

QUALITY MEASURES

for Education Leadership Development Systems and Programs[®]

Principal Preparation Program Quality Self-Assessment Rubrics

**Course Content and Pedagogy
and Clinical Practice**

2009 EDITION



qualitymeasures.edc.org

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Introduction

School leaders are being called upon to lead schools to achieve at unprecedented levels of student and school performance. These new demands dictate the need for school leaders who can “hit the ground running” with a laser focus on improving instruction and student achievement. States are responding by adopting rigorous, well-defined standards for school leaders (ISLLC, 2008); providing curriculum frameworks to guide program redesign; creating external processes for auditing the quality of preparation program content and curricula; and are increasingly holding preparation programs accountable for graduates' performance on-the-job and the achievement of students in the schools they lead (Fry, Bottoms, & O’Neill, 2007).

Principal preparation programs are being asked to redesign to focus less on creating efficient managers and more on developing leaders who are equipped to lead schools to high levels of student performance. Program redesign strategies include a more rigorous and relevant course of study with a heavy emphasis on instructional leadership. Course content is moving away from traditional lecture formats to more project based learning experiences that are directly linked to schools and aligned to principal performance standards.

Programs are being challenged to produce graduates who know how to analyze and assess instruction, develop learning opportunities for teachers, and strategize for moving a school forward based on data. In addition, they are realizing the value in having school districts play a much more active role in recruiting and selecting preparation program candidates and in having districts become more involved in candidate mentoring and evaluation (Fry et al., 2007; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2008). High quality programs scaffold candidate learning experiences to build upon one another in a coherent and developmental sequence. They culminate in a clinical practice experience that takes place in a real school setting under the skilled supervision of program faculty and expert field practitioners.

Quality Measures™ Rubrics and the Program Self-Assessment Process

The Quality Measures™ approach to assessing the quality of principal preparation programs uses a calibrated set of research-based rubrics and an evidence-based analysis protocol (King, Levinger, & Schoener, 2006). QM rubrics incorporate the essential features and attributes of program course content and clinical practices associated with exemplary principal preparation programs in the literature (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, & Orr, 2007) with an explicit emphasis on the review and consideration of “supporting evidence” in determining the degree to which programs reflect these indicators of quality.

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Jonsson & Svingby (2007) argue that the reliable scoring of performance assessments can be enhanced by the use of rubrics, especially if they are analytic, topic-specific, and complemented with exemplars and/or rater training. They further suggest that rubrics “seem to have the potential of promoting learning and/or improve instruction.” The main reason for this potential lies in the fact that rubrics make expectations and criteria explicit, which facilitates feedback and self-assessment. Several additional benefits of using scoring rubrics include, more consistency in scoring from different raters (inter-rater reliability), and the improved ability to make more valid judgments about complex competencies.

Since 2005, EDC has been funded to work with Wallace funded districts, universities, and states to assess the quality of their principal preparation programs using QM rubrics and evidence-based self-assessment protocols. These tools have been useful in building broader consensus around the features and attributes of high quality programs and in helping assessment teams to examine supporting evidence against the rubric criteria and draw conclusions about the overall quality of their programs. (King, Levinger, & Schoener, 2006). The continuous review and refinement of these indicators of quality has necessarily been an ongoing process as the field continues to grow.

Finally, the collection of program artifacts, along with observations of the process, and conversations with program directors and faculty about their work have been invaluable sources of information that were critical to the revision process. We believe that these tools and processes, when used together, will provide improved guidance to program self-assessment team efforts to more accurately determine the quality of their principal preparation programs.

Quality Measures™ Rubrics

This 2009 edition of the QM rubrics include two program features, *Program Course Content and Pedagogy* and *Program Clinical Practice*. The QM rubrics identify the indicators of quality that are essential for well-developed principal preparation pre-service programs. They also calibrate the indicators of quality along a developmental scale (well-developed, developed, emerging and beginning). These rubrics reflect the newest information and lessons learned about principal preparation program quality and have been chiefly guided by new advancements in the field, the adoption of newly revised ISLLC standards (CCSSO, 2008), and recent progress in the development of evaluation tools (Goldring, Porter, Murphy, Elliot, & Cravens, 2007) for assessing principal performance.

