

National SAM Innovation Project (NSIP)
Executive Director Performance Review 2026
COMPILATION

2025 Revised January 2024

Please complete the evaluation and return to the Board President. The president will compile the results and share with the executive director. The Board and executive director will meet to discuss.

Each section begins with a brief description of an area of responsibility. After reading it the answers to the questions will measure your level of satisfaction with how the executive director is performing. Check off the number representing the degree to which you are satisfied or not satisfied:

- 1-Very Dissatisfied
- 2-Dissatisfied
- 3-Satisfied
- 4-Very Satisfied
- 5-Not sure or N/A

At the end of the sections there is a place for comments. All comments will be shared with the executive director.

Except where stated otherwise, all items refer to actions or conditions since the previous Performance Review (approximately one year).

1. Vision and Mission – The executive director's role has both strategic and operational components. Working with the board, the executive director develops a shared vision for NSIP, builds understanding around the current mission, and develops appropriate goals and strategies to advance the mission.

How satisfied are you that:		Not satisfied		Satisfied		Not Sure	Comments
		1	2	3	4		
1-1	The executive director and staff have worked with the board to communicate a clear vision for NSIP.						4 Progress has been made.
1-2	The executive director and staff have worked with the board to communicate a clear mission.						4 The mission is clearer and guides decisions.
1-3	The executive director and staff have moved NSIP forward, or closer to its vision.						4
1-4	The executive director and staff have moved NSIP forward, or closer to its mission.						4 With current financial state we are in, I am very pleased with NSIP.
The executive director, staff, and board have made a lot of progress over the last couple of years in crafting a compelling vision and mission and in clearly articulating that to others. Progress has been achieved and discussed at various meetings.							

2. Improving Quality – Quality of NSIP implementation and support

How satisfied are you that:		Not satisfied		Satisfied		Not Sure	Comments
		1	2	3	4		
2-1	The executive director and staff have worked to improve SAM implementation.						.4 Process continues to improve and rubric has been nice touch.
2-2	The executive director and staff have worked to improve SAM coaching, training and support.						4
2-3	The executive director and staff have worked to improve professional development offerings and the national conference.						4 Loved that Mark presented at conference for Sams! Needs to continue SAMs updates and training. Keeps getting better and side conversations indicate those attending continue to be impressed. This year's conference was smaller, but still as good or better than past conferences.
2-4	The executive director and staff have worked to improve TimeTrack™.						4 Still improving (continuous). Rather than resisting the security requirements of clients like NYC and Chicago, Mark has embraced them and made security a selling point.
A culture of continuous improvement is embedded throughout SAMs. Each year, the process and its outcomes improve. The executive director is to be commended for establishing this type of culture and for continuously moving SAMs forward.							

3. NSIP Growth

How satisfied are you that:		Not satisfied		Satisfied		Not Sure	Comments
		1	2	3	4		
3-1	The executive director and staff have increased, maintained or decreased the number of participating SAM schools as consistent with the mission, vision and culture of NSIP.						3.8 Yes, to all as we have lost some due primarily to funding, but we have added new ones.
3-2	The executive director and staff have built strong relationships with clients.						4. Clients believe in the process and the staff
3-3	The executive director and staff have enhanced the visibility of the SAM process.						3.5 It's hard but word of mouth continues to be the best.
3-4	The executive director and staff have enhanced the interest in the SAM process.						3.6 New schools and districts continue to join. Marketing-word of mouth. Tech is helping and paying for advertising too. Still wondering if there should be more.
Mark is always looking for new ways to spread the word. He finds and tries new tools or approaches and then continues or abandons them based on the results they produce. Participation in SAMs has decreased over the past year. The executive director has done what he reasonably can to minimize the overall negative impact. It should be noted that other educational organizations are currently struggling as well. This decrease in SAMs is not due in any way to the executive director's leadership.							

4. Fiscal Management – Ensuring that income is managed wisely is important. It is the role of the executive director to see that solid planning and budgeting systems are in place and that NSIP’s goals and strategic plan serve as the basis for sound financial planning. In addition, it is the executive director’s responsibility to ensure that qualified staff is hired to accurately monitor, assess, and manage the financial health of NSIP.

How satisfied are you that:		Not satisfied		Satisfied		Not Sure	Comments
		1	2	3	4		
4-1	The executive director responsibly managed financial planning, budgeting and fiscal resources.						4 Tough times have been handled appropriately and stability of NSIP is well.
4-2	The executive director maintained a fund balance that assures organizational stability.						3.8 Close, federal changes have caused great uncertainty and hesitation among districts; however, efforts have been extended to keep districts in.
4-3	The executive director presented financial reports to the Board and other information as requested.						4 Full disclosure has occurred, and transparency exists.
Mark has done an excellent job of applying lessons learned from the financial challenges of the pandemic. The pandemic felt like a crisis, while our current situation feels more like a very difficult but still manageable challenge. Without Mark’s previous work in this area, the past year would have been far more difficult. Great job! A key word to note is “responsibly.” Given the difficulty that all education organizations and vendors are experiencing, the executive director is to be commended for responsibly taking the necessary steps to minimize impact on the organization. While stability has been impacted by the decrease in participation, the executive director has taken necessary steps to minimize this and has transparently shared these efforts with the board.							

