carefully chosen to support work towards goals.
Step 3		
Conduct a Mid-Year Review of Progress	December/January	Superintendent provides an update on progress towards each goal, and suggests changes to goals, evidence, and/or timeline, if necessary.
Step 4		
Conduct an End-of-Year, Summative Evaluation	May/June	Formal evaluation process is completed by superintendent and board. Contract renewal/extension decisions may be discussed at this time.

Figure 10 Handbook, Page 10

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Figure 11 Handbook, Page 11

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Figure 12 Handbook, Page 12

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Appendix G

ARTIFACT 6: SAMPLE SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION POLICY

Sample Superintendent Evaluation Policy

Policy Title: Evaluation of the Superintendent
Policy Number: XXX
Adopted: XX/XX/XXXX

Evaluating the Superintendent is an important tool in the improvement effort of the District. This process is designed to define the Board's expectations, enhance communication, create a positive working relationship between the Board and Superintendent, clarify and prioritize District goals, and encourage the Superintendent to focus attention on the critical responsibility of improving achievement for all students. The purpose of the evaluation system is professional growth, performance improvement, and accountability to ensure our district and our schools have the strongest leadership possible.

The evaluation tool will include an assessment of the Superintendent's competence in meeting goals developed by the Board under the following standards:

1. Vision and Goals
2. Teaching and Learning
3. People, Systems, and Operations
4. Professional Responsibilities
5. Superintendent's Goal

The Board will meet each year to determine the specific goal(s) for each standard, with measurable objectives and data collection procedures for each. After this phase is completed, the Board will meet with the Superintendent to discuss the proposed evaluation and make changes as needed. The Superintendent will share their goal for standard 5, and the Board will discuss measurable objectives and data collection procedures with the Superintendent. The final evaluation tool will be determined by a majority vote of the Board. The Superintendent will provide the Board with updates as dictated by measurable objectives and a mid- and end-of-year review. The Board will present their end-of-year evaluation to the Superintendent and discuss the results before voting on the Superintendent's contract.

Timeline:

- July/August – Meeting(s) to determine Superintendent's goals for the following year and determine measures and data collection procedures.
- December/January – Mid-year evaluation
- May/June – End-of-year evaluation/contract renewal consideration

Document Header - includes administrative information about the policy

Introduction/Purpose Statement - The "what" and "why" of the policy

Outline of Framework

Procedures - Step by step guidance for policy compliance

Timeline

Figure 13 Sample Superintendent Evaluation Policy

Appendix H

ARTIFACT 7: GOAL-SETTING FORM

Just as the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook is an interactive PDF, the goal-setting and evaluation forms allow the user to choose goals and evidence from pull down menus and select a rating with the click of the mouse. Since both the goal-setting and evaluation forms are shown in this ELP as static figures, the following table provides the full list of prepopulated goals and evidence for each of the first four standards. The fifth standard, which is the superintendent's goal, has text boxes where the goal, evidence and rubric can be typed in by the board or superintendent. The prepopulated list of goals and evidence is by no means exhaustive. As this framework is reviewed and implemented by local school boards in Delaware, items can be added to the list, making the forms increasingly more comprehensive.

Table 5

Goals and Evidence Options by Standard

Standard	Goals	Evidence
1 – Vision and Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of District implementation Plan - Equity of learning opportunities - Improves district culture within and among schools - Improves district culture and morale at the District Office - Other (Specify) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative team meeting agendas - Stakeholder presentations/speeches - District implementation plan - Administrator goals - Observational data from board - Media articles/posts/blog entries - Participation in state, regional, or national initiatives - Evidence of annual review of district mission and vision - Communication “vehicles”, including technology that makes the vision and mission visible to stakeholders - Opening day presentation/speech - Board and administrative policy enforcement materials - Monthly superintendent update to the board - Results of school/district climate surveys - Other (Specify)

Table 5 continued

2 – Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of goals for district office staff - Professional development plans - Development and oversight of curricular and extra-curricular programs - Alignment of instruction across schools - Monitoring and reporting of student achievement - Improvement in the number of students taking and passing AP exams - Other (Specify) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - District professional development plan - Log of school visits - Surveys of staff and/or community - Meeting log with administrators - Reports/celebrations of student achievement - School improvement plans with specific evidence of superintendent support - Diversity training and/or awareness plan - Anti-bullying programs implemented/attended - Agenda/minutes from community meetings attended - Student achievement data - Administrative team book study - Professional development attended as a team - Blog posts -Other (Specify)
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Table 5 continued

<p>3 – People, Systems, and Operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluation of administrators - Oversees public relations and PR plan - Involvement in contract negotiations - Oversees work of cabinet members - Development of long-range facilities plan - Develops procedures that carry out policy - Guides budget preparations/priorities - Guides hiring practices - Creates and executes a successful referendum plan - Other (Specify) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administrative calendar of presentations - DOE site visit report - Auditor’s report - List of grants applied for and/or received - Emergency/crisis plans - Recruitment plan - Calendar of recruitment activities - Employee handbooks - Program evaluation reports - Administrative team meeting agendas - Conflict resolution plan/training - Budget creation/management activities - Technology plan - District safety plan - Long-term financial goals/plan - Successful outcome of referendum - Successful completion of a construction project - Long-term facilities management plan - Partnership with “school-safety” organizations - Other (Specify)
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Table 5 continued