Program Course Content and Pedagogy: The five indicators of quality for this feature include a focus on content domains that are detailed in the 2008 ISLLC standards. This content should be logically and sequentially organized and aligned with state professional standards and school district performance expectations. The pedagogy for a well-developed program should include problem-based learning strategies designed to incorporate real school contexts and make extensive use of formative and summative assessments. References to the literature that support the indicators for well-developed programs are included here:

1. Requires course work in each of the following content domains:
 - Vision for learning
 - School culture
 - Instructional supervision
 - Management of resources and operations
 - Ethical practice, and
 - Political, social, economic, legal, and cultural contexts
 (see CCSSO, 2008; Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Murphy, Moorman, & McCarthy, 2008)
2. All required courses are logically and sequentially organized (see Martin & Papa, 2008) and specifically aligned to state and professional leadership standards (see CCSSO, 2008)
3. All required courses incorporate project based learning methods as the comprehensive approach to instruction that include adequate opportunities for students to practice an array of skills in real school contexts (see Darling-Hammond et al.; Goldring, Huff, May, & Camburn, 2008)
4. All required courses explicitly link successful completion of coursework to current performance expectations for school principals (see Goldring et al., 2007; Levine, 2005; Murphy et al.)
5. All required courses implement well-defined formative and summative assessment measures for use by faculty, the candidate, and peers to evaluate candidate performance (see Darling-Hammond et al.; Goldring et al., 2007; Murphy et al.)

Program Clinical Practice (Internship or Practicum): These five indicators clarify that the clinical practice is a culminating experience to a rigorous preparation program and more than an additional course among others in a program's curriculum. While some programs call these experiences an "internship" and others call it a "practicum," the indicators of quality define the essential experiences found in the clinical practice feature of a well-developed program. They include carefully sequenced opportunities to practice leadership skills in a real-world setting for at least a year. The series of problem-based projects and activities must be explicitly linked to leadership standards and completed with support from expert coaches and mentors. Like other program coursework, the clinical practice should provide formal formative and summative assessments and offer interns the opportunity to develop competencies in more than one context.

The Program Clinical Practice indicators and their references are:

1. Includes developmentally sequenced opportunities for intern to further develop, apply, and practice leadership skills in real-world clinical settings for at least one year under the direct supervision of both university faculty and expert field practitioners (see Darling Hammond et al., 2007; Kelley & Peterson, 2001; Martineau & Hannum, 2004)
2. Requires intern to complete a comprehensive series of problem-based projects and activities that are explicitly linked to leadership standards and district performance expectations for principals (see CCSSO, 2008; Darling-Hammond et al.)
3. Provides intern with expert coaching and mentoring support that includes daily opportunities for intern to be observed and receive feedback from experts while practicing and developing their skills (see Darling-Hammond et al.)

4. Provides formal formative and summative assessments of intern performance at scheduled intervals throughout the clinical practice experience (see Goldring et al., 2007; Levine, 2005; Murphy et al., 2008)
5. Offers intern the opportunity to develop competencies in more than one school level (elementary, middle and high) and demographic contexts (see Goldring et al., 2008)

We have come to understand that an effective self-assessment of principal preparation program quality requires a clear understanding by all participants in the process of what is meant by "quality." Much of the confusion associated with assessing program quality comes from the ambiguity about what is to be assessed and what constitutes credible evidence of quality.

QM rubrics and protocols for self-assessment seek to address this problem by providing clearer descriptions of feature indicators of quality and guidance for selecting credible evidence (Morse, 2008; Alteide, 2008).

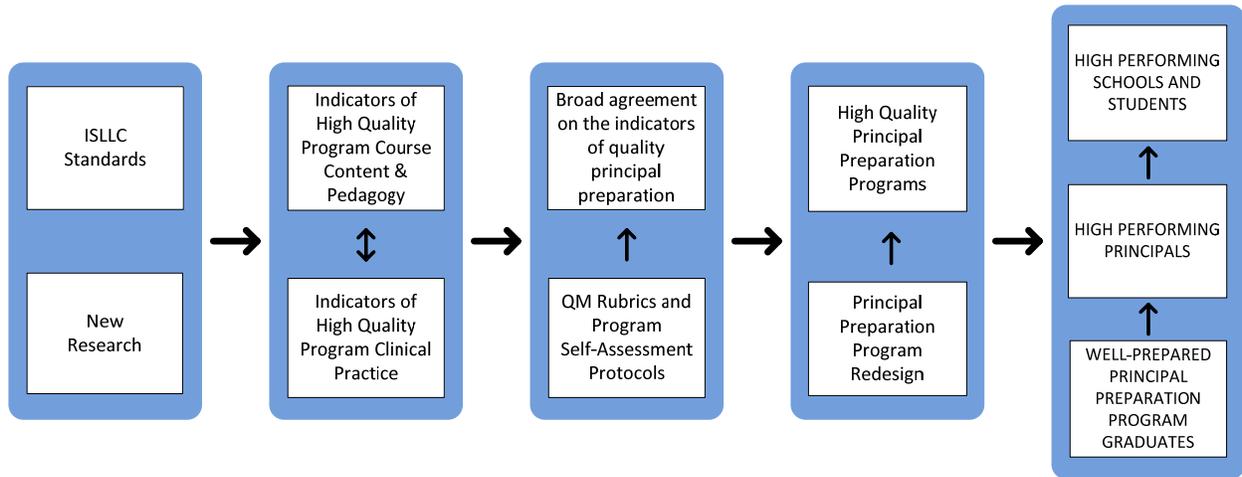
...an effective self-assessment of principal preparation program quality requires a clear understanding by all participants in the process of what is meant by "quality."