5. Operations Management – The executive director is responsible for day-to-day management. The executive director works with staff to develop, maintain, and use the systems and resources that facilitate the effective operation of NSIP.

How satisfied are you that:		Not satisfied		Satisfied		Not Sure	Comments
		1	2	3	4		
5-1	The executive director has assured NSIP has sound risk management policies in place including adequate insurance coverage.						4 All insurance is accounted for and audit keeps things clean. Talked about coverage and explained very well. All insurance is accounted for, and audit keeps things clean.
5-2	The executive director has assured NSIP has accounting, payroll, and cash management systems in place.						4
5-3	The executive director has ensured compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.						4 Absolutely covered and sustained.
The executive director manages the operations of SAMs with great attention to detail. The organization is always compliant with legal and regulatory requirements.							

6. Board Perceptions of the Organization – As the board reviews the performance of the executive director, it should also gauge its perceptions of the general operations and quality of NSIP in the following areas. The responses to these questions may help to focus the board and executive director's attention on specific areas of strengths and limitations and will help to guide future NSIP development efforts.

Over the past year, what do you see as the Executive Director's greatest strength or most important accomplishment?

The Executive Director's greatest strength lies in his exceptional ability to build and sustain meaningful relationships. He connects effortlessly with others in the moment, demonstrating charisma, passion, and professionalism that foster immediate trust and engagement. Equally impactful is his ability to maintain these connections over time—recalling personal details and individual nuances that allow him to quickly reestablish rapport, even after significant gaps in interaction. This relational acumen is critical to the health and longevity of NSIP, as the organization's stability and future growth are deeply rooted in the strength of its connections.

Through the unpredictable and sometimes nonsensical decisions coming from the federal government, Mark has just kept things from falling apart, he has kept NSIP moving forward.

Keeping NSIP afloat during difficult financial times. Following the varied federal changes and working with schools to address what they can control and not give up. Keeping NSIP in the black is outstanding. Adding new schools and districts to NSIP (even though we lost some) has been one of the most important accomplishments.

True leadership shows itself most during difficult and challenging times. Although this past year has been a challenging one for many organizations including SAMs, the executive director has displayed exceptional leadership skills as he has navigated these fiscal challenges. His leadership is always very much appreciated, but, in particular, at times like these.

The fiscal piece has been rough and I applaud Mark on staying focused while also making necessary changes. Positivity is contagious!

In the year ahead, what do you see as the Executive Director's greatest potential area for growth?

Convincing Wallace to fund a study to examine principal evaluations of teachers
Finding new districts and schools to join the team
Working with established districts and schools to stay during tough financial times.

It would appear that the greatest potential area for growth in the year ahead is to increase the number of participants and participating states. Board members should stand ready to assist in whatever ways they can to help build participation in the SAMs process.

I think Mark is doing an amazing job. The only area of growth I see would be to make videos (training and refreshers). I think Mark is very motivating and may underestimate how inspirational and energetic his personality is. So making videos would be my suggestions, that and continued training for Sams. They are trained at the beginning but need updates and refreshers.

The Executive Director's greatest opportunity for growth is the continued deepening of his current, field-based understanding of the realities facing today's principals. While NSIP is enriched by the expertise of seasoned leaders and high-quality professional learning, vigilance to ensure the works fully reflects the most urgent, day-to-day challenges in schools is critical to its longevity.

While instructional leadership remains essential and the tools NSIP provides in this area continue to be valuable, they may not, on their own, be sufficient to meet the evolving needs of current and prospective members. Today's principals are managing increasingly complex demands, including rising student aggression, the growing identification and support of students with disabilities, heightened expectations for individualized student and family responsiveness, and extensive compliance requirements. These responsibilities require meticulous documentation and accountability, with significant professional consequences if expectations are not met.

For NSIP to remain relevant and impactful, it must continue to remain curious, intentionally centering on the voice of current practitioners and address the complexities of modern school leadership. This is critical to ensure the organization stays aligned with the real work of today's principals.

I don't feel that I can identify a significant area for growth at this time, but I feel that Mark's professional growth will come from having to confront constantly changing and exceedingly unpredictable circumstances.

Overall Comments:

Fabulous job during difficult and not so fun times. Efforts to keep the ship sailing are appreciated and the work involved is tremendous and must be exhausting. The NSIP family is appreciative of the time and energy expended. One of Mark's most significant accomplishments has been retaining critical staff through a time when he has had to cut salaries and benefits. I think staff's willingness to weather the storm with NSIP speaks volumes about the strength of the relationships Mark has built with those who work for him.