

# **Possible Guiding Questions:**

## **Strategic Discussions between Supervising Administrators and Special Education Supervisors**

*This document utilizes the components within the Framework for Leadership to provide possible guiding questions for strategic discussions that occur between a supervising administrator and a Special Education Supervisor. In addition, the document is intended to help clarify framework components. Note that a few of the guiding questions also provide linkages to the Danielson Framework for Teaching in order to establish a level of connectedness among the two frameworks.*

*Please note: The questions identified here are provided to spur some thoughts as to the individual discussions that occur between a supervising administrator and supervisor. The actual discussions that occur should be determined locally. It is not mandatory to use these questions, nor should they be viewed as a “checklist” to be followed. They are provided solely as a resource.*

## **Leadership Framework:**

### **Domain #1 Strategic/Cultural Leadership**

*1a. Creates an Organizational Vision, Mission, and Strategic Goals*

### **Discussion Focus: Planning and Preparation**

**Key Point: Shared ownership for school/district goals**

## **Possible Guiding Questions:**

- How do you articulate the Vision and Mission of your school/department so that it is understood?
- How will you celebrate short term wins?
- What is the goal setting process between your department and schools?
- How has your school community helped you to determine these goals?
- How are your department's goals related to the district and school goals and the goals for continuous academic improvement?
- What are the barriers to your goals and what can you/we do to minimize them?
- What opportunities have you used to engage your teachers in collaboration relative to vision, mission, and strategic goals?
- How do you measure fidelity to your goals?
- Give an example of a time a plan failed to achieve the expected outcomes. What happened? How did you analyze the problem to rectify it and was it rectified in a collaborative manner? If so, how?
- Is your vision:
  - Achievable/doable?
  - Focused on results that lead to accountability?
  - Measurable?
  - Simple and clear?
  - Actionable?
  - Does it lend itself to developing a clear strategy for making the vision possible?
  - Does it lead to hard choices?
  - Is it worth fighting for?

**Domain #1 Strategic /Cultural Leadership**

*1b. Uses data for Informed Decision Making*

**Discussion Focus: Planning and Preparation**

**Key Point: Instructional decisions based on clear evidence, supported by data**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- What would be helpful for me to know about your student population?
- How can we improve your department's data management to encourage focused teaching?
- In your classroom observations, do you see evidence of the items below to inform decision making regarding the instructional process:
  - Formative and summative assessments of student work
  - Varying levels of questioning based on Bloom's Taxonomy/Webb's Depth of Knowledge
  - Oral and written responses
  - Active student engagement
  - Critical thinking
  - Small group instruction
  - Individual student conferences
  - Examples of exemplary student work
  - Rubrics to guide instruction and assessment
  - Transition planning
  - Evidence of implementation of IEP goals across all educational settings
- How have you used the district's data from multiple measures (School Performance Profile, Elective Data/SLOs, Chapter 14, 15, and 16, and Ratings/PVAAS Correlations) to inform your decision making?

**Domain #1: Strategic/Cultural Leadership**

*1c. Builds a Collaborative and Empowering Work Environment*

**Discussion Focus:**  
**School Environment and Delivery of Service**

**Key Point:**  
**Involves teachers in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- How do teachers in your department have a voice in decisions?
- Describe the work your leadership team does.
- What do you do to nurture a climate of trust and continuous improvement in your department?
- How are your teachers involved in the planning and assessment of your department's goals and their school goals?
- What opportunities have you used to engage your teachers in building a collaborative and empowering work environment?

**Domain #1: Strategic/Cultural Leadership**

*1d. Leads Change Efforts for Continuous Improvement*

**Discussion Focus:**  
**Planning and Preparation/School Environment**

**Key Point:**  
**Instructional Leadership**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- Describe any innovative and effective instructional initiatives you are doing or have done this year.
- What strategic framework guides you (i.e. Kotter's Leading Change) as you adapt to shifting conditions?
- How have you helped your teachers to become more effective instructors?
- What is your greatest barrier to increased student achievement and what efforts are you making to remove that barrier?
- How are you helping your teachers to be experts in their curriculum?
- What safety nets do you have in place to support teachers/students?
- What have you done this year to stay current on research related to student achievement?
- What have you done this year to stay current with changes in regulations for Chapter 14, 15 and 16?
- What benchmarks do you have in place to encourage continuous academic improvement?