<p>4 – Professional Responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishes communication norms with the board - Improvement of the climate and culture of the district - Personal professional development - Effective governance with the board - Ensures legality of board policy and district procedures - Improves consistency amongst schools as well as grade levels in regard to curriculum - Effective communication with staff, parents, and community members - Ensure the timely and successful completion of new website and app - Other (Specify) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting agenda/minutes from task force meetings - Public relations plan - Public relations feedback survey results - Community and stakeholder survey data - Documentation of collaborative partnerships - Open house attendance - Communications with parents - Website feedback - App feedback - Record of solicitation of personal feedback - Transcript of training, conferences, and/or graduate level courses taken - Membership in fraternal organizations - Attendance at state and national level conferences - Attainment of graduate degree or “plus” credit - Evidence of relationship building with staff - Development and implementation of two-way communication with all stakeholders - Participation in “non-school” civic activities - Participation in state-level task force groups - Communication logs with legislators - Other (Specify)
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Standard 1 – Vision and Goals

Effective superintendents establish and articulate the mission and vision of their districts. They create the ideal to which the district can aspire. The mission and vision should drive the district’s work. To achieve the vision, superintendents integrate principles of cultural competency and equitable practice, and promote the success of every student. The superintendent ensures that the vision of learning is shared and supported by all. Superintendents monitor actions to ensure a sustained focus on achieving the goals of the district.

Measurable Goals

Goal 1 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Goal 2 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Articulates a clear and coherent mission and vision for the district through words and actions.	Articulates the vision of the district in writing and speech.	Little or no evidence exists of a district vision implemented in the work of the district.
Builds a commitment to the district’s vision for student success among staff, school leaders, educators, students, and families, including high expectations for all students.	Consistently models values, beliefs, and attitudes that reflect high expectations for all students and adults in the district.	Rarely demonstrates confidence in the potential of all students and educators in the district to perform at high levels.
Adapts department-specific goals and implementation plans based on stakeholder feedback and changing conditions in the district while maintaining alignment to the vision and strategic plan.	Sets clear and targeted department-specific goals and implementation plans that are aligned to the district’s vision and strategic plan.	Department-specific goals and implementation plans are developed but are not aligned to the district’s vision or strategic plan.

Figure 14 Goal-Setting Form, Standard 1

Standard 2 – Teaching and Learning

Effective superintendents place a primary focus on improving instruction and enhancing student learning. As instructional leaders, they create a district culture and put forth expectations that support effective, data-based decision making at all levels of the system. They integrate principals of cultural competency/equitable practice and promote the success of every student by sustaining a positive district culture conducive to student learning and staff professional growth. They monitor student progress to ensure the success of the district as a whole.

Measurable Goals

Goal 1 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Goal 2 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Creates structures for observing and analyzing instruction and for making practice public to deepen a shared understanding of practice within the district.	Supports school instructional leaders in creating and implementing systems and structures for observing and analyzing instruction that support teaching and learning.	Engages informally with educators and school instructional leaders about peer feedback, collaboration, and innovation
Builds capacity of school instructional leaders to develop and execute high quality professional development for educators that is consistent with adult learning strategies to support district goals.	Provides job-embedded professional learning opportunities for school instructional leaders and educators that are consistent with adult learning strategies.	Rarely provides professional development to school instructional leaders and educators that is consistent with adult learning strategies.
Builds capacity of district staff to analyze school- and district-wide trends from multiple data sources to inform decisions about staffing, resource allocation, and instructional improvement strategies.	Analyzes school- and district-wide trends from multiple data sources to inform decisions about staffing, resource allocation, and instructional improvement strategies.	Decisions about staffing, resource allocation, and instructional improvement strategies are not informed by data.

Figure 15 Goal-Setting Form, Standard 2

Standard 3 – People, Systems, and Operations

Effective superintendents intentionally focus financial, human, time, materials, technological and facility resources in support of district goals for instruction, achievement and safety. Superintendents take actions to achieve district goals. They support individuals at all levels in the district and assume that the central office is a support and service organization for the schools. Effective superintendents organize the district to provide leaders appropriate authority within their schools to make decisions, implement initiatives and ensure alignment with mandated policies. To allow for this to happen successfully, superintendents provide adequate and equitable resources across the district.

