

## Principal Evaluation Composite Score Trends over 3 Years

The Tucson Unified School District’s Principal Evaluation Rubric was developed in 2015 using the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium or ISSLC standards. In 2021, the Principal Evaluation Rubric was redesigned to incorporate Professional Standards for Educational Leaders or PSEL standards in compliance with the Arizona Department of Education’s directive. The district worked with a team of principals and central leadership to revise the Principal Evaluation Rubric to reflect the updated standards. Table 1 shows a side by side comparison between the ISSLC and PSEL standards demonstrating that the core tenets of the original ISSLC rubric was retained in the transition to the PSEL standards.

**Table 1. Comparison of ISSLLC and PSEL Standards**

| ISLLC 2008                                    | PSEL 2015   |
|---|---|
| 1. Vision                                     | 1. Mission, Vision, and Core Values<br>10. School Improvement   |
| 2. School Culture and Instructional Program   | 4. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment<br>5. Community of Care and Support for Students*<br>6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel*<br>7. Professional Community for Teachers and Staff |
| 3. Operations, Management, and Resources      | 5. Community of Care and Support for Students*<br>6. Professional Capacity of School Personnel*<br>9. Operations and Management   |
| 4. Collaboration With Faculty and Community   | 8. Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community*   |
| 5. Ethics                                     | 2. Ethics and Professional Norms<br>3. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness*  |
| 6. Political, Social, Legal, Cultural Context | 3. Equity and Cultural Responsiveness*<br>8. Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community*   |

\* Note. Individual PSEL standards designated with an asterisk (\*) correlate to multiple ISLLC standards.

The PSEL standards were chosen because of the strong, clear emphasis on students and student continuous learning outlining foundational principles of leadership to help ensure that each child is well educated and prepared for the 21st century. The standards recognize the central importance of human relationships not only in leadership but also in teaching and student learning. Additionally, the standards envision community involvement as well as upcoming challenges so that educational leaders can succeed in the future. Changes to Principal Evaluation Rubric increased emphasis on culturally responsive practices, greater alignment with SPARKS, and the evidence of rigor for a distinguished score.

The revised Principal Evaluation Rubric was approved by the Governing Board in June 2021 and was implemented in SY2021-22. In addition to the approval of the revised rubric, the Governing Board

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approved the new cut scores to be implemented in SY2022-23. Please see below for the legacy cut scores and the new cut scores:

### Legacy Cut Scores – SY 2021-22 last year of implementation

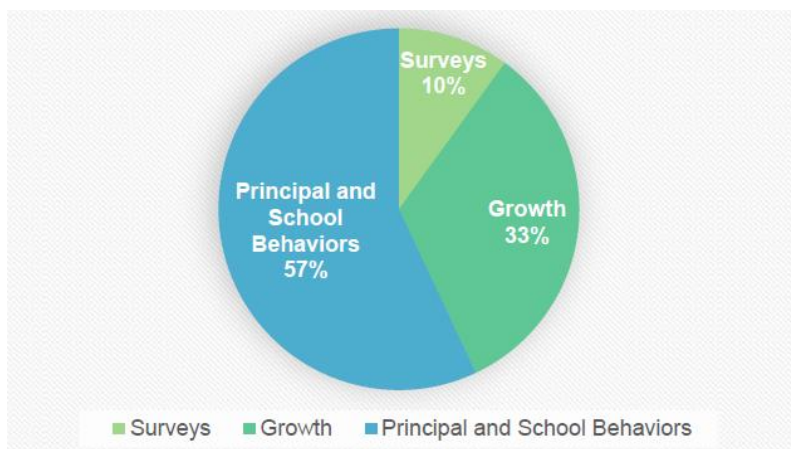
|               |          |
|---------------|----------|
| Ineffective   | 00 – 44  |
| Developing    | 45 – 56  |
| Effective     | 57 – 75  |
| Distinguished | 76 – 100 |

### New Cut Scores – to begin use in SY 2022-23

|               |          |
|---------------|----------|
| Ineffective   | 00 – 70  |
| Developing    | 71 – 76  |
| Effective     | 77 – 80  |
| Distinguished | 81 – 100 |

This study examined three years of Principal/Assistant Principal composite scores to understand the impact of the revised rubric and the new cut scores on SY2022-23 scores. The composite score is comprised of three categories including Principal and School Behaviors, Academic Growth, and Surveys (School Quality Staff and Student surveys were used). The Principal Evaluation Rubric is used to evaluate Principal and School Behaviors, the largest component of the composite score. Please see Graph 1 below that illustrates the distribution of the points in the composite score.