How are resources allocated?

**Domain #1: Strategic/Cultural Leadership**

*I.e. Celebrates Accomplishments and Acknowledges Failures*

**Discussion Focus:**  
**School Environment/Delivery of Service**

**Key Point:**  
**Setting priorities, benchmarking successes and evaluating strategies for constructive decision-making**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- What is the goal setting process in your department/district?
- How do you determine fidelity to those goals?
- Tell me some ways you celebrate achievements in your department? ( student, teacher, school wide)
- Describe an initiative that was not successful. How did you redirect your efforts?
- Do you use a consistent framework for strategic thinking? Describe it.
- How do you share your successes with your peers?

<p><b>Domain #2: Systems Leadership</b></p> <p><i>2a. Leverages Human and Financial Resources</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b>  <b>Planning and Preparation/Delivery of Service</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b>  <b>Aligning goals with resources</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How often do you reflect on your schedule to see what portion of your day is spent in Instructional related activities as opposed to managerial ones?</li> <li>• In what ways do you ensure that Department Meetings focus on leadership rather than management items?</li> <li>• How do you determine the roles of the people that make up your leadership team?</li> <li>• What opportunities do your most effective teachers have to share their practice?</li> <li>• What is your process for determining allocations of financial resources in your department?</li> <li>• How do you prioritize requests from your teachers?</li> <li>• Give me some examples of effective use of technology in your department?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domain #2: Systems Leadership</b></p> <p><i>2b. Ensures School Safety</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b>  <b>Planning and Preparation/School Environment/Delivery of Service</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b>  <b>A safe and secure school environment where teachers can teach and students can learn</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent has you participated in your school/district safety plan and your process of reviewing and updating it.</li> <li>• Explain how your staff is trained to respond to a building/district crisis.</li> <li>• Explain how your entire staff is aware of their responsibilities in emergency situations?</li> <li>• Is there anything that you would suggest to keep our district safer?</li> <li>• What internal and external factors affect your department?</li> <li>• What procedures are in place to report and deal with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Suspicious behavior</li> <li>➤ Bullying</li> <li>➤ Disruptive behaviors</li> <li>➤ Child Abuse</li> <li>➤ Restraints</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How do you promote positive school-wide behavior?</li> </ul>

<p><b>Domain #2: Systems Leadership</b></p> <p><i>2c. Complies with federal, State, and LEA Mandates</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b> <b>Planning and preparation</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b> <b>Uses Federal, State and LEA regulations as guidelines in planning for student success</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe your role in district’s comprehensive plan for increased student achievement?</li> <li>• Are you familiar with the plan for increased student achievement and how do your current initiatives support the plan?</li> <li>• Are we in compliance with Chapter 14, 15, and 16 regulations? What influences do these mandates have as you plan instruction/programming?</li> <li>• Are we in compliance with other grants/funding that we use to support our efforts?</li> <li>• With consideration for current initiatives, what professional development would you recommend to support compliance?</li> <li>• How do you use the PDE website/SAS website to learn about initiatives, program mandates and your personal status using your PPID number?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domain #2: Systems Leadership</b></p> <p><i>2d. Establishes and Implements Expectations for Students and Staff</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b> <b>School Environment</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b> <b>High Expectations for All/Student Achievement</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you and your staff demonstrate the belief that achievement follows effort and all students are capable of increased achievement?</li> <li>• What safety nets do you have for struggling students?</li> <li>• What innovative approaches have you used this year to increase student achievement?</li> <li>• What processes are in place to study data and define services gaps to assist all students?</li> </ul>