THE LITERATURE AND QM THEORY OF ACTION

There is a general consensus that graduates of principal preparation programs need to be better prepared if they are to have a positive impact on student achievement (Goldring, Spillane, Huff, Barnes, & Supovitz, 2006). Researchers point to "... a lack of urgency for refocusing the design, content, process and outcomes of principal preparation programs based on the needs of schools and student achievement" (Fry et al., 2007, p. 6). They highlight the need to ensure that graduates emerge from principal preparation programs equipped with the competencies to lead improvement in their schools through practices that are linked to increased student learning and achievement, and tailored to their particular contexts (Fry et al.; Goldring et al., 2006; Smylie & Bennett, 2005). And they stress that this will only come about with a change in the assumptions, practices, and structures that have traditionally been in place in leadership preparation programs (Hess, 2005; Lashway, 2003; Levine, 2005; Murphy et al., 2008; Olson, 2007; Sebring, Allensworth, Bryk, Easton, & Luppescu, 2006).

In response to this call, our work to date has focused on developing user-friendly tools and protocols for use in assessing pre-service programs' course content and clinical practice and, as a result, bring increased rigor to the assessment of principal preparation program quality. Through the use of Quality Measures™ tools and protocols, Wallace-funded principal preparation programs have made important strides in self-assessing the quality of their principal preparation program practices. They have used these rubrics, along with guidelines for selecting and analyzing credible evidence, to structure their self-assessment of core features. Through this process of self-assessment, program teams are able to determine where they fall on a developmental scale and use the results of the analysis to make strategic improvements in the quality of their programs.

The Quality Measures™ approach is based on the premise that effective, high-quality leadership development programs are standards-based and prepare school leaders with the essential knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to lead schools to high levels of student performance. Our indicators of high quality are based on the latest research and 2008 ISLLC standards.



QM THEORY OF ACTION: *The Quality Measures™ Theory of Action posits that, when individual programs engage in a self-assessment process using the QM Rubrics, they will deepen their agreement of what constitutes quality principal preparation. Redesign and improvement ideas will emerge that lead to higher quality principal preparation. Graduates benefit, specifically possessing the competencies that are important to schools, and they will be better prepared to fill principal positions. Their performance on the job will be improved leading ultimately to better school and student performance.*

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PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAM QUALITY RUBRIC:
COURSE CONTENT AND PEDAGOGY