Measurable Goals

Goal 1 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Goal 2 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Puts in place systems that create environments that inspire learning and that are highly reliably safe.	Puts in place systems and staff so that environments are conducive to learning and are consistently safe.	Unevenly manages and staffs the operational aspects of the organization, resulting in situations where inferior quality learning environments and/or unsafe situations arise for staff and students.
Makes quality fiscal decisions in line with the organization's strategic goals that are innovative and forward thinking.	Makes sound fiscal decisions in line with the organization's strategic goals and establishes clear and transparent systems of fiscal control and accountability.	Makes avoidable errors in fiscally managing the organization and the organization has inconsistent fiscal lines of control and accountability.
Regularly seeks feedback from school leaders to adjust and modify processes for recruitment, preparation, and support based on feedback from school leaders.	Supports the design and/or implementation of systems for recruiting and selecting high-quality candidates to meet projected vacancies in a timely manner for educator and leader roles.	Rarely involves school leaders in recruiting, preparing, or supporting personnel in the district. Reacts to educator and leader vacancies on a case by case basis.

Figure 16 Goal-Setting Form, Standard 3

Standard 4 – Professional Responsibilities

Effective superintendents focus on their personal leadership actions, including building meaningful relationships and engaging in self-reflection and ongoing learning. Effective superintendents build their own capacity to problem solve and manage change constructively, while keeping a constant focus on student learning. Effective superintendents establish effective two-way communication and engagement with students, staff, parents, media and the community, they respond to feedback and build support for and engagement with the district.

Measurable Goals

Goal 1 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Goal 2 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
Communicates key information to all stakeholders in an appropriate and timely manner. Alert to potential issues; he/she predicts and shares possibilities with school board in advance.	Keeps staff, students and parents informed on a regular basis. Communication with individuals and groups is clear and effective.	Ineffective in communication with staff, parents and students. Stakeholders frequently feel out of the loop.
Demonstrates a high level of self-awareness and regularly reflects on practice to improve.	Demonstrates self-awareness and uses reflection to improve practice.	Is not self-aware and does not reflect on his or her practice.
Regularly identifies potential operational issues through management and communication strategies to avoid issues becoming crises.	Implements consistent routines for addressing and resolving operational issues.	Addresses operational issues as they arise.

Figure 17 Goal-Setting Form, Standard 4

Standard 5 – Superintendent’s Goal

Effective superintendents know that their personal success and the success of the district are inextricably tied. They recognize the importance of goal setting as an important tool in that success and choose goals that are representative of pursuits that will complement their performance. This goal should be aimed at personal or professional improvement targets that are congruent with the district’s needs.

Measurable Goals

Goal 1

Evidence

Evidence

Goal 2

Evidence

Evidence

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations

Figure 18 Goal-Setting Form, Standard 5

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Appendix I

ARTIFACT 8: EVALUATION FORM

Standard 1 – Vision and Goals

Measurable Goals

Goal 1 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Goal 2 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Articulates a clear and coherent mission and vision for the district through words and actions.	<input type="radio"/> Articulates the vision of the district in writing and speech.	<input type="radio"/> Little or no evidence exists of a district vision implemented in the work of the district.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Builds a commitment to the district’s vision for student success among staff, school leaders, educators, students, and families, including high expectations for all students.	<input type="radio"/> Consistently models values, beliefs, and attitudes that reflect high expectations for all students and adults in the district.	<input type="radio"/> Rarely demonstrates confidence in the potential of all students and educators in the district to perform at high levels.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Adapts department-specific goals and implementation plans based on stakeholder feedback and changing conditions in the district while maintaining alignment to the vision and strategic plan.	<input type="radio"/> Sets clear and targeted department-specific goals and implementation plans that are aligned to the district’s vision and strategic plan.	<input type="radio"/> Department-specific goals and implementation plans are developed but are not aligned to the district’s vision or strategic plan.

Comments:

1

Figure 19 Evaluation Form, Standard 1

Standard 2 – Teaching and Learning

Measurable Goals

Goal 1 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Goal 2 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Creates structures for observing and analyzing instruction and for making practice public to deepen a shared understanding of practice within the district.	<input type="radio"/> Supports school instructional leaders in creating and implementing systems and structures for observing and analyzing instruction that support teaching and learning.	<input type="radio"/> Engages informally with educators and school instructional leaders about peer feedback, collaboration, and innovation.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Builds capacity of school instructional leaders to develop and execute high quality professional development for educators that is consistent with adult learning strategies to support district goals.	<input type="radio"/> Provides job-embedded professional learning opportunities for school instructional leaders and educators that are consistent with adult learning strategies.	<input type="radio"/> Rarely provides professional development to school instructional leaders and educators that is consistent with adult learning strategies.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Builds capacity of district staff to analyze school- and district-wide trends from multiple data sources to inform decisions about staffing, resource allocation, and instructional improvement strategies.	<input type="radio"/> Analyzes school- and district-wide trends from multiple data sources to inform decisions about staffing, resource allocation, and instructional improvement strategies.	<input type="radio"/> Decisions about staffing, resource allocation, and instructional improvement strategies are not informed by data.

