

Best Practices in Teacher Leadership Training and Principal Development

In this report, Hanover Research presents general best practices in planning and implementing educational leadership development programming. We highlight the value of leadership development programs with a proactive approach to district-wide succession management. This includes strategic and career-track leadership training for teachers who demonstrate leadership potential and an interest in administrative responsibilities. We also note the importance of ongoing professional development for both novice and veteran principals through cohort groupings, coaching, and/or other instructive experiences.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Section I: A Distributed Leadership Approach to Succession Management	6
Developing a Distributed Leadership Approach	8
Profiles of State-Level Leadership Succession Initiatives	13
<i>Case Study: Delaware Department of Education</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Case Study: Maryland State Department of Education</i>	<i>14</i>
Section II: Planning Educational Leadership Development	16
Create Individual Development Plans	16
Implement a Performance Continuum.....	17
<i>Case Study: Uinta County School District #1: Teaching Standards Rubric.....</i>	<i>17</i>
Consider Various Training Providers	19
<i>The School District</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>The State.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>The Local University</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Third-Party Organizations.....</i>	<i>20</i>
Use the Direct Instruction Approach Sparingly.....	20
Develop Professional Learning Communities	21
<i>Characteristics of Effective Professional Learning Communities.....</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Expected Outcomes.....</i>	<i>22</i>
<i>Case Study: Amberst Middle School Leadership Team.....</i>	<i>23</i>
Section III: Training Teachers for Specific Leadership Roles	26
Training Lead/Mentor/Master Teachers	26
<i>Case Study: Edmonds School District No. 15 (Lynnwood, Washington).....</i>	<i>27</i>
Content-Area Coaches	28
Training Assistant Principals.....	30
Alternative Principal Licensure.....	32
Section IV: Professional Development for Principals	33
Principal Development Program Design	33
Core Competencies of School Administrators	34
<i>New Leaders for New Schools – Resident Core Competencies</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>North Carolina Department of Education: State Standards for Administrators.....</i>	<i>36</i>
Pedagogy	39

<i>Coaching and Mentoring</i>	39
<i>Cohorts</i>	41
<i>Direct Instruction – The 95/5 Model</i>	41
<i>Case Study: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Leadership Curriculum Modules</i>	42

Executive Summary

In this report, Hanover Research presents an overview of the literature on educational leadership development for teachers and school administrators. The report is organized according to the following sections:

- ❖ **Section I:** A Distributed Leadership Approach to Succession Management
- ❖ **Section II:** Planning Educational Leadership Development
- ❖ **Section III:** Training Teachers for Specific Leadership Roles
- ❖ **Section IV:** Professional Development for Principals

The following key findings emerged from our research:

- ❖ **Succession Management** - Leadership development planning should be conducted in the context of district-wide and school-based succession planning. Core activities involved in succession planning include the identification of staff members who exhibit leadership potential, career-oriented leadership development for those individuals, and increased opportunities for candidates to build and exercise their leadership skills.
- ❖ **Distributed Leadership** - The implementation of a school-based distributed leadership model can provide teachers on-the-job experience with administrative responsibilities and project management, adding well-qualified future candidates to the district's principal pipeline. Furthermore, a strong professional learning community can contribute to superior performance outcomes for both teachers and their students.
- ❖ **A School- or District-Wide Framework** - It is important to contextualize educational leadership development in an overarching framework. Strategic, ongoing training may be framed by a school- or district-wide succession plan, independent development plans, a performance continuum, or a combination of these.
- ❖ **Methods of Leadership Development** - Key educational leadership training delivery modes include the following:
 - Internships/Residencies
 - Independent Development Plans (IDPs)
 - Performance Evaluation (by Administrator, Self, or Peer(s))
 - Coaching/Mentoring
 - Professional Learning Communities

- Cohort Groupings
 - Interactive Workshops and Discussion Groups
 - University-Based Courses
 - Summer Institutes
 - Job-Embedded Training Modules, Assignments, Experiences, etc.
 - Direct Instruction (Readings, Lectures, Conferences, Seminars, etc.)
 - Online Resources (Webinars, Toolkits, Discussion Boards, etc.)
- ❖ **The Cohort Model** - Cohorts can be a particularly useful way of providing school leaders with personal and professional support. Effective facilitation, participant buy-in, and opportunities for the application of new knowledge are factors that can contribute to the success of leadership development cohorts.
- ❖ **The Coaching Model** - Ongoing individualized coaching, which should not be mistaken for remediation, is an important aspect of developing lead/master/mentor teachers, content area coaches, and school administrators. While coaching may vary in level of structure and formality, regularly scheduled meetings should provide participants with feedback. Individual development plans can help keep discussions on the topic of an individual's professional growth, instead of being sidetracked toward pressing issues facing the school community.
- ❖ **Ongoing Professional Development for Principals** - Professional development is critical to the success of both novice and veteran principals, and should be research-based, coherent in the educational philosophy presented, framed around principles of "adult learning theory," linked directly to on-the-job experiences and self-reflection, and aligned with professional and state licensing standards.

Section I: A Distributed Leadership Approach to Succession Management

As school districts increase in size and public expectations for accountability grow, the development and implementation of succession plans is a crucial component of human capital investment.¹ According to the *American Association of School Administrators* and the *District Management Council*, targeted leadership development initiatives will only become more important to the success of school systems as the nature of school districts evolves.² Districts can plan for effective succession management now by identifying staff members who exhibit leadership potential, providing career-oriented leadership development for those individuals, and increasing opportunities for candidates to build and exercise their leadership skills.

The District Management Council provides a **best practice methodology** for school districts interested in developing a succession planning process. These eight steps are outlined below:³

- ❖ **Set the Stage:** At the beginning of the succession planning process, school districts should think about the purposes, goals, and expectations of succession planning, and transfer this information into a mission statement.
- ❖ **Plan for the Future:** The succession planning process should be designed to address future needs and should be proactive in developing the district's talent pool.
- ❖ **Define Leadership Requirements:** School districts should make efforts to identify the skills, characteristics, and other attributes that are required in school leaders. While instructional leadership has always been a core concept to district leadership, "real-world job responsibilities force ever-increasing amounts of organizational and public leadership responsibilities as leaders rise through the organization." A "District Leadership Code," including metrics such as performance evaluations, survey data, and recruiting statistics should be created based on feedback from various stakeholders.
- ❖ **Identify Potential Leaders:** The District Management Council provides a matrix for evaluating leadership candidates on their past performance and future potential. The performance rating evaluates employees' fulfillment of

¹ "Succession Planning for Public School Districts: An Introduction." The District Management Council. <http://www.dmcouncil.org/library/management-briefs/35-succession-planning-for-public-school-districts-an-introduction>

² Wilson, Jackie O. "Administrator Succession Planning." *The School Administrator*. December 2009, 11:66. <http://www.aasa.org/SchoolAdministratorArticle.aspx?id=10146> and "Succession Planning for Public School Districts: An Introduction." *Op.cit.*

³ "Succession Planning for Public School Districts: An Introduction." *Op.cit.*

the current requirements of the position, while the future potential rating forecasts employees' latent value. This matrix is provided below.

Figure 1.1: The Performance/Potential Grid

Performance	<i>High</i>	“Workhorses” or “Keepers”	“Stars” or “Growers”
	<i>Low</i>	“Underperformer” or “Deadwood”	“Question Marks”
		<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
		Future Potential	

Source: District Management Council⁴

- ❖ **Assess Leaders' Mobility:** Districts should conduct “bench strength” analyses that measure the depth of the leadership talent within the system. The results of this process can help school and district leaders make strategic human resource decisions including staff development planning.
- ❖ **Develop Leaders to Fill the Gap:** This “bench strength” assessment should indicate which individuals should be subjects of individualized development plans (IDP). An IDP can help identify the key positions the employee should be prepared for, the learning objectives of the individual's development, and the methods and strategies of the development process. On-the-job opportunities or 360 degree evaluations, in which expert coaches are used to help leaders identify their strengths and weaknesses, are most commonly used during the leadership development process. “Open and honest feedback about an emerging leader's performance” is one of the most important components of leadership development. In addition to performance evaluation, opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, and talents must be made available. Best practice in the public and private sector usually demands a combination of coaching, mentoring, and formal training in leadership development for succession planning.

⁴ *Ibid.*

- ❖ **Create Individual Transition Plans:** Leadership transition is equally as important as leadership development. Many districts structure goal-based plans that “outline the process of orienting new leaders.” However, individual transition plans vary widely by district and school, and the organization’s culture is a crucial influence on transition goals.
- ❖ **(Re)Assess Your Program:** Succession planning should be a “fluid and continual process” that is subject to regular evaluation. Evaluation and assessment should include the human capital metrics discussed previously, as well as perceptions of fairness, transparency, morale, confidence, and competence in order to promote long-term leadership development.