**Graph 1. Distribution of Principal Evaluation Points**



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The total number of Principal/Assistant Principal records that were used in this study were:

- 2020-21 = 120
- 2021-22 = 117
- 2022-23 = 126

The average composite score varied very little from year to year. The average composite score in SY2020-21 was 83 points. Subsequently, in both SY2021-22 and SY2022-23, the average composite score was 82 points. This data suggests that the revisions to the Principal Evaluation Rubric with the updated PSEL standards did not have a significant impact on the overall composite scores that Principal/Assistant Principals received in SY2021-22 and SY2022-23.

The greatest impact to the Principal/Assistant Principal's composite scores over the last three years appears to be the change in the cut scores implemented for the first time SY2022-23. The percent of Distinguished Principals decreased from 93% in 2021-22 to 56% in SY2022-23. Additionally, the percent of Effective Principals increased from 7% in SY2021-22 to 38% in SY2022-23. Finally, for the first time in three years, a handful of Developing Principals were recorded. No Ineffective Principals were recorded over the last three years. Please see Table 2 for a distribution summary of Performance levels.

| <b>Table 2. Distribution of Principal Evaluation Performance Levels over Three Years</b> |                |                |                |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Performance Level</b>   | <b>2020-21</b> | <b>2021-22</b> | <b>2022-23</b> |
| Ineffective  | 0%             | 0%             | 0%             |
| Developing   | 0%             | 0%             | 6%             |
| Effective  | 4%             | 7%             | 38%            |
| Distinguished  | 96%            | 93%            | 56%            |
| Total  | 100%           | 100%           | 100%           |

The composite score is comprised of three categories including Principal and School Behaviors, Academic Growth, and Surveys. In SY2022-23, the academic growth component (33% of the total score) appeared to wield greater impact on the performance level than in prior years when the legacy cut scores were used. For example, if a Principal/Assistant Principal's academic growth was below average using the new cut scores, it would be quite challenging to score high enough from the Principal and School Behaviors and Survey categories to reach a distinguished level. In SY2022-23, about 10% of schools scored below average academic growth scores.

Factors outside of the evaluation process may have also influenced some changes in the distribution of Principal Evaluation performance levels over the last two years. For example, TUSD saw a record number of seasoned educational professionals, including Principals leave schooling post-COVID, which mirrored an educational trend across the nation. As a result, many Principal/Assistant Principal positions opened

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up in TUSD over the last two years and 46 new positions were subsequently filled. During this time, TUSD also saw some lateral movement of experienced administrators from one school to another. However, more than three quarters of the newly opened positions were filled by administrators new to the position and/or new to the District. Please see Table 3 below for the breakdown of scores of Principals/Assistant Principals who have been in their current position for more than 2 years and Principals/Assistant Principals who have been in their current position for 2 years or less.

| <b>Table 3. Distribution of Performance Levels by Years in Current Position</b>                  |                      |                  |                   |
|--|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|  | <b>Distinguished</b> | <b>Effective</b> | <b>Developing</b> |
| Principals/Assistant Principals who have been in their position for more than 2 years.           | 68%                  | 29%              | 3%                |
| Principals/Assistant Principals who are new and have been in their position for 2 years or less. | 36%                  | 53%              | 11%               |

This data suggests that Principals/Assistant Principals who are new to their position may be experiencing a steeper learning arc than established Principals/Assistant Principals. Sixty-four percent of new Principals/Assistant Principals scored at an Effective (53%) or Developing (11%) level and may need more growth opportunities and experience in order to become 'Distinguished'. The data also suggests that Principals/Assistant Principals who work more than two years in these leadership positions have a higher likelihood of receiving a 'Distinguished' rating.

In summary, changes to the Principal Evaluation cut scores and to a much lesser degree, the Principal Evaluation Rubric have impacted the distribution of performance levels so that more Principals/Assistant Principals fall into the Developing and Effective levels. The change in the distribution may indicate a greater sensitivity from the new cut scores to align Principals/Assistant Principals to the appropriate performance level.