Comments:

Figure 20 Evaluation Form, Standard 2

Standard 3 – People, Systems, and Operations

Measurable Goals

Goal 1 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Goal 2 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Puts in place systems that create environments that inspire learning and that are highly reliably safe.	<input type="radio"/> Puts in place systems and staff so that environments are conducive to learning and are consistently safe.	<input type="radio"/> Unevenly manages and staffs the operational aspects of the organization, resulting in situations where inferior quality learning environments and/or unsafe situations arise for staff and students.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Makes quality fiscal decisions in line with the organization’s strategic goals that are innovative and forward thinking.	<input type="radio"/> Makes sound fiscal decisions in line with the organization’s strategic goals and establishes clear and transparent systems of fiscal control and accountability.	<input type="radio"/> Makes avoidable errors in fiscally managing the organization and the organization has inconsistent fiscal lines of control and accountability.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Regularly seeks feedback from school leaders to adjust and modify processes for recruitment, preparation, and support based on feedback from school leaders.	<input type="radio"/> Supports the design and/or implementation of systems for recruiting and selecting high-quality candidates to meet projected vacancies in a timely manner for educator and leader roles.	<input type="radio"/> Rarely involves school leaders in recruiting, preparing, or supporting personnel in the district. Reacts to educator and leader vacancies on a case by case basis.

Comments:

Figure 21 Evaluation Form, Standard 3

Standard 4 – Professional Responsibilities

Measurable Goals

Goal 1 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Goal 2 Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Evidence Choose One:

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Communicates key information to all stakeholders in an appropriate and timely manner. Alert to potential issues; he/she predicts and shares possibilities with school board in advance.	<input type="radio"/> Keeps staff, students and parents informed on a regular basis. Communication with individuals and groups is clear and effective.	<input type="radio"/> Ineffective in communication with staff, parents and students. Stakeholders frequently feel out of the loop.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Demonstrates a high level of self-awareness and regularly reflects on practice to improve.	<input type="radio"/> Demonstrates self-awareness and uses reflection to improve practice.	<input type="radio"/> Is not self-aware and does not reflect on his or her practice.
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Regularly identifies potential operational issues through management and communication strategies to avoid issues becoming crises.	<input type="radio"/> Implements consistent routines for addressing and resolving operational issues.	<input type="radio"/> Addresses operational issues as they arise.

Comments:

Figure 22 Evaluation Form, Standard 4

Standard 5 – Superintendent’s Goal

Measurable Goals

Goal 1

Evidence

Evidence

Goal 2

Evidence

Evidence

Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

Figure 23 Evaluation Form, Standard 5

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SuperintendentEvaluation-Workbook.pdf?la](http://www.osba.org/-/media/Files/Resources/Board-Operations/2017-SuperintendentEvaluation-Workbook.pdf?la)

Appendix J

ARTIFACT 9: TRAINING

Providing training to school board members poses unique challenges that must be addressed in order to prepare them for the responsibilities of boardsmanship. Being a school board member requires a substantial time commitment to adequately meet the demands of overseeing the district. Often, school board members work full time jobs and have family commitments with which to contend. Adding time for training is a burden, which has traditionally been complicated by the need to find time that mutually accommodates the schedules of five to seven individuals. In reality, finding a mutually agreeable, extended period of time for training is nearly impossible. Therefore, to successfully instruct school board members, training must be flexible, topic specific, and available on demand. Applying the concept of microlearning is an ideal means by which to meet these needs.

“Microlearning is the practice of delivering content in small focused chunks” (Eldridge, 2017, p48). The concept was first introduced in the early 2000s and is making its way into businesses on a more regular basis as the workforce becomes increasingly decentralized and populated with a younger generation of employees (Paul, 2016). Fox (2016) states, “with Millennial employees making up an ever-increasing percentage of the workforce, more and more companies are finding the old “death by PowerPoint” training just doesn’t cut it anymore. More companies are

opting for new, on-demand, interactive approaches to training in the form of microlearning” (p 42).

Microlearning has also carved out a role for itself in the classroom. Short learning videos can be used to introduce or reinforce concepts, review for exams, or prepare students for participation in an activity (Sweet, 2014). Microlearning can also be used to differentiate instruction. “Students can watch the videos as many times as necessary to learn the material; students can pause their teacher, rewind their teacher, and make sure they actually learn the important concepts” (Sweet, 2014, p 53). Students can move at their own pace and choose their entry point (with guidance), making the learning personalized to each student’s needs.

In the article, “Maximizing Microlearning”, Shannon Tipton (2017) poses the question, “Is microlearning the solution?” (p 58) and provides six factors to consider when developing microlearning content. Each factor has been listed below to justify the decision to use microlearning in the training of Delaware school board members on the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process.

1. **Short effort required for development** – School board members need help now, especially since most boards indicated during the interviews that their evaluation takes place in the early summer months.
2. **Short time for participant consumption** – School board members have limited time for training. Short training videos that are “on demand” fit the needs of the majority of learners.

3. **Small units with a narrow** focus – Videos are short and concept specific. School board members can choose their own entry point based on previous knowledge or the task at hand.
4. **Immediately applicable/relevant** – Videos will be focused on not only the background knowledge of goal-setting and assessment but will walk the viewer through the process. Videos can be viewed before and/or during the actual process.
5. **Open, flexible** – Content can be added to and/or changed easily. Videos can be viewed from any device.
6. **Easily accessible** - Content will be uploaded to YouTube, where it can be accessed by any device, anywhere and at any time.