	(4) WELL-DEVELOPED	(3) DEVELOPED	(2) EMERGING	(1) BEGINNING
Indicator 1	Requires course work in <i>each</i> of the following content domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision for learning • School culture • Instructional supervision • Management of resources and operations • Ethical practices, and • Political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts 	Requires course work in <i>five out of the six</i> following content domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision for learning • School culture • Instructional supervision • Management of resources and operations • Ethical practices, and • Political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts 	Requires course work in <i>at least half</i> of the following content domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision for learning • School culture • Instructional supervision • Management of resources and operations • Ethical practices, and • Political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts 	Requires course work in <i>less than three</i> of the following content domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision for learning • School culture • Instructional supervision • Management of resources and operations • Ethical practices, and • Political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts
Indicator 2	<i>All</i> required courses are logically and sequentially organized and <i>specifically</i> aligned to state and professional leadership standards	<i>Most</i> required courses are logically and sequentially organized and <i>closely</i> aligned to state and professional leadership standards	<i>Only a few</i> of the required courses are logically and sequentially organized and aligned to state and professional leadership standards	Required courses <i>are not yet</i> logically and sequentially organized; and are not yet aligned to state and professional leadership standards
Indicator 3	<i>All</i> required courses incorporate project based learning methods as the comprehensive approach to instruction that includes adequate opportunities for students to practice an array of skills in real school contexts	<i>Most</i> required courses incorporate project based learning methods as the comprehensive approach to instruction that includes adequate opportunities for students to practice an array of skills in real school contexts	<i>Only a few</i> required courses incorporate project based learning methods as the comprehensive approach to instruction that includes adequate opportunities for students to practice an array of skills in real school contexts	Required courses <i>do not yet</i> include project-based learning methods as the comprehensive approach to instruction that includes adequate opportunities for students to practice an array of skills in real school contexts
Indicator 4	<i>All</i> required courses <i>explicitly link</i> successful completion of coursework to current performance expectations for school principals	<i>Most</i> required courses <i>closely link</i> successful completion of coursework to current performance expectations for school principals	<i>Only a few</i> of the required courses link successful completion of coursework to current performance expectations for school principals	Required courses <i>do not yet</i> link successful completion of coursework to current performance expectations for school principals
Indicator 5	<i>All</i> required courses implement well-defined formative and summative assessment measures for use by faculty, the candidate, <u>and</u> peers to evaluate candidate performance	<i>Most</i> required courses implement well-defined formative and summative assessment measures for use by faculty, the candidate <u>and</u> peers to evaluate candidate performance	<i>Only a few</i> required courses implement well-defined formative and summative assessment measures for use by faculty, the candidate, <u>and/or</u> peers to evaluate candidate performance	Required courses <i>do not yet</i> implement well-defined formative and summative assessment measures for use by faculty, the candidate, <u>and</u> peers to evaluate candidate performance

PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAM QUALITY RUBRIC:
CLINICAL PRACTICE

	(4) WELL-DEVELOPED	(3) DEVELOPED	(2) EMERGING	(1) BEGINNING
Indicator 1	Includes developmentally sequenced opportunities for intern to further develop, apply, and practice leadership skills in real-world clinical settings for at least one year under the direct supervision of both university faculty and expert field practitioners	Includes opportunities for intern to further develop, apply, and practice leadership skills in real-world clinical settings for at least 6 months under the direct supervision of both university faculty and expert field practitioners	Includes opportunities for intern to further develop, apply, and practice leadership skills in real-world clinical settings for at least 3 months under the direct supervision of university faculty or expert field practitioners	Includes opportunities for intern to further develop, apply, and practice leadership skills in real-world clinical settings for less than 3 months under the direct supervision of university faculty or field practitioners
Indicator 2	Requires intern to complete a comprehensive series of problem-based projects and activities that are explicitly linked to ISLLC standards (2008) and district performance expectations for principals	Requires intern to complete multiple problem-based projects and activities that are linked to ISLLC standards (2008) and district performance expectations for principals	Requires intern to complete at least one problem-based project that is explicitly linked to ISLLC standards (2008) or district performance expectations for principals	Does not yet require intern to complete problem-based projects that are explicitly linked to ISLLC standards (2008) and/or district performance expectations for principals
Indicator 3	Provides intern with expert coaching and mentoring support that includes daily opportunities for intern to be observed and receive feedback from experts while practicing and developing their skills	Provides intern with expert coaching and mentoring support that includes regularly scheduled opportunities for interns to be observed and receive feedback from experts while practicing and developing their skills	Provides intern with expert coaching and mentoring support that includes occasional opportunities for interns to be observed and receive feedback by experts while practicing and developing their skills	Does not yet provide intern with expert coaching and mentoring support that includes opportunities for interns to be observed and receive feedback from experts while practicing and developing their skills
Indicator 4	Provides formal formative and summative assessments of intern performance at scheduled intervals throughout the clinical practice experience	Provides formal formative and summative assessments of intern performance at least two times during the clinical practice experience	Provides informal formative and summative assessments of intern performance at least one time during the clinical practice experience	Does not yet provide formative and summative assessments of intern performance during the clinical practice experience
Indicator 5	Offers intern the opportunity to develop competencies in more than one school level (elementary, middle and high) and demographic contexts	Offers intern the opportunity to develop competencies in more than one school level (elementary, middle and high) or demographic context	Offers intern the opportunity to develop competencies in one school level (elementary, middle and high) and demographic context	Does not yet offer intern the opportunity to develop competencies in school contexts