<p><b>Domain #2: Systems Leadership</b></p> <p><i>2e. Communicates Effectively and Strategically</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b>  <b>Planning and Preparation/School Environment</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b>  <b>Goal Focused Communication</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you assess the needs of your department as well as involve your teachers and staff in that reflection?</li> <li>• How do you reflect on your strategic intent and decision-making to ensure quality and continued improvement?</li> <li>• What efforts do you make to ensure that your teachers know and can articulate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ your mission</li> <li>➤ your vision</li> <li>➤ priority goals for this year</li> </ul> </li> <li>• How do you support your teachers to reach your department and district goals?</li> <li>• What do you do to ensure a fair, unbiased and caring environment?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domain #2: Systems Leadership</b></p> <p><i>2f. Manages Conflict Constructively</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b>  <b>School Environment</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b>  <b>Conflict Resolution</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are your teachers models of appropriate behavior and how do you encourage that in your school?</li> <li>• What procedures are in place to guarantee that consequences for bad behavior are consistent in your department?</li> <li>• How are problems resolved in the classroom before they escalate and require your attention?</li> <li>• Describe how your teachers have been prepared with the skills to support and resolve conflict?</li> <li>• How do you engage the challenging Teacher directly, honestly and with respect in difficult situations?</li> <li>• What are your strengths and weaknesses as a manager of conflict?</li> <li>• How do you foster an atmosphere of professional learning in your department?</li> </ul>

**Domain #2: Systems Leadership**

*2g. Ensures a high quality, high performing staff*

**Discussion Focus:**  
**School Environment**

**Key Point:**  
**Staff recruitment, retention and supervision**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- What are the positive attributes of an effective teacher?
- How do you support novice teachers who are hired to work in your building?
- What do you see as your role in the hiring, transfer, retention and dismissal of teachers in your department?
- What is it about that role that makes you comfortable/uncomfortable?
- How have you used the data from multiple measures (School Performance Profile, Elective Data/SLOs, Chapter 14, 15, and 16, and Ratings/PVAAS Correlations) to ensure you have a high quality, high performing staff?

**Domain # 3- Leadership for Learning**

*3a. Leads School Improvement Initiatives*

**Discussion Focus:**  
**Planning and Preparation/Delivery of Service/Professional Development**

**Key Point:**  
**Goals related to student achievement**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- What goals and priority initiatives have you identified for your department this year and how did you determine needs?
- What are your specific goals related to instruction and student achievement?
- How are you aligning resources both human and financial, to those resources?
- What are the methods you will use to determine progress toward the goals?
- What current research relates your initiative to increased student achievement?

**Domain # 3- Leadership for Learning**

*3b. Aligns Curricula, Instruction, and Assessments*

**Discussion Focus:**  
**Planning and Preparation/Delivery of Service**

**Key Point: Effective Alignment for Student Achievement**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- Describe your understanding of a standards-based system.
- What have you done with your teachers to inform and reinforce the importance of alignment of curricula, instruction and assessments to ensure student achievement?
- What processes are in place to ensure that your curriculum is coherent so that knowledge goes deeper at each grade level?
- How do you encourage your teachers to be designers of effective instruction?
- In lesson planning, do your teachers use “Backward Design” (Wiggins&McTighe) to design lessons for effective instruction?
- What have you done to enhance your teacher’s ability to align lesson planning with curriculum, instruction and assessment to promote student growth.
- How do you incorporate online resources like the PDE SAS website to support and motivate effective Instruction?
- How do you identify teacher leaders and support them in becoming curriculum experts? Explain how your teachers create instruction that promotes conceptual understanding and not just factual recall.

**Domain # 3- Leadership for Learning**

*3c. Implements High Quality Instruction*

**Discussion Focus:**  
**Planning and Preparation/Delivery of Service/Professional Development**

**Key Point:**  
**Effective Classroom Instruction**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- Describe the evidence you observe of these practices as you observe instruction in your staff:
  - Student engagement
  - Flexible grouping
  - Formative assessment
  - Differentiated instruction
  - Focused teaching
  - Relevant and rigorous lessons
  - Higher-order thinking and questioning
  - Modeling and gradual release
  - Inquiry learning
  - Cooperative learning
  - Opportunities for reading, writing and using technology
  - Connections to previous learning
  - Compliance with Chapter 14, 15, and 16
  
- How do you teachers ensure increased student participation in the general education environment?
- How do you improve instruction that is not effective?
- In what ways do you monitor teacher performance and give teachers ongoing feedback on their effectiveness and opportunities for growth?
- How do you make sure that curriculum standards are being taught by the teachers and mastered by the student?
- How do you capitalize on teachers' expertise and involve them in lesson planning and peer professional development?
- What are some methods of formative assessment your teachers use to determine the needs of the students in your school?
- What strategies do teachers use to focus instruction to those needs to promote student growth?