Extensive knowledge of technology is not required and links to the videos can be sent in emails (every school board member in the state has an email address).

The concept of microlearning videos addressed the needs of both the training material in this project and the Delaware school board members who would benefit from it. Along with the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook, board members will be able to navigate the process effectively by using the videos as a supportive tool in their work.

Links to Microlearning Videos

1. Introduction to the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Process - <https://youtu.be/svZs2Zj1eGI>
2. Superintendent Standards - <https://youtu.be/NzWTBUS0O1A>
3. The Standards-Based Job Description - <https://youtu.be/ekCsZu2f2kc>
4. The Goal-Setting Process - https://youtu.be/ia2xvGSr_y0
5. The Mid-Year Review - <https://youtu.be/D6FNQVj-Guo>
6. The End-of-Year, Summative Evaluation - <https://youtu.be/voOSOQ437Ls>

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Appendix K

ARTIFACT 10: FEEDBACK ON PROCESS

Feedback provides researchers important information and allows one to gauge the success or failure of a program/study. This study was used to collect and analyze feedback on five artifacts of my ELP: the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Guidebook, the YouTube microlearning videos, the goal-setting form, the evaluation form, and the sample superintendent evaluation policy. The feedback was used to improve both artifacts and to determine how successful they will be in assisting Delaware school boards with implementing and/or improving their current processes.

Research Questions

Central question – How effectively does the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook lead school board members through the process?

Sub-questions – What areas of the guide need improvement? What areas are the most helpful?

Methodology

Participants

This study used purposive sampling technique. Study participants were chosen strictly based on their previous involvement in the ELP project. Participants of this study included the eleven board members who were interviewed for the study, “Current Practices in Superintendent Evaluation in the State of Delaware”. Informal e-

mail invitations, along with pertinent documents and follow up questions, were sent to participants for their review.

Data Collection Tools

This follow up study used a simple feedback form comprised of five questions that participants filled out and returned (found in Appendix L). Questions were crafted using the guidance put forth by the ERIC/AE Staff in their 1997 article on the design of structured interview questions and the textbook, *Evaluation*, by Carol Weiss (1998).

Procedures

First, this research protocol and the proper amendment/modification forms, were submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review. The amendment/modification received an approval as an “exempt” study under category three. Research in category three includes: “(3) Research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under category 2, if (a) the human subjects are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office, or (b) federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.” (University of Delaware, n.d.).

Following IRB review, study participants were contacted by email and provided with the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook, which included the links to the YouTube training videos, the goal-setting form, the evaluation form, the sample superintendent evaluation policy and the feedback form.

The feedback forms were returned, and the data was compiled and analyzed.

Suggested changes to the training materials were made based on the feedback from the participants.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the iterative method described in Tracy's book, *Qualitative Research Methods* (Ch. 9, 2012). Data were first reviewed for emerging themes, and primary codes were added to the main codebook. Data were reviewed again to refine the codebook and second-level codes were developed (p. 194). Finally, an analysis outline was constructed, which answered the main and sub-research questions using the data gathered from the interviews (p. 197).

Results

Ten of the eleven school board members from the original study responded to the request for feedback. School boards from all three counties were represented and male and female respondents were similar in number. Race and ethnic data were not collected. Data from the feedback forms was compiled and organized so that it answered the central research question, "How effectively does the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook lead school board members through the process?" and the sub-questions, "What areas of the guide need improvement?" and "What areas are the most helpful?" The results were also used to make improvements to the training materials and make recommendations for future work in this area (addressed in Chapter 5, Reflection on Improvement Effort Results).

Central question – How effectively does the Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook lead school board members through the process?

The Superintendent Goal-Setting and Evaluation Handbook, microlearning videos and forms were generally well received by the board members who provided feedback for this study. Participants offered comments such as, “guidebook is a great tool”, “process established is clear and can be performed” and “big step in the improvement of superintendent evaluations.” Most board members indicated that they had already or were anxious to share the work with their fellow board members, and stated that they would suggest using the materials in their current/next evaluation cycle.

Even though the overall response was positive, requests were still made by a few board members for additional “in person” training. One board member questioned, “would it be more efficient and effective for [us] to participate in a face-to-face PD after studying the guidebook? In successive years the videos would suffice.” These comments were not coded as negative toward the framework or process, but should be taken into consideration as an option for future delivery of training.

Sub-question – What areas of the guide need improvement?

Responses to this study question were coded and placed in two categories that emerged from the data. The categories were named “materials improvements” and “process improvements”. Items in the materials improvements category included minor changes to grammar and aesthetics. The aesthetic portion focused on how the

YouTube links were embedded in the handbook. The original handbook listed the URL, which was hyperlinked to the YouTube page. While this method produced the desired result, the look lacked a professional polish. In an effort to remedy this, I created a second handbook that included additional pages where the actual video was embedded. This improved the appearance, but increased the file size considerably, and to the point where it could no longer be sent as a file attachment over e-mail. A second attempt to remedy the situation was made, which returned to the embedded links, this time with a YouTube clip art graphic. A note was included on the introduction page explaining the links. This resulted in a product that had that professional polish, and was a reasonable file size.