Developing a Distributed Leadership Approach

Shane Safir, an instructional coach with the Stanford School Redesign Network, speaks for many teachers as she bemoans the lack of career-track professional development she received as a teacher before becoming a school principal:

In my six years of teaching English and social studies before becoming a principal, I never received any real coaching. Did I undergo the requisite annual administrator drop-in and evaluation? Of course. But these painfully brief “assessments” of my practice never pushed my thinking or helped me realize my potential.⁵

Alternatively, a distributed leadership approach has the potential to empower teachers and other school personnel to become key players in the movement to reform and improve schools.⁶ For too long, public school systems have considered two types of individuals to be the de facto leaders in a district: the superintendent and school principals. **Emerging research suggests that “leaders” are needed at all levels and tiers in order for reform to be successful.**

In fall 2009, Donald Hackman, an associate professor of educational organization and leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, gave a presentation titled “Distributed Leadership for Learning.”⁷ In the presentation, Hackman guided his audience through a **thought experiment** that would help them begin actively devising ways to implement a distributed leadership approach in their schools, particularly with regard to distributing responsibility among teachers. In the following discussion, we examine Hackman’s presentation, as it relates to developing

⁵ Safir, S. July 30, 2008. “Teaching How to Teach: Coaching Tips from a Former Principal.” *Edutopia*. <http://www.edutopia.org/how-to-instructional-coaching-tips>

⁶ Blankstein, A. 2004. *Failure is Not an Option: Six Principles That Guide Student Achievement in High-Performing Schools*.

⁷ Hackman, Donald G. “Distributed Leadership for Learning.” West Virginia Institute for 21st Century Learning. 2009. <http://www.docstoc.com/docs/55748910/Distributed-Leadership-for-Learning>

a distributed leadership approach. This information is supplemented with commentary drawn from other sources as necessary.

As a first step, Hackman presents MacBeath's taxonomy and phases of distributed leadership.⁸ The taxonomy includes six categories. In a 2004 study of distributed leadership, MacBeath explains that the categories "represent different ways of thinking about leadership and differing **processes of distribution.**"⁹ He further explains that typically, schools will progress through the categories as stages, with formal distribution as the first stage of distributed leadership and cultural distribution as the last. At the same time, however, these categories may "exemplify different approaches at different times and in response to external events."¹⁰ In this sense, the appropriate stage will often depend on the task at hand.

Figure 1.2: MacBeath's Taxonomy of Distributed Leadership

Distribution formally : through designated roles/job description
Distribution as pragmatic : through necessity; often ad hoc delegation of workload
Distribution as strategic : based on planned appointment of individuals to contribute positively to the development of leadership throughout the school
Distribution as incremental : devolving greater responsibility as people demonstrate their capacity to lead
Distribution as opportunistic : capable teachers willingly extending their roles to school-wide leadership because they are pre-disposed to taking initiative to lead
Distribution as cultural : practicing leadership as a reflection of the school's culture, ethos, and traditions

Source: MacBeath, 2005.¹¹

Placing these categories more firmly into a continuum of distributed leadership, MacBeath explains, "**Distribution is likely to begin with delegation and move through incremental and opportunistic phases before leadership can become truly embedded in cultural mores.**"¹² With these categories in mind, MacBeath describes "a model for sustaining distributed leadership in school."¹³ We present this development model below.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

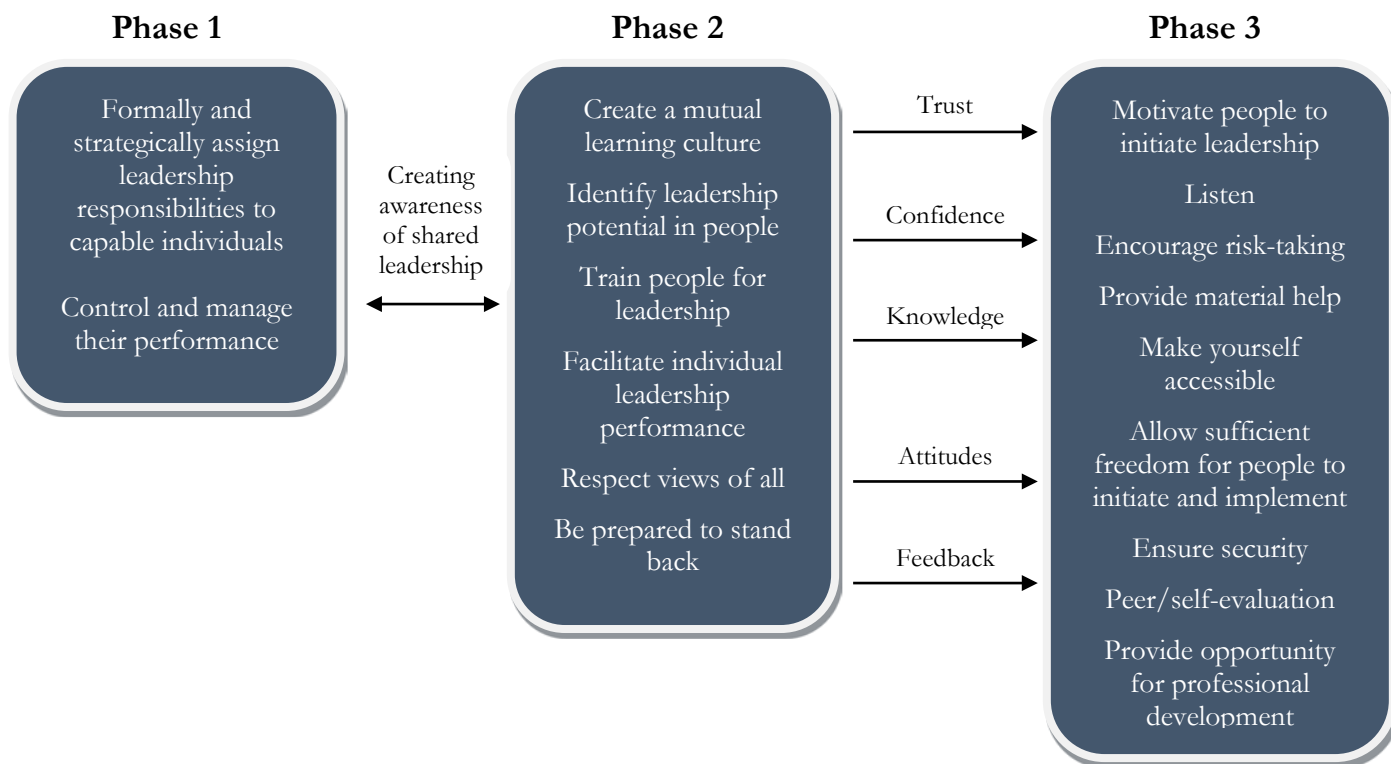
⁹ MacBeath, John, George KT Oduro, and Joanne Waterhouse. "Distributed Leadership in Action." National College for School Leadership. 2004. p. 35. <http://www.nationalcollege.org.uk/pl-distrib-leadership-full-hay-report.pdf>

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ MacBeath, John. "Leadership as Distributed: A Matter of Practice." *School Leadership & Management*. Vol. 25. No. 4. p. 329-366. Cited in Hackman, 2009. *Op. cit.*

¹² MacBeath, *et al.*, 2004. *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹³ *Ibid.*

Figure 1.3: Phases of Distributed Leadership¹⁴

MacBeath comments that in the first phase of distributed leadership, the principal of the school is “likely to tread cautiously.”¹⁵ At this point, the principal will observe formal structures of the school, while leadership may be distributed pragmatically as needs arise. As the principal gets a better sense of the direction of the school, he or she may begin to distribute leadership strategically by “**identifying leadership needs of the school, looking for people who have the requisite capacity for satisfying such a need, and then assigning responsibilities to them.**” After delegating leadership responsibilities, the principal will monitor and control progress, while seeking to build “a culture of performance.”¹⁶ As the individuals who have been assigned new responsibilities begin to master leadership principles and display signs of being able to lead without supervision, the principal may then offer them opportunities to share their expertise with others.

This marks the progression into the second phase, where the principal is widening the scope of leadership incrementally by enabling other individuals who do not hold a formal leadership position to lead. At this point, the principal is looking for ways to establish “shared leadership” by involving staff in decision-making activities. As

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

MacBeath explains, the principal is encouraging “a sense of collaboration among teachers and between teachers and classroom assistants, and **a culture in which staff members willingly use informal opportunities to discuss children’s learning and then reflect on their practice as a way of identifying their professional learning needs.**”¹⁷

Finally, the school may progress into the third phase which is largely defined by the principal “standing back.” MacBeath provides the following description of this third phase:

When the culture is characterized by mutual trust, self-confidence and shared goals, leadership can become followership as the occasion demands. In a culture in which there is a high level of trust, differences in values and working practices can be both tolerated and challenged. If phase 2 is transformational, phase 3 is more about sustainability and renewal. Standing back does not imply a laissez-faire stance. It is not about maintaining the status quo but keeping its dynamic and evolving quality alive by supporting others...It is here that leadership is grasped opportunistically and cultures grow organically.¹⁸

After discussing MacBeath’s taxonomy and phases of distributed leadership in his presentation, Hackman asks his audience to **visualize the ways in which leadership is currently distributed** in their school, coming up with a concrete list of “activities/ functions/roles.”¹⁹ This can be seen as similar to Spillane’s approach of documenting the leadership activities of key school personnel. This enables school administrators to gain a better view of the ways in which leadership is already distributed among different actors. Once such a list has been developed, Hackman asks the audience to examine MacBeath’s three developmental phases of distributed leadership and to identify the phase (I, II, or III) in which their school is situated. This allows the audience to determine how close they already are to embracing a distributed leadership approach, while also identifying what steps they need to take to move towards the third phase.

After identifying the phase in which the school currently rests, Hackman recommends that school principals seek to **anticipate the barriers** that exist within the school that may limit the effectiveness of the further development of a “culture that embraces distributed leadership.”²⁰ The table below presents a number of the potential barriers, as suggested by Hackman.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Hackman, 2009. *Op. cit.*, p. 19.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

Figure 1.4: Potential Barriers to Distributed Leadership

Community and possibly the district office's expectation that the principal must be in charge of every leadership activity at the school.
Changing the school's culture, when teachers are accustomed to being followers rather than leaders
Time for developing leadership skills, particularly with regard to the release of teachers to engage in leadership activities
Union resistance to teacher performance of duties that may be perceived to be administrative in nature, including involvement in teacher supervision or evaluation
Administrators' willingness to "let go" when they are still ultimately accountable
The process can create winners and losers. Teachers who have traditionally served in leadership roles may perceive that they are losing power as others are brought on board.
Teachers with leadership skills can be pulled from the classroom by the district to train others. These individuals could even be recruited by other school/districts for employment opportunities.

Source: Hackman, 2009²¹

Beyond anticipating such barriers and devising ways to eliminate them, Hackman provides his audience with one final step. He asks them to **identify new areas in which they may involve faculty and staff members in leadership activities**. For each of these activities, principals should assign staff members who have "the knowledge, skills, and capacity to lead the initiative."²² While not presented directly in relation to this step, earlier in his presentation, Hackman offered a number of examples of distributed leadership in a school. These may help inform the principals' list of activities:

- ❖ Leadership Team, School Improvement Team
- ❖ Data Analysis Team
- ❖ Response to Intervention Team
- ❖ Goal Teams (to assist in implement school goals)
- ❖ Grade Level Lead Teachers, Middle Level Team Leaders, Department Heads
- ❖ Professional Development Team
- ❖ Peer Coaching
- ❖ Mentors for Novice Teachers, Instructional Coaches²³

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 21.

²² *Ibid*, p. 22.

²³ *Ibid*, p. 16.

While the areas in which a school or district decides to take a distributed leadership approach will vary by its unique goals and circumstances, the above examples, as well as Hackman's thought experiment and MacBeath's developmental model, provide current school leaders with a starting place for implementing the approach.

Profiles of State-Level Leadership Succession Initiatives

In this subsection, we present case studies of proactive succession management conducted at the state level in Maryland and Delaware. We place an emphasis on professional development activities launched to increase the pool and strength of leadership candidates.

Case Study: Delaware Department of Education

Delaware is one of 23 states that received funding through a three year, \$8.9 million grant from the Wallace Foundation to implement state policy supporting school leader preparation and development. As a result of the grant, the State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP) was launched to lead the national campaign for state laws and policies that strengthen the capacity of school superintendents and principals. A second stage of the project was announced in 2004 (with an additional \$3.6 million in funding).²⁴ The resulting campaign included a variety of different components including the following **talent development** activities:²⁵

- ❖ Development and implementation of education leadership standards
- ❖ Revision of licensure and certification requirements for school leaders
- ❖ Completion of a “critical friends” review of school leadership programs in all three universities offering either a masters or doctorate in school leadership education so the programs are aligned to Delaware's school leader standards
- ❖ Development of a state-funded mandatory mentoring program for school leaders
- ❖ Addition of professional development requirements for licensure renewal

After using demographic data to forecast educational leadership needs within the state over the next decade, Delaware SAELP chose to develop a “**Pool of 100**” that involves a group of teachers with leadership potential that may be developed through a school leadership career track. SAELP expects to add about 200 additional leaders to the pool, from which school administrators may be selected.

²⁴ Delaware's Cohesive Leadership System. About Us- Overview. <http://saelp.doe.k12.de.us/about/about.html>

²⁵ Quoted verbatim from: *Ibid.*

Delaware SAELP also identified a **disconnect between university credentialing programs and district needs**. Prospective administrators now take a six-credit course with 240 hours of clinical experience in an internship with a mentor principal. They can also earn salary increments over five years by taking a skills and knowledge cluster.

In fall 2008, an estimated 125 to 150 highly qualified candidates were eligible for open leadership positions as a result of Delaware's succession planning. Between 2003 and 2007, assistant or principal positions were filled from the pool. Full scale succession plans are now under development within the districts. Delaware SAELP has evolved beyond the Wallace Foundation funding into a state-financed group called the **Delaware Cohesive Leadership System (DCLS)**. DCLS reports that one of its current challenges is to ensure they don't develop too many leaders too quickly, creating an oversaturation of candidates. They also hope to maintain **25 percent of the Pool of 100 as minority candidates**.

*Case Study: Maryland State Department of Education*²⁶

A large number of Maryland school leaders – principals, assistant principals, etc. – are at or close to retirement age. In order to address these pending leadership vacancies, Maryland developed a transparent and collaborative process that fosters professional development and strengthens leadership across the system. After two years of research and planning with academic collaborators, the State of Maryland issued the *Leadership Succession Planning Guide for Maryland Schools*, which highlights major issues and strategies for succession planning, provides an outline for succession planning actions, and offers an example succession plan for Maryland schools.

The following excerpt, regarding professional development, is taken from the Guide's five elements of successful leadership succession: **(1) identification, (2) development (3) promotion, (4) movement, and (5) retention**. The outline is intended to raise questions and provide guidelines that are intended to increase the quantity and quality of potential candidates for the positions of principal and assistant principal.²⁷

²⁶ Maryland State Department of Education. Leadership Succession Planning Guide for Maryland Schools. May 2006. <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/NR/rdonlyres/BABBCCCE8-07F0-4C82-AB4E-FB8549E67474/10150/SuccessionGuide062106.pdf>

²⁷ Quoted verbatim from: *Ibid*, p. 11-16

Development

1. The mechanisms that are in place to assess needs, determine interests, and provide access in order to differentiate leadership development opportunities. The needs assessment must be a **360 degree evaluation**.
2. The process for including both potential and aspiring principals in the design and implementation of leadership development initiatives
3. The process for providing constructive feedback to both potential and aspiring principals who are participating in the design and implementation of professional development and by whom
4. How the *Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework* is integrated into leadership development experiences
5. The potential funding sources and processes to support leadership development
6. How the system communicates to internal and external stakeholders the processes used to support candidates for the principalship
7. The mechanisms to establish and sustain the culture for a professional learning community of aspiring and potential principals
8. Partnerships with colleges and universities to assure the alignment of leadership development experiences with the *Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework*
9. The processes that are in place to ensure that principals provide opportunities for assistant principals to observe teachers, provide constructive feedback, conduct professional development, chair committees with an instructional focus, and meet regularly with the principal on strategies to improve student achievement

Section II: Planning Educational Leadership Development

In this section, we present key features of educational leadership development programs. This includes structural considerations such as individual development plans and performance continuums as well as potential training providers and pedagogical approaches.

Create Individual Development Plans

Once a group of high potential employees has been identified, a succession plan must make provisions for their development. The development of high potential employees is an element of succession planning that is often neglected in favor of mere identification and assessment. The National Academy of Public Administration has suggested that **development, rather than being tacked on to succession planning as an afterthought, should actually precede the selection of specific candidates.** By developing groups of high-potential employees together, organizations can observe the emergence of the best successor candidates. Clunies sees in this a similarity to his recommendation to use teams of candidates, in that, for instance: “By educating all suitable deans, a prospective provost may surface.”²⁸

It is important that **any employee included in succession planning should have an “individual development plan” (IDP)**, which outlines planned activities that will help narrow the gap between what the individuals can already do and what they should do to meet future work requirements of one or more positions.”²⁹ **These plans will provide for the three major categories of (1) work experience and assignments, (2) coaching, and (3) educational courses and seminars.** While further education and coaching are important, they are perhaps the most obvious paths of development. What may be less obvious is the importance of job assignments to eventually producing effective senior leaders. As much as possible, **high potential individuals should receive challenging job experiences**, such as task forces, job rotations, line switches, and turnaround or fix-it assignments. Moving a young manager through the various aspects of a business – sales, distribution, finance, human resources, and so on – is a common tactic in the corporate world, but one without as much hold in higher education.

One obstacle to this method, not unique to education, is that it may require the deliberate assignment of individuals to jobs for which they are not fully qualified, at the expense of the short-term interests of the organization. These so-called “stretch assignments” can be challenging, but they serve as both excellent

²⁸ Clunies, J. Feb 13, 2007. “Benchmarking succession planning & executive development in higher education: Is the academy ready now to employ these corporate paradigms?” *Academic Leadership*. 2(4).
http://www.academicleadership.org/article/Benchmarking_Succession_Planning_Executive_Development_in_Higher_Education

²⁹ *Ibid.*

development opportunities and as a test of an employee's mettle – whether they have what it takes to succeed at higher levels of the organization where they will likewise find themselves “stretched.” At some corporations, such as Citigroup, this practice is formalized in the assignment of high potential young managers to jobs for which they are no more than 60 to 70 percent qualified.³⁰ Job rotation should not, however, happen so quickly that the individual does not have a chance to respond to the challenge and derive developmental benefit from the assignment.

Implement a Performance Continuum

In order to bring specificity and a common language to the teacher development process, several districts have incorporated the use of a *performance continuum*. Many states and school districts employ the selected continuum to frame both professional development as well as teacher evaluations. A formative evaluation, using a well-crafted continuum can help to “improve a teacher's performance by identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.”³¹ By aligning educational quality standards with research-based descriptions of effective practice, the rubric may be used to facilitate self-reflection on abilities and progress, to focus new teacher discussions with their mentors, or to guide formal teacher evaluations with school administrators.

Case Study: Uinta County School District #1: Teaching Standards Rubric

Uinta County School District #1 in Evanston, Wyoming has developed its own performance continuum, which describes instructional proficiency at various levels. Uinta County's “Teaching Standards Rubric” uses four levels of performance: Entry Level, Emerging, Advanced, and Accomplished.³² The table below outlines the basic expectations of a teacher at each of these levels.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ “Summative Teacher Evaluation,” Southeast Comprehensive Center. SEDL, January 2008.
http://secc.sedl.org/orc/rr/secc_rr_00052.pdf

³² “Certified Personnel Evaluation System.” Uinta County School District #1.
<http://www.uinta1.k12.wy.us/files/749798/Certified%20Personnel%20Evaluation%20System%2009-10.doc>

Figure 2.1: Performance Level Descriptions: UCSD #1

Entry Level Professional	Emerging Professional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rudimentary pedagogical skills and knowledge not connected ▪ Primary declarative knowledge base ▪ Initial teaching framework ▪ Basic strategic approach ▪ Narrow focus and compartmentalized ▪ Rudimentary recognition of patterns and problem features ▪ Basic understanding of technical elements ▪ Moving toward efficiency ▪ Basic sense of student needs and ability to scaffold for students ▪ Inconsistent and varied student results ▪ Requires external evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing pedagogical skills and knowledge that begins to connect ▪ Increasing declarative and procedural knowledge base ▪ Emerging teaching framework ▪ Increasing strategic approach ▪ Widening perspective and focus ▪ Increasing recognition of patterns and problem features ▪ Increasing understanding of technical elements ▪ Increasing efficiency ▪ Increasing sense of student needs and ability to scaffold for students ▪ Student results less varied and becoming more consistent ▪ Increasing ability to self-reflect and analyze
Advanced Professional	Accomplished Professional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wide range of pedagogical skills that connect ▪ Deep content knowledge connected to procedural knowledge ▪ Intuitive framework that connects ▪ Explicit and wide ranging strategic approach ▪ Open perspective and focus ▪ Recognizes multiple patterns and problem features ▪ Technical elements become implicit ▪ Routine expertise ▪ Understands student needs at multiple levels and scaffolds ▪ Student results are consistent ▪ Self-evaluates, reflects and analyzes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Substantial and deep pedagogical content knowledge ▪ Nuance in skills apparent ▪ Knows full continuum and connections of content ▪ Substantial, explicit framework that connects knowledge, skills and contexts ▪ Multiple, specific strategic approaches ▪ Wide perspective and focus ▪ Deep recognition of patterns and problem features ▪ Adaptive expertise ▪ Deep understanding of student needs and strategic scaffolds ▪ Student results are systematic, significant and consistent ▪ Highly self-directed, reflective and analytic

Source: Uinta County School District #1³³

The UCSD #1 rubric describes how a teacher performs at each of these levels on specific teaching practices categorized under the district's six professional standards: **Purpose, Student Engagement, Curriculum and Pedagogy, Assessment, Classroom Environment and Culture, and Professionalism**. The table below presents an excerpt from the Teaching Standards Rubric itself. We highlight the "Accomplished" teacher description, which should apply to emerging leaders.

³³ Descriptions reproduced verbatim from: "Certified Personnel Evaluation System." Uinta County School District #1. *Op. cit.*

Figure 2.2: Excerpt from the Teaching Standards Rubric: UCSD #1

Standard	Entry Level	Emerging	Advanced	Accomplished
Dimension 1: Purpose				
P4- Instructional tasks are purposefully aligned to learning targets	Limited connection of skills and knowledge with curriculum leads to inaccuracies of validity and clarity in tasks (typically knowledge or procedural)	Emerging connection of skills and knowledge with curriculum leads to usually accurate, valid and clear tasks (typically knowledge or procedural with some conceptual)	Broader connection of knowledge and skills leads to clear and accurate tasks which help in procedural and conceptual understanding. Tasks are accurate, valid and clear.	Sophisticated connection of knowledge and skills leads to clear and accurate tasks which consistently help in procedural and conceptual understanding. Tasks are highly accurate, valid and clear.

Source: Uinta County School District #1³⁴

Consider Various Training Providers

A report developed at the Stanford Leadership Institute, titled “School Leadership Study: Developing Successful Principals,” describes four main types of leadership development providers. Those are (1) the school district, (2) the state, (3) local universities, and (4) third-party organizations. We discuss each provider type and incorporate examples in the subsections below.

*The School District*³⁵

Districts launching school reforms may include “comprehensive district professional development initiatives” in the strategic reform plan. This may involve focused training for administrators on topics such as teacher coaching and evaluation, or the launching of a standardized mentorship program for teachers and/or principals. School districts that have launched these types of large-scale, district-based professional development initiatives include New York City’s former District #2, San Diego, California, and St. Paul, Minnesota.

*The State*³⁶

State-funded leadership academies can be useful in stimulating professional development for aspiring and practicing school administrators throughout their careers. Academies may offer workshops, institutes, networking opportunities, coaching, and internship programs. The Missouri Leadership Program, the

³⁴ Descriptions reproduced verbatim from: *Ibid.*

³⁵ Davis, S., Darling-Hammond, L., LaPointe, M., Meyerson, D. “School Leadership Study: Developing Successful Principals.” Stanford Leadership Institute, 11.
http://www.srnleads.org/data/pdfs/sls/sls_rr.pdf

³⁶ *Ibid.*

Leadership Institute for School Improvement in Georgia, and the Principal Executive Program in North Carolina are examples of state-run educational leadership academies.

*The Local University*³⁷

Universities can offer school districts a wealth of “intellectual resources” in the context of mutually beneficial partnerships. Collaboration in the design of pre-service principal preparation programs can yield significant dividends for the district’s principal pipeline and reduce the need for corrective on-the-job training. University faculty can thus reciprocate by consulting school districts on professional development for leadership candidates and school administrators. Furthermore, some universities offer individualized on-site graduate-level courses for local districts.

*Third-Party Organizations*³⁸

Nonprofit organizations and for-profit companies have become major providers of educational leadership training in recent years. Successful partnerships between school districts and external organizations depend on shared goals and values between the parties involved. Examples include the following:

- ❖ The Principal Residency Network (PRN) – A partner of several Rhode Island school districts and higher education institutions, the PRN is operated by the Big Picture Company. The goal of this nonprofit is to prepare principals who “champion educational change through the leadership of small, innovative schools focused on students’ personal growth.” Candidates participate in a 12-month internship, after which they receive a Rhode Island principal certificate.
- ❖ The Gheens Professional Development Academy - Launched in 1983 by Kentucky’s Jefferson County Public School District, the Academy is funded by money from the Gheens Foundation. It was originally founded and continues functioning to ensure “ongoing, district-relevant professional development for educators that can remain untouched by the vicissitudes of annual school budget fluctuations.” Services include “job-embedded” training for principals featuring cohorts, individualized development plans, a summer institute, and consistent workshop and training opportunities.

Use the Direct Instruction Approach Sparingly

Since the early 1990s, research has widely accepted that the “sit and get” seminar is not the most effective delivery method. Lectures, discussions, and readings can

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ Davis, *et. al.*, *Op. cit.*, 17. http://www.srnleads.org/data/pdfs/sls/sls_rr.pdf

increase knowledge, but the use of such activities in conjunction with more engaging activities like demonstrations, practice sessions, and feedback results in a higher increase in knowledge.

Joyce and Showers advise that “presentation-only treatments should be avoided in most settings. The multidimensional approach is much more effective.”³⁹ Kise writes that large meetings and conferences are good for certain purposes. They may be the most effective and efficient type of professional development for “conveying new missions or philosophies, launching the school year, or beginning new initiatives.”⁴⁰ They can be limited, however, in their ability to effectively engage educators because of their large group design.

Develop Professional Learning Communities

In a 1997 literature review on professional learning communities, Shirley Hord notes that while a goal of school reform is to provide appropriate learning environments for *students* to take risks and make discoveries, *teachers* have the same need. Research shows that professional development in the form of Professional Learning Communities can foster productive staff relationships, engage educators at all levels, provide support to teachers, and promote efforts towards school improvement and student achievement.⁴¹ Drawing teachers into a professional learning community seems to help teachers buy in to the school’s mission, potentially inspiring them to assume increasing levels of leadership in order to advance this mission. Professional learning communities, however, may not address the unique needs of each teacher the way mentoring does because professional learning communities do not necessarily build in one-on-one time for teacher questions and concerns to be addressed. See Section III for more information on the role of mentor or master teachers.

Characteristics of Effective Professional Learning Communities

Collegial atmosphere, an unwavering focus on student learning, collective learning and application, and peer review are essential components. Review of a teacher’s behavior by colleagues is the norm in professional learning communities. It is not evaluative but constructive.⁴² As described by the National Staff Development Council, teams of teachers within a professional learning community “meet almost every day and concern themselves with practical ways to improve teaching and

³⁹ Joyce, Bruce and Beverly Showers. 2002. *Student Achievement Through Professional Development*, p. 76.

⁴⁰ Kise, Jane A. G. 2006. *Differentiated Coaching*, p. 31.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Hord, Shirley. 1994. “Staff Development and Change Process: Cut from the Same Cloth.” *Issues ... about Change* 4(2), 25. <http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/issues42.html>

learning.”⁴³ As such, key structural conditions must be in place for professional learning communities to be effective. These include time to meet and talk, close physical proximity between team members, and a regular space to hold group meetings.

Expected Outcomes

Research indicates that professional learning communities can have highly positive effects for both staff and students.

Staff Outcomes:

- ❖ Reduction of teacher isolation
- ❖ Increased commitment to the mission and goals of the school and increased vigor in working to strengthen the mission
- ❖ Shared responsibility for the total development of students and collective responsibility for students’ success
- ❖ Powerful learning that defines good teaching and classroom practice and that creates new knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learners
- ❖ Increased meaning and understanding of the content that teachers teach and the roles that they play in helping all students achieve expectations
- ❖ Higher likelihood that teachers will be well informed, professionally renewed, and motivated to inspire students
- ❖ More satisfaction and higher morale, and lower rates of absenteeism
- ❖ Significant advances into making teaching adaptations for students, and changes for learners made more quickly than in traditional schools
- ❖ Commitment to making significant and lasting changes
- ❖ Higher likelihood of undertaking fundamental, systemic change⁴⁴

Student Outcomes:

- ❖ Decreased dropout rate and fewer classes “cut”
- ❖ Lower rates of absenteeism
- ❖ Increased learning that is distributed more equitably in the smaller high schools
- ❖ Larger academic gains in math, science, history and reading than in traditional schools
- ❖ Smaller achievement gaps between students from different backgrounds⁴⁵

⁴³ National Staff Development Council. “Learning Communities.”

<http://www.nsdc.org/standards/learningcommunities.cfm>

⁴⁴ Hord, *Op. cit.*, p. 36.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 37.

The following case study tells the story of a middle school principal who used a distributed leadership approach to promote the school's professional learning community and facilitate the development of teachers' leadership capacities.

Case Study: Amherst Middle School Leadership Team

In the late 1990s, Amherst Regional Middle School was involved in a unique transition period. Originally, the school was a traditional junior high school with grades 7, 8, and 9. Due to decisions made by the local school board, 9th grade would move to the area high school and Amherst would become a middle school. To facilitate this transition, the school board recruited Mary Cavalier to be the new principal.

During Cavalier's second year at Amherst (1999), the school received a \$50,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Education and the New England Regional Turning Points Network. Specifically, the grant provided funding to address seven goals (known as Turning Points):

- ❖ Create small caring communities for learning
- ❖ Teach a core academic program
- ❖ Empower teachers and administrators to make decisions
- ❖ Prepare teachers for the middle grades
- ❖ Develop students' character, creativity, and health
- ❖ Re-engage families in the education of young adolescents
- ❖ Connect schools and communities

Additionally, the grant provided a professional coach to help Cavalier institute distributed leadership throughout the school.⁴⁶

Cavalier's initial agenda was to create a "leadership team" that was designed to address some of the core issues of the transition. This was in line with the National Turning Points Network model that seeks to "[ensure] that the faculty and staff are an integral part of all change."⁴⁷ Recognizing that some members of the faculty were going to be reluctant to change the school's organization, Cavalier handpicked key teachers to participate in the leadership team (along with the professional coach) to make for the smoothest transition possible for all interested parties. Cavalier and the coach worked together to design the leadership team's agenda, and the group routinely shared information with the principal.

⁴⁶ Burke, Peggy H. "Organizational Learning a Necessity for Sharing and Distributing Leadership to Bring about Real Change for Teachers and Students: One Principal's Story." Paper prepared for the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in Chicago, IL, p. 7.
<http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED481091.pdf>

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 10.

By the end of the second year, the leadership team had begun an in-depth dialogue about its own role, including how decisions should be made and what issues should be addressed in the overall agenda. After an intense series of summer workshops prior to the start of its third year, the leadership team had begun implementing pilot programs for various tactics to address the needs of the recently divided school. These discussions included the principal as a constant resource. For example, although the school's orchestra, band, and choir programs were thriving (over 65 percent of the student body participated in a musical ensemble), many students were taking two music classes a day for at least one-quarter of the school year. In response to struggling performance in reading and writing tests, the leadership team discussed the possibility of replacing the second music elective with a supplemental reading comprehension course. During these discussions, Cavalier was on hand to authorize a new teaching position that rotated between each 8th grade class from quarter to quarter. Because the entire proposal went through a shared communication structure, including both the principal and the teachers, the compromise was seen as adequate for everyone.⁴⁸

While the principal was involved in many of the discussions, it is important to recognize the level of autonomy that was given to the leadership team itself. As the leadership team developed in its own confidence, it became a breeding ground for new ideas that helped drive the team forward. Since the principal and coach had worked together closely planning the original agenda, there was a shared vision for how the school should be operating. Once the team had been in action for a year or two, decisions could be made independently of the principal. Cavalier comments:

Letting go of the work that I thoroughly enjoy was at first difficult. It meant letting go of control. It also meant letting teachers have more independence and decision-making autonomy. However, I had come to trust the coach and believe that we shared a common vision about the dual importance of excellence and equity in an exemplary middle school.⁴⁹

It is important to emphasize Cavalier did not simply hand authority to a group of uninterested teachers and tell them to find the best way to prepare the school for its new role. Rather, by working closely with both the coach and with key teachers, Cavalier was able to guide the school towards a common purpose while reinforcing her solid "commitment to a democratic school community."⁵⁰

As time progressed past the grant period, Cavalier and Amherst continued many of the same traditions that had been developed during the school's transition phase. As the role of the coach expired, members of the leadership team absorbed many of the duties the coach was performing, such as helping with problem solving, monitoring

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 12.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 11.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 14.

team progress, and keeping dialogue lines open. Ultimately the distributed approach of the leadership team became embedded in the culture of the school:

While one cannot predict the future of schools, what is evident at Amherst is that the vision is not Mary's alone. It has become embedded in the culture of the school and is shared by all. When Mary, at some point, leaves Amherst Regional Middle School, the vision will not go with her. Just as the school was able to sustain the role of the coach they will also sustain the belief that teaching is a non-routine activity that needs a collaborative, democratic environment.⁵¹

The distributed approach worked well for Amherst, as the school was able to transition from a junior high to a middle school with a common purpose. Typical to the concept of shared responsibility and leadership, the authors of the case study emphasize that such an example was ultimately larger than any of the individual players, and that the synergy created by a distributed approach can be very powerful.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 15.

Section III: Training Teachers for Specific Leadership Roles

This section presents approaches to equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to fill the following leadership positions:

- ❖ Lead/Mentor/Master Teacher
- ❖ Content Area Coach
- ❖ Assistant Principal
- ❖ School Principal

Training Lead/Mentor/Master Teachers

The mentor, master, or lead teacher role is very common in school districts across the country.⁵² While there are various incarnations of this role, we are generally focusing on the formal support relationship between a mature teacher and an early-career teacher. The Connecticut Department of Education, for example, includes Master Teacher on its Common Core of Teaching (CCT) Performance Continuum. The following is a description of an individual qualified for the role of master teacher:

Master Teacher: Reflects leadership skills that go beyond the essential skills and competencies defined in the CCT. Those areas, in which the teacher meets *Accomplished*-level performance, are the areas in which the teacher may take on teacher-leader roles such as mentor, peer coach, curriculum/committee chair, professional development presenter, etc. This column draws some of its language from the *Five Core Proposition Statements* of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, while using the CCT as its framework.⁵³

Teachers responsible for formally mentoring new staff benefit from established goals and expectations, as well as ongoing professional development. According to a “Synthesis of Research on Mentoring Beginning Teachers,” successful mentoring behavior *can* be taught.⁵⁴ The following guidelines can be used by staff developers responsible for coordinating a mentor teacher program:⁵⁵

- ❖ Plan an orientation session to introduce new mentors to the program, as well as the specific function(s) required of mentors.
- ❖ Model the process of planning and goal-setting within the staff developer – mentor relationship, enabling the mentor teacher to replicate the process within the mentor – protégé relationship.

⁵² Janas, M. “Mentoring the Mentor: A Challenge for Staff Development.” *Journal of Staff Development*. Fall, 1996, 17(4).

⁵³ “Common Core of Teaching Table: A Performance Continuum.” Connecticut State Department of Education. 2002. <http://teacherweb.com/CT/MilfordSchoolDistrict/GailKrois/cctperformance.pdf>

⁵⁴ Janas, M., *Op. cit.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

- ❖ Plan ongoing training workshops for mentors on topics such as the following: “communication and active listening techniques, relationship skills, effective teaching, models of supervision and coaching, conflict resolution, and problem solving.”⁵⁶
- ❖ Coach mentors on (and monitor) the “ten distinct stages in mentoring”:
 - Attraction
 - Cliché Exchange
 - Recounting
 - Personal Disclosure
 - Bonding
 - Fear of Infringement
 - Revisiting Framework
 - Peak Mentoring
 - Reciprocity
 - Closure⁵⁷
- ❖ Continually assess the mentoring relationship and provide constructive feedback for the mentor teacher.
- ❖ Communicate regularly, with scheduled “checkpoints” via email, telephone, and/or in person.

The following case study illustrates the power of teacher leadership development to impact student achievement and enhance school culture and collegiality.

*Case Study: Edmonds School District No. 15 (Lynnwood, Washington)*⁵⁸

In Edmonds School District, the cultivation of “teacher leaders” (individuals prepared and supported to work with their peers as facilitators of change) has improved student achievement. Teacher leaders are trained to make the best use of new technologies, engage in educational research and development, and synthesize new educational research. In some cases, they are enabled to pursue advanced degrees. The development of a team of teacher leaders has allowed for opportunities to recognize and **stimulate exemplary professional performance, induct new employees, develop new teaching skills, and give and receive feedback.** Those trained as teacher leaders made substantial changes in their beliefs and practices, including how they organized their classrooms, how they taught, and how they observed, assessed, and recorded students’ performance. In turn, teacher leaders have prompted other teachers to make visible changes in their classrooms, in their use of materials, and in their teaching. All educators now have the opportunity to meet

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 3-4.

⁵⁸ Hassel, Emily. 1999. “PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: LEARNING FROM THE BEST.” North Central Regional Educational Library, 88-89. <http://www.learningpt.org/pdfs/pd/lftb.pdf>.

together to learn, discuss, and share new ideas and classroom experiences. As a result of this program, math scores increased *in every grade tested*. Results in language and reading have steadily improved as well.

Content-Area Coaches

While school-based coaching emerged as a trend primarily concentrated in urban areas such as Boston and San Diego, it has become much more common in recent years. Many school districts have concluded that coaching enhances the professional development of teachers and, consequently, improves student performance. The support school-based coaches receive at the district level varies. While many districts have built-in professional development and training programs for coaches, others are far less structured. It is clear, however, that strong support and professional development is pivotal in enhancing the quality of coaching.

A study conducted by Neufeld and Roper, for instance, which sought to analyze best practices in school-based coaching program design, suggests that coaching efforts are enhanced when districts offer coherent and focused orientation programs for new coaches that emphasize the “big picture.” Follow-up assistance provided by coach mentors and specific professional development (differentiated by school level, extant knowledge, and skills) activities specifically for coaches were also found to be critical.⁵⁹ A study conducted by Everston and Smithey in 2000 analyzed the effect of mentoring programs on classroom practice and confirmed the importance of ongoing training as a means of improving coaches’ mentoring skills.⁶⁰ Both of these studies seem to reinforce the notion that strong training programs should be in place before coaches are even hired in order to maximize the chances of success.

America’s Choice, a school reform model used across the country, is an example of a program that offers strong training and support components. The program, which provides teachers with the opportunity to work with math and literacy coaches in small groups in order to hone their instructional skills, features a rigorous training regimen for incoming coaches.⁶¹ The training sessions provide coaches access to the following a five-day Coaching Institute – three days of initial training and two days of follow-up training.

The America’s Choice program also offers strong in-person support services. A literacy coach requiring assistance in the state of Georgia, for example, can turn to a team leader (who is in charge of six schools in the county) or a network of peers for

⁵⁹ Marsh, J. (2008) “Supporting Literacy Across the Sunshine State: A Study of Florida Reading Coaches.” RAND. http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG762.pdf

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ “Coaching.” America’s Choice. Pearson Education, Inc. <http://www.americaschoice.org/coaching>

support.⁶² Several of the coaches involved in the CPRE's⁶³ 2003 study of the America's Choice program commented on how helpful these network meetings can be. According to these coaches, peer meetings provide a stress-free environment in which they can discuss various critical issues that have come up in their work.⁶⁴

The coaching program tied to the Just Read, Florida! initiative offers similarly strong support services. For instance, all of the districts in the study provide professional development opportunities for coaches on a monthly basis, at least, with most of these sessions having a strong instructional focus. In addition, seven of the eight featured districts implemented the use of formal coach evaluations conducted by principals. These training and evaluation sessions seem pivotal in helping coaches hone and develop their skills.

The state of Pennsylvania has invested heavily in school-based coaching systems in recent years. In conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Annenberg Foundation created the Pennsylvania High School Instructional Coaching Initiative (PAHSCI) in 2005. This established a model for one-on-one instructional coaching in 26 high schools in 16 “high need” districts. Ultimately, the “content and processes piloted through PAHSCI have become the foundation of a statewide system of training and support for instructional coaches and instructional mentors.”⁶⁵

In support of PAHSCI, the foundation also recently created the Pennsylvania Institute for Instructional Coaching (PIIC). PIIC provides an “instructional mentor” to support coaching in each of the state's 29 Intermediate Units (IUs)—which are comprised of multiple districts—and offers resources and professional development opportunities for mentors, coaches, teachers, and administrators.⁶⁶ In addition, PIIC offers the following services:

- ❖ An ongoing program of study on instructional coaching, mentoring, and teacher professional development.
- ❖ Online resources for mentors and coaches, including toolkits, guides, and training curricula.
- ❖ Materials and training for school leaders to build their capacity to support coaching.

⁶² Poglinco, S., Bach, A., Hovde, K., Rosenblum, S., Saunders, M. and Supovitz, J. (2003) “The Heart of the Matter: The Coaching Model in America's Choice Schools.” Consortium for Policy Research in Education. 2003. http://www.cpre.org/images/stories/cpre_pdfs/AC-06.pdf

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ “PAHSCI In the News.” Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative. <http://piic.pacoaching.org/index.php/news/in-the-news>

⁶⁶ “What is PIIC” Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative. <http://piic.pacoaching.org/index.php/about-piic/what-is-piic>

- ❖ Specific training, as appropriate, in the Penn Literacy Network’s evidenced-based strategies for developing reading, writing, and comprehension skills across the curriculum.
- ❖ Research and evaluation to analyze the effectiveness of instructional coaching and gather data to support continuous improvement.

Through PIIC, each participating Intermediate Unit (IU) has a single full-time, dedicated mentor who provides professional development and instructional coaching support to districts within his or her unit. These mentors “work with instructional coaches already identified in the IU and assist in the enrollment of districts interested in implementing an instructional coaching model.”⁶⁷

In addition to support, training and professional development, research has also been conducted on how districts should design coach/teacher interaction. According to this body of research, the further removed coaches are from the actual work of teachers in classrooms, the less likely they are to have an impact on teacher behavior. The research also indicates that coaches are more likely to have a meaningful impact if they adopt a consultant approach and build capacity by enabling and encouraging teachers to be reflective practitioners who focus on ongoing improvement.⁶⁸

Self-assessments can “help instructional coaches reflect on their strengths and weaknesses to help make improvements and determine future professional development needs.” Providing coaches with targeted professional development and training opportunities maximizes a given system’s chances of success. As we have seen, offering built-in support and training for coaches is pivotal when designing a school-based coaching model. Consequently, many of the school-based coaching models designed and implemented in recent years, including the America’s Choice, Florida, and Pennsylvania programs, have featured such components.

Section IV presents additional perspectives on the core competencies required of principals, as well as approaches to professional development that can enable ongoing capacity building among school leaders.

Training Assistant Principals

School districts can facilitate the internal promotion of mature teachers to administrative roles, such as assistant principal, by creating formal leadership development structures. Miami-Dade County Public School System, for example, offers an Assistant Principal Preparation Program, which serves to “assess and

⁶⁷ “PAHSCI in the News,” *Op. cit.*

⁶⁸ Poglinco, *et. al.* *Op. cit.*

enhance leadership capacity and the potential of eligible candidates.”⁶⁹ **The program is competency-based** and focuses on ten leadership standards that are presented in activities both **online** and **face-to-face**. Components of the program, including self-assessment, job shadowing, and field experience opportunities, seek to strengthen participants in areas defined by **Florida’s Principal Leadership Standards**. Candidates are prepared to perform well on assessments of the Leadership Standards, which means they:

- ❖ Have a personal vision for their school and the knowledge and skills to develop and implement a vision that is supported by the larger community
- ❖ Promote a positive learning culture, provide an effective instructional program, and apply best practices to student learning
- ❖ Manage the organization, operations, facilities, and resources in ways that maximize the use of resources in instructional organization
- ❖ Collaborate with families and community members to respond to their needs and work effectively within the organization to mobilize community resources
- ❖ Plan effectively, use critical thinking and problem solving techniques
- ❖ Understand, respond to, and influence relationships in the classroom, the school, and the local community
- ❖ Implement the integration of technological and electronic tools in teaching, learning, management, research, and communication responsibilities
- ❖ Monitor the success of all students, align curriculum to promote performance, use benchmarks and feedback to ensure accountability
- ❖ Recruit, select, nurture, and retain effective personnel, develop mentor and partnership programs, and design professional growth plans for staff
- ❖ Act with integrity, fairness, and honesty in an ethical manner⁷⁰

These ten clear standards for the work of acting assistant principals may be used to focus leadership training on the most critical areas of knowledge and skill.

⁶⁹ “Assistant Principal Preparation Program.” Miami-Dade County Public Schools.
<http://prodev.dadeschools.net/Leadership/appp.asp>

⁷⁰ “Educational Leadership Course Syllabus.” Florida Atlantic University, p. 5-11.
<http://www.leadership.fau.edu/Documents%20for%20EDA%206942/Internship%20syllabus%20-%20FALL%202009%20-%20JB%20DRG%20WJH.pdf>

Alternative Principal Licensure⁷¹

The Wallace Foundation encourages school districts to develop alternative certification programs for mature teachers who have expressed a desire to advance into an administrative role. While the State of Texas does not currently facilitate alternative principal licensure, university alternatives such as regional education services centers, public school districts, and various other third parties are authorized to provide “principal preparation programs based on state guidelines and customized to meet candidates’ needs.” Principal candidates may be able to bypass certain prerequisites to licensure by gaining education and experience through one of these avenues.

⁷¹ “Good Principals Are the Key to Successful Schools: Six Strategies to Prepare More Good Principals.” Southern Region Education Board. <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/principal-training/Documents/Six-Strategies-to-Prepare-More-Good-Principals.pdf>

Section IV: Professional Development for Principals

A 2003 Public Agenda report revealed that two-thirds of respondents considered the leadership training they received in education-related graduate programs to be “‘out of touch’ with what principals need to know.”⁷² This sentiment could be the result of a number of factors, some of which will be addressed in this section, but the undeniable result is an acute need for well-planned, ongoing professional development for school leaders. This is true both for novice principals, juggling an abundance of new responsibilities, as well as veteran administrators adapting to the 21st century educational landscape. According to a report by the National Association of Elementary School Principals:

The role of principal continues to become more complex and challenging. Traditional leaders may have considered their jobs to be solely the managers of schools. But the current social and educational context—which combines high-stakes accountability with the high ideals of supporting social, physical and emotional needs of children—demands that principals demonstrate the vision, courage, and skill to lead and advocate for effective learning communities in which all students—and adults—reach their highest potential.⁷³

In this section, we present a review of the literature on effective on-the-job professional development for principals. We consider important features of program design, core competencies to be nurtured in school administrators, and pedagogy best suited for principal development programming. Case studies are included to model these principles in practice.

Principal Development Program Design⁷⁴

According to a review of the research conducted at the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute, the content of both pre- and in-service principal development programs should be characterized by these main features:

- ❖ **Research Based** - Programs should incorporate up-to-date research on “school leadership, management, and instructional leadership” as well as “organizational development, and change management.”

⁷² “Changing Role of School Leadership - An NEA Policy Brief.” National Education Association.
http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/PB09_Leadership08.pdf

⁷³ “Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do: Executive Summary.” 2nd Ed. National Association of Elementary School Principals, p.2.
<http://www.naesp.org/resources/1/Pdfs/LLC2-ES.pdf>

⁷⁴ Davis, *et. al. Op. cit.*, p. 7-9.

- ❖ **Coherent** - Curriculum should be coherent in the educational philosophy presented, developing in participants a set of “shared values, beliefs, and knowledge about effective administrative practice.”
- ❖ **Pedagogically Suitable** - Coursework and learning activities should be “framed around principles of adult learning theory.” For example, material presented in a single course should be connected to theories and concepts discussed in subsequent courses, allowing leaders to access and build upon prior knowledge.
- ❖ **Practical** - Instruction should be problem- rather than subject-centered and linked directly to field experiences and self-reflection.
- ❖ **Contextualized** – Leaders should be empowered to develop a school culture of excellence and collegiality featuring the following:
 - Collaborative decision-making
 - Distributed leadership
 - Data-driven organizational change
 - Instructional technologies to assist with school improvement
- ❖ **Career Relevant** - Content should be aligned with professional standards and state licensing standards for educational leaders.

Core Competencies of School Administrators

In this section, we present core competencies of school administrators that may be used to frame the initial identification of principal candidates, the design of principal development initiatives, and the evaluation of principal competency. Several aspects of educational leadership emerge from the examples of New Leaders, a nonprofit educational leadership development organization, and the North Carolina Department of Education. These include the following:

- ❖ Data-driven instructional leadership with a focus on student outcomes
- ❖ Strategic organizational leadership to build a school culture, mission, and community
- ❖ Management, development, and recognition of staff, with attention to micropolitics as well as union concerns
- ❖ An incarnational approach to modeling and promoting a set of shared values
- ❖ Technical knowledge and skills concerning how to oversee school operations
- ❖ Development of dynamic and sustainable school-based relationships with the greater community

Below, we present the specific frameworks used by New Leaders and the North Carolina Department of Education.

New Leaders for New Schools – Resident Core Competencies

New Leaders, a national nonprofit founded in 2000, “Develops transformational school leaders and designs effective leadership policies and practices for school systems across the country.” The organization manages three programs relevant to this report: (1) Emerging Leaders Program, (2) Aspiring Principals Program (under redesign), and (3) Principal Institute.

Teachers and administrators who have completed the Emerging Leaders Program are expected to be capable of the following:

- ❖ Function as a lead/mentor teacher
- ❖ Facilitate the large-scale strengthening of classroom culture
- ❖ Lead the advancement of curricular rigor
- ❖ Lead “effective meetings”
- ❖ Set and achieve high goals
- ❖ Successfully manage teams and projects⁷⁵

Participants in the Aspiring Principals program receive academic training in conjunction with one year of school-based residency. Participants benefit from developing professional relationships with other new principals through the New Leaders cohort system, a programmatic feature discussed later in the sub-section on principal training methods. New Leader residents are empowered to develop school, personal, and technical leadership competencies – outlined in Figure 4.1 below.

⁷⁵ “Emerging Leaders Program.” New Leaders. <http://www.newleaders.org/what-we-do/emerging-leaders-program/>

Figure 4.1: New Leaders for New Schools Resident Core Competencies⁷⁶

School Leadership	Personal Leadership	Technical Leadership
Ensure Effective Teaching and Learning	Model the Way – clearly articulate personal values and non-negotiable; align actions with shared values	Budget – develop and manipulate school budget to maximize resources for student learning
Focus on Data & Outcomes	Inspire a Shared Vision – enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations	Union Contract – understand union contracts to make effective decisions in service of student learning
Nurture Student & Staff Efficacy	Challenge the Process – seek innovative ways to change, grow, and learn from mistakes	School Law – implement necessary school policies and procedures in accordance with local, state, and federal school law
Lead Learning Organizations	Enable Others to Act – strengthen others by building their capacity and creating a climate of trust and positive interdependence	Scheduling – implement effective school schedule and procedures
Build School Community & Culture	Encourage the Heart – recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence	Human Resources Policies and Procedures – implement effective human resources policies and procedures to ensure that all staff members are managed effectively
Manage Effectively		Facilities – use school facilities to enhance student learning and school culture Technology – use technology effectively to support student learning, school management, and school culture

Source: NewSchools Venture Fund

*North Carolina Department of Education: State Standards for Administrators*⁷⁷

The North Carolina State Board of Education documents a set of seven professional standards for administrators. School districts in North Carolina must use standards and criteria that reflect those outlined below. As the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute report presented earlier in this section notes, professional development for principals and

“The knowledge base upon which the [principal development] program is grounded, as well as instructional strategies, [should be] closely aligned with professional standards.”

-Stanford Educational Leadership Institute

⁷⁶ “Principal Development: Selection, Support, & Evaluation.” June, 2008. NewSchools Venture Fund, p. 11. <http://www.newschools.org/files/PrincipalDevelopment.pdf>

⁷⁷ “Public School Employee Evaluation.” Public Schools of North Carolina. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/fbs/personnel/evaluation/>

leadership candidates should reflect consensus standards such as these.

- ❖ *Strategic Leadership*: “School executives will create conditions that result in strategically re-imagining the school’s vision, mission, and goals in the 21st century. Understanding that schools ideally prepare students for an unseen but not altogether unpredictable future, the leader creates a climate of inquiry that challenges the school community to continually re-purpose itself by building on its core values and beliefs about its preferred future and then developing a pathway to reach it.”
 - This standard is evaluated based on the implementation and assessment of school improvement plan strategies, the North Carolina Working Conditions Survey, the alignment of the school improvement plan with state and national standards, student data, and other evidence of the school’s direction.

- ❖ *Instructional Leadership*: “School executives will set high standards for the professional practice of 21st century instruction and assessment that result in a no nonsense accountable environment. The school executive must be knowledgeable of best instructional and school practices and must use this knowledge to cause the creation of collaborative structures within the school for the design of highly engaging schoolwork for students, the on-going peer review of this work and the sharing of this work throughout the professional community.”
 - This standard is evaluated based on the school improvement plan, the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, student data, teacher retention data, and other instructional plans

- ❖ *Cultural Leadership*: “School executives will understand and act on the understanding of the important role a school’s culture contributes to the exemplary performance of the school. School executives must support and value the traditions, artifacts, symbols and positive values and norms of the school and community that result in a sense of identity and pride upon which to build a positive future. A school executive must be able to “reculture” the school if needed to align with school’s goals of improving student and adult learning and to infuse the work of the adults and students with passion, meaning and purpose. Cultural leadership implies understanding the school and the people in it each day, how they came to their current state, and how to connect with their traditions in order to move them forward to support the school’s efforts to achieve individual and collective goals.”
 - This standard is evaluated based on the work of relevant professional learning communities, the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, the school improvement plan, the performance award structure, and student and teacher data

- ❖ *Human Resource Leadership*: “School executives will ensure that the school is a professional learning community. School executives will ensure that processes and systems are in place that result in the recruitment, induction, support, evaluation, development and retention of a high performing staff. The school executive must engage and empower accomplished teachers in a distributive leadership manner, including support of teachers in day-to-day decisions such as discipline, communication with parents, and protecting teachers from duties that interfere with teaching, and must practice fair and consistent evaluation of teachers. The school executive must engage teachers and other professional staff in conversations to plan their career paths and support district succession planning.”
 - This standard is evaluated by the school improvement plan, the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, the number of National Board Certified teachers, teacher data, professional development activities, and other data

- ❖ *Managerial Leadership*: “School executives will ensure that the school has processes and systems in place for budgeting, staffing, problem solving, communicating expectations and scheduling that result in organizing the work routines in the building. The school executive must be responsible for the monitoring of the school budget and the inclusion of all teachers in the budget decisions so as to meet the 21st century needs of every classroom. Effectively and efficiently managing the complexity of every day life is critical for staff to be able to focus its energy on improvement.”
 - This standard is evaluated by the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, the school improvement plan, external reviews, school scheduling/procedures, and communication of safety procedures and behavioral expectations

- ❖ *External Development Leadership*: “A school executive will design structures and processes that result in community engagement, support, and ownership. Acknowledging that schools no longer reflect but in fact build community, the leader proactively creates with staff opportunities for parents, community and business representatives to participate as “stockholders” in the school such that continued investments of resources and goodwill are not left to chance.”
 - This standard is evaluated by PTSA participation, and meeting agendas, parent attendance at team meetings, parental feedback and participation at events, school-community partnerships, and other external events.

- ❖ *Micropolitical Leadership*: “The school executive will build systems and relationships that utilize the staff’s diversity, encourage constructive ideological conflict in order to leverage staff expertise, power and influence to realize the school’s vision for success. The executive will also creatively

employ an awareness of staff's professional needs, issues, and interests to build social cohesion and to facilitate distributed governance and shared decision-making.”

- This standard is evaluated by the Teacher Working Conditions Survey, teacher retention data, clear communication on expectations, evidence of team operations, and evidence of distributed leadership.

Pedagogy

In a review of the literature, three main methods of principal development have emerged:

- ❖ Coaching/Mentoring
- ❖ Cohort Experiences
- ❖ Direct Instruction

Each approach has the potential to improve principals' leadership capacity, and should be implemented in a three-pronged approach, according to the NewSchools Venture Fund. However, many new principals cite coaching as “the most valuable form of on-the-job support”⁷⁸ and the vast majority of veteran principals consider their colleagues to have been more helpful than the direct instruction they received in graduate school.⁷⁹ Consequently, both individualized coaching and professional networking opportunities should be foundational for any principal development programs.

Coaching and Mentoring

Formal principal coaching is characterized by the following features:

- ❖ **Varied in Level of Structure** – Coaching may involve both casual impromptu discussions as well as highly-structured meetings framed by specific protocol. Formal, regular coaching sessions should be involved, however, at least once or twice monthly.
- ❖ **Individualized** – Coaching sessions should be tailored to suit the needs of the individual principal, and coaches should resist the tendency to focus school-level issues over the principal's professional growth.
- ❖ **Formalized Feedback and Discussion** – Coaching sessions should feature clear expectations of both parties, focus on a specific topic(s), stimulate personal reflection, and be framed by a personal growth plan - a helpful tool for generating targeted feedback and principal evaluation. Activities may

⁷⁸ “Principal Development: Selection, Support, & Evaluation,” *Op. cit.*

⁷⁹ “Changing Role of School Leadership - An NEA Policy Brief,” *Op., cit.*

include modeling, questioning, observations of practice, discussion of professional development opportunities.⁸⁰

Figure 4.2: Green Dot's Key Results Meeting Protocol⁸¹

Agenda for Key Results Meeting:

- ❖ Reflection on the month's staff development
 - What went well? How do you know?
 - What did not go well? How do you know? How would you change it for next time?
 - How did you determine the focus of staff development for this month?
- ❖ Plan next month's staff development
 - What is the focus of your staff development for next month?
 - How does your staff development for next month connect to the needs you have noticed while in classrooms?
 - What resources do you need for your staff development next month?
 - Who will help you facilitate the staff development?
- ❖ Reflection and discussion of coaching, evaluation, and the supervision of instruction
 - How often have you been in classrooms this month?
 - What are you doing to recognize and highlight the best practices of your best teachers?
 - How are you using your best teachers to teach their colleagues?
 - What are you doing to support your struggling teachers?
- ❖ Feedback on written documentation
 - What documentation do you have that contains the feedback you have provided to teachers during your observations?
 - What documentation do you have that is evidence of the support you have provided to your struggling teachers?
- ❖ Set goals for supervision and instruction for the next month

Artifacts to Bring to the Meeting:

- ❖ Staff development agendas
- ❖ Evidence of supervision and evaluation including:
- ❖ Teacher conference summaries
- ❖ Documentation of observations: informal and formal memos
- ❖ APAP goals
- ❖ Teacher buddy observations
- ❖ Mentor teacher observations
- ❖ Any other documentation regarding supervision and evaluation of employees: action plans, development plans, etc.

Source: NewSchools Venture Fund

⁸⁰ "Principal Development: Selection, Support, & Evaluation," *Op. cit.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

In Figure 4.2, we present an example of a principal coaching session agenda. The protocol depicted is used for a monthly meeting between the Chief Academic Officer and each principal. This protocol focuses on the principal's role in school-based staff development and the supervision and evaluation of instruction.

Cohorts

Principal cohorts have the potential to benefit participants in the following ways:

- ❖ **Personal and Professional Support** - Build a “supportive, non-judgmental” network of encouraging and sympathetic peers, thus reducing “principal isolation.”
- ❖ **Teamwork** - Collaborate with colleagues and discuss solutions to challenging issues; identify macro-level problems facing principals at several schools; and consider strategies for addressing these problems in a coordinated effort.
- ❖ **Professional Growth** - Share professional knowledge and experiences, reflect on specific practices, identify potential areas and avenues for growth, receive constructive feedback and advice⁸²

Not only is the cohort structure able to empower participating principals, it also pays dividends to the teachers under their management. Principals who have participated in a cohort-based training program are rated higher for their leadership practices than those who have not.⁸³ Effective cohort facilitation, principal buy-in, and participant application of new knowledge, however, are required for the success of any cohort. While cohorts can be framed in a variety of ways, we present an example of a district-based principal cohort below.

In this model, the superintendent of Achievement First, a network of public charter schools, facilitates a “monthly cohort conference call.”⁸⁴ The remote approach to group communication eliminates the potentially time-consuming need to gather all principals in one place. During the call, principals take turns sharing a success and a struggle from the previous month. Feedback and advice is shared regarding the individual challenges mentioned. The superintendent also leads a discussion surrounding one common issue facing multiple schools, selected in advance based on feedback received from principals.

Direct Instruction – The 95/5 Model

We presented the role of direct instruction in educational leadership training in Section III and now will simply add to that a model specifically related to *principal*

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Davis, *et. al.* *Op. cit.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