<p><b>Domain # 3- Leadership for Learning</b></p> <p><i>3d. Sets High Expectation for All Students</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b> <b>School Environment/Delivery of Service</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b> <b>High Expectations for All Students</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do you do to encourage the belief that ALL STUDENTS receive effective instruction?</li> <li>• What evidence do you see that your district is student rather than adult-centered?</li> <li>• How do your grouping practices provide flexibility as students master skills?</li> <li>• What factors do you consider before changing to a student to a more restrictive placement?</li> <li>• What options do you offer for struggling students? (i.e.) small group instruction, focused teaching, peer tutoring, after/before/summer school programs, home connections)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domain # 3- Leadership for Learning</b></p> <p><i>3e. Maximizes Instructional Time</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b> <b>Delivery of Service</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b> <b>Instructional Time Management</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you plan department meetings around instructional as well as management goals?</li> <li>• What techniques do you use to guarantee that cooperative planning sessions are structured for effective use of time?</li> <li>• What evidence do you observe that lessons are standards driven?</li> <li>• How do you provide time for teachers to plan cooperatively to make connections with other content areas for increased student understanding?</li> </ul>

<p><b>Domain # 4- Professional and Community Leadership</b></p> <p><i>4a. Maximizes Parent and Community Involvement and Outreach</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b>  <b>Planning and Preparation/School Environment/Delivery of Service</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b>  <b>Parent and Community Involvement and Communication</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are all of the stakeholders in your school involved in determining the annual goals for your department?</li> <li>• What successful strategies have you used for sharing your goals with the community and aligning appropriate resources, both human and financial to support your needs?</li> <li>• Describe the process you use to schedule Chapter 14, 15 and 16 meetings at varying times of the year and day to accommodate working and single parents?</li> <li>• How do you network with organizations and people outside the school to build partnerships to help meet your department and student goals?</li> <li>• What opportunities do you provide for students to shine? (i.e. Student participation events, featured students at School Board Meetings)</li> <li>• What innovative things have you and your teachers done to make parents feel welcome in your district?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Domain # 4- Professional and Community Leadership</b></p> <p><i>4b. Shows Professionalism</i></p> <p><b><u>Discussion Focus:</u></b>  <b>School Environment</b></p> <p><b><u>Key Point:</u></b>  <b>Professional Performance, Ethical Behavior, Contributing to the Profession</b></p>	<p><b><u>Possible Guiding Questions:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe an ethical dilemma you faced this year and how you resolved it.</li> <li>• What are the qualities that define you as an supervisor? How do these qualities impact your department?</li> <li>• What professional learning have you pursued this year, and why?</li> <li>• Are you an active member of any community or professional organizations? Name and describe your role.</li> <li>• How do you communicate your professional beliefs and values to your teachers and the community at large?</li> <li>• What do you do to encourage respect in your communications with your staff and stakeholders?</li> </ul>

**Domain # 4- Professional and Community Leadership**

4c. Supports Professional Growth

**Discussion Focus:**

**School Environment/Delivery of Service/Professional Development**

**Key Point:**

**Professional Development**

**Possible Guiding Questions:**

- What strategies do you use to continually expose your teachers to ideas and research that contribute to effective learning? How do you stay informed?
- How do you systemically engage staff in discussions about current research and theory?
- How do you and your teachers share current research on learning and effective practice?
- How do you assess your department's needs for professional development?
- Once you've determined your priorities, what are your steps toward matching your goals with a plan for professional development to support them?
- What kind of orientation and mentoring do you provide for new teachers?
- In your job, you are sometimes in difficult situations. Can you tell me about such a time and how you were able to speak to someone directly with honesty and respect to work toward a solution?