Feedback that was categorized as process improvements were more difficult to address. Several board members made comments related to the rubrics, specifically pertaining to the semantics. One board member questioned the difference between the rating categories, stating that “distinguishing between the first two categories (exceeds and meets) is very difficult, however there is a giant leap between “meets” and “below expectations.” Additionally, requests for further training, specifically on creating and/or modifying the rubrics to match the specific goals were made on the feedback forms.

Sub-question- What areas are the most helpful?

Feedback in this area focused mainly on the microlearning videos. Participants valued the ability to access the videos easily and were generally satisfied with the amount of time it took to complete them. Board members appreciated receiving

support from the videos “in real time” and many commented positively on how the process was divided into smaller, more manageable chunks. The concept of microlearning seemed to appeal to the busy schedules of most school board members. Several board members expressed an interest in additional training videos, not just on the superintendent goal-setting and evaluation process, but on other pertinent/relevant school board issues. The microlearning delivery method for school board member training is an area that should be explored for future use in our state.

REFERENCES

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Appendix L
IRB APPROVAL
HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTOCOL

University of Delaware

Protocol Title: Current Practices in Superintendent Evaluation in the State of Delaware

Principal Investigator

Name: Alison J. Myers, M.Ed.

Department/Center: Doctorate in Educational Leadership

Contact Phone Number: (302) 563-2125

Email Address: ajmyers@udel.edu

Advisor (if student PI):

Name: Laura Eisenman, Ph.D.

Contact Phone Number: (302) 831-0532

Email Address: Eisenman@udel.edu

Other Investigators: none

Investigator Assurance:

By submitting this protocol, I acknowledge that this project will be conducted in strict accordance with the procedures described. I will not make any modifications to this protocol without prior approval by the IRB. Should any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects occur during this project, including breaches of guaranteed

confidentiality or departures from any procedures specified in approved study documents, I will report such events to the Chair, Institutional Review Board immediately.

1. **Is this project externally funded?** YES NO

2. **Research Site(s)**

University of Delaware

Other (please list external study site

Is UD the study lead? YES No

3. **Project Staff**

NAME	ROLE	HS TRAINING COMPLETE?
Alison Myers	Principal Investigator	Yes
Laura Eisenman	Advisor	Yes

4. **Special Populations**

The study does not involve any special or vulnerable populations.

5. **RESEARCH ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is to (1) collect data on the current superintendent evaluation practices in Delaware’s nineteen public school districts and (2) collect data on the evaluation practices and implementation history of superintendent evaluation in selected other states. For the participants from Delaware, one board member from

each school district will be asked to participate in a short phone interview, discussing their board’s methods. For the participants from other states, a purposive sampling method will be used to select people who were involved with the implementation of a superintendent evaluation in their state or from their organization. The findings will be included in a white paper on the topic, which will be distributed to school boards in Delaware. The data collected will be used to help create sample goal-setting and evaluation forms, and the development of a training presentation. Professional development training will be offered to assist school boards with the goal-setting and evaluation processes, and the forms will be available for school boards to use in their districts. or departures from any procedures specified in approved study documents, I will report such events to the Chair, Institutional Review Board immediately.

1. **Is this project externally funded?** YES NO

2. **Research Site(s)**

University of Delaware

Other (please list external study site

Is UD the study lead? YES No

3. **Project Staff**

NAME	ROLE	HS TRAINING COMPLETE?
Alison Myers	Principal Investigator	Yes
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The study does not involve any special or vulnerable populations.

5. RESEARCH ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to (1) collect data on the current superintendent evaluation practices in Delaware’s nineteen public school districts and (2) collect data on the evaluation practices and implementation history of superintendent evaluation in selected other states. For the participants from Delaware, one board member from each school district will be asked to participate in a short phone interview, discussing their board’s methods. For the participants from other states, a purposive sampling method will be used to select people who were involved with the implementation of a superintendent evaluation in their state or from their organization. The findings will be included in a white paper on the topic, which will be distributed to school boards in Delaware. The data collected will be used to help create sample goal-setting and evaluation forms, and the development of a training presentation. Professional development training will be offered to assist school boards with the goal-setting and evaluation processes, and the forms will be available for school boards to use in their districts.

6. PROCEDURES

Following IRB review, prospective study participants will be contacted by email and/or phone, and interview dates/times will be scheduled. Interviews will be

conducted by phone, using the interview protocol. Responses will be audio recorded for accuracy. When all interviews are completed, the audio will be transcribed and analyzed. Results will be reported in a white paper format.

After the professional development materials are created, they will be sent to the participants of the study to review. Participants will also be sent a five-question feedback form to fill out and return to the researcher.

7. STUDY POPULATION AND RECRUITMENT

Participants of part (1) of this study hold the position of school board member in the state of Delaware. Qualifications for school board members are dictated by state code, Title 14, Chapter 10, Subchapter III, which proclaims, “each member shall be a citizen of the State and resident of the school district in which elected or appointed and shall be qualified to vote at a school election in that district at the time of such election or appointment” (14 Del. C. §1052).

Participants in part (2) of this study will represent selected states that have successfully implemented a superintendent evaluation process. They will hold employment in the department of education for their state, or in another educational organization.

Participants are expected to represent a wide variety of ages, genders and ethnicities.

Participants will be contacted by email and/or phone for recruitment purposes. A copy of the email and phone script is also uploaded to IRBNet.

8. RISKS AND BENEFITS

There are no identified risks to participants in this study.

9. COMPENSATION

Participants will not be compensated.

10. DATA

Subjects will be known to the primary investigator and advisor only. Identities will be kept confidential in all reporting of the data to others, including in publication.

Audio recordings from the interviews will be erased after transcription. Transcribed data will be kept in a password protected file for three years after the end of the study.

Will data be destroyed? YES NO (if yes, please specify how the data will be destroyed)

Audio files will be deleted after transcription and transcribed files will be deleted after three years.

Will the data be shared with anyone outside of the research team? YES NO (if yes, please list the person(s), organization(s) and/or institution(s) and specify plans for secure data transfer)

How will data be analyzed and reported?

Data will be analyzed using an iterative coding method for qualitative studies. The study will be reported in a white paper for school board members in the state of Delaware, and in my doctoral leadership portfolio.

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

Participants in this study will remain confidential. Only the researcher will know the identity of each participant. The research team will make every effort to

keep all research records that identify you confidential. The findings of this research may be presented or published. If this happens, no information that gives your name or other personally identifying details will be shared. Research data will be kept electronically, in a password protected file for three years after the conclusion of the study. All audio recordings of the interviews will be erased after transcription.

12. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Do you have a current conflict of interest disclosure form on file through UD Web forms?

No

Does this project involve a potential conflict of interest?

No

13. CONSENT and ASSENT

X Consent forms will be used and are attached for review (see Consent Template under Forms and Templates in IRBNet)

___ Additionally, child assent forms will be used and are attached.

___ Waiver of Documentation of Consent (attach a consent script/information sheet with the signature block removed).

___ Waiver of Consent (Justify request for waiver)

14. Other IRB Approval

Has this protocol been submitted to any other IRBs?

No

15. Supporting Documentation

Please list all additional documents uploaded to IRBNet in support of this application.

Invitation E-mail and Phone Script for Delaware Participants

Invitation E-mail and Phone Script for Out of State Participants

Feedback Questionnaire Form

Email Template/Phone Script – Delaware School Board Member

Dear _____,

My name is Alison Myers and I am a doctoral student at the University of Delaware. I am also a fellow board member, sitting for the past three and a half years on the Cape Henlopen Board of Education.

As part of my doctoral work, I am researching current goal-setting and superintendent evaluation practices in other Delaware school boards. I am conducting brief phone interviews (approximately 20 minutes) to collect data and would greatly appreciate your participation. Your identity will be kept confidential in all reporting of the data, and your participation is voluntary. Results of the study will be published in a white paper for all Delaware school board members and will assist in the development of goal-setting and evaluation tools, which I hope will assist school boards in their important work of governing our school districts.

Please respond to this email or call me at (302) 563-2125 to set up a date and time for a phone interview. I thank you in advance for your participation.

Alison Myers, M.Ed.

Ed.D. Student, University of Delaware

Cape Henlopen Board of Education Member

Interview Script – Delaware School Board Member

Opening script: “Hello, my name is Alison Myers, I am a doctoral student at the University of Delaware, and a member of the Cape Henlopen board of education. As part of my education leadership portfolio, I am exploring the superintendent evaluation processes in Delaware’s school districts. As a fellow school board member, your experiences with superintendent evaluation and goal-setting can help inform my research. I would like to ask you some questions about your current procedures. The interview should last approximately 20 minutes. Your responses to my interview questions will be reported anonymously. All identifying information will be omitted. Additionally, so that I can accurately report the data, I would like your permission to record our conversation. Is that alright? Thank you. If at any time you wish to stop the recording, please let me know. Let me begin by asking you some general questions about your experience as a board member.”

1. How long have you been a board member?
 - a. Were you elected or appointed?
2. What prompted you to seek a board seat?
 - a. Probe – (If interviewee responds with a specific issue) Do you feel you have been able to address that issue during your time on the board?
3. Please describe how your board sets goals or priorities for the superintendent?

- a. Probe – Does the board include the superintendent when choosing goals?
 - b. Probe - How often does your board discuss these goals?
4. Please give some examples of goals your board and superintendent are working on this year or in previous years?
5. Does your board evaluate the superintendent? Please explain the process?
 - a. Probe- Is the evaluation completed by all board members or a select few?
 - b. Probe – Is the evaluation based on the goals and/or priorities that were set by the board, or is it based on other measures?
 - c. Probe – How often is the process completed? Is it a single yearly event or is progress discussed at multiple points during the year?
 - d. Probe – How is feedback given to the superintendent? Does he/she have the opportunity to address the feedback with the board?
6. Explain how you feel about your role in the process?
 - a. Probe – Would additional training on goal-setting and evaluation help you participate further in the process?
7. Does your board have a policy that includes the superintendent evaluation process?
 - a. Probe – If yes, what information is included in this policy?
8. Please elaborate on the things you feel work best with your current goal-setting and evaluation process?

9. Please tell me what you feel needs improvement with your current process?
10. Is there any other information you would like to share with me on the topic of goal-setting and superintendent evaluation?

Closing script: “Thank you very much for your time. Your insight is very much appreciated, and the information you provided has been very helpful. As I stated before, your responses will be reported without any identifying information. The results of this research will assist me in the development of a professional development training program for school board members throughout our state. Thank you again for your willingness to participate.”

Email Template/Phone Script – Out of State Participant

Dear _____,

My name is Alison Myers and I am a doctoral student at the University of Delaware. I am also a school board member, sitting for the past three and a half years on the Cape Henlopen Board of Education in Delaware

As part of my doctoral work, I am researching current goal-setting and superintendent evaluation practices in other states, particularly ones that have successfully implemented the process. I am conducting brief phone interviews (approximately 20-30 minutes) to collect data and would greatly appreciate your participation. Your identity will be kept confidential in all reporting of the data, and your participation is voluntary. Results of the study will be published in a white paper for all Delaware school board members and will assist in the development of goal-setting and evaluation tools, which I hope will assist school boards in their important work of governing the school districts in Delaware.

Please respond to this email or call me at (302) 563-2125 to set up a date and time for a phone interview. I thank you in advance for your participation.

Alison Myers, M.Ed.

Ed.D. Student, University of Delaware

Cape Henlopen Board of Education Member

Interview Script – Out of State Participant

Opening script: “Hello, my name is Alison Myers, I am a doctoral student at the University of Delaware, and a member of the Cape Henlopen board of education. As part of my education leadership portfolio, I am exploring the superintendent evaluation processes in other states. Your experiences with superintendent evaluation and goal-setting can help inform my research. I would like to ask you some questions about your experiences with implementation of the process and the current evaluation procedures. The interview should last approximately 20-30 minutes. Your responses to my interview questions will be confidential. All identifying information will be omitted. Additionally, so that I can accurately report the data, I would like your permission to record our conversation. Is that alright? Thank you. If at any time you wish to stop the recording, please let me know. Let me begin by asking you some general questions about your background and experience.”

1. Please state your job title and some of your major duties.
2. When did you first become involved with administrator (or superintendent) evaluation?
3. Tell me the story of the implementation process?
 - Probe – When did the process begin?
 - Probe – Were you involved from the beginning?
 - Probe – Did this start as a school board initiative, state regulation, DOE project?
4. What were the major roadblocks to success in the implementation process?

Probe – How did you address these roadblocks?

5. What works best with your current goal-setting and evaluation process?
6. Explain what you feel needs improvement with your current process?
7. Is there any other information you would like to share with me on the topic of goal-setting and superintendent evaluation?

Closing script: “Thank you very much for your time. Your insight is very much appreciated, and the information you provided has been very helpful. As I stated before, your responses will be reported without any identifying information. The results of this research will assist me in the development of a professional development training program for school board members throughout the state of Delaware. Thank you again for your willingness to participate.”

Feedback Form

1. How effectively did the handbook prepare you to complete the goal-setting and evaluation process?
2. What areas of the handbook need improvements? What specific improvements do you suggest?
3. How effective were the training videos in increasing your knowledge and answering you questions about the goal-setting and evaluation process?
4. In what areas would you like to see additional training videos or training information?
5. Would this handbook and training video program help to improve the goal-setting and evaluation practices in your district?



RESEARCH OFFICE

210 HULLIHEN HALL
UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
NEWARK, DELAWARE 19716-1551
PH: 302/831-2136
FAX: 302/831-2828

DATE: February 9, 2018

TO: Alison Myers, B.S., M.Ed.
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1170293-1] Current Practices in Superintendent Evaluation in the State of Delaware

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
DECISION DATE: February 9, 2018

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # (2)

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB (HUMANS) has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office. Please remember to notify us if you make any substantial changes to the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

Figure 24 IRB Exemption Letter



RESEARCH OFFICE

210 Hulihan Hall
University of Delaware
Newark, Delaware 19716-1551
Ph: 302/831-2136
Fax: 302/831-2828

DATE: April 27, 2018

TO: Alison Myers, B.S., M.Ed.
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1170293-2] Current Practices in Superintendent Evaluation in the State of Delaware

SUBMISSION TYPE: Amendment/Modification

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
DECISION DATE: April 24, 2018

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # (2)

Thank you for your submission of Amendment/Modification materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office. Please remember to notify us if you make any substantial changes to the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office

Figure 25 IRB Amendment/Modification Exemption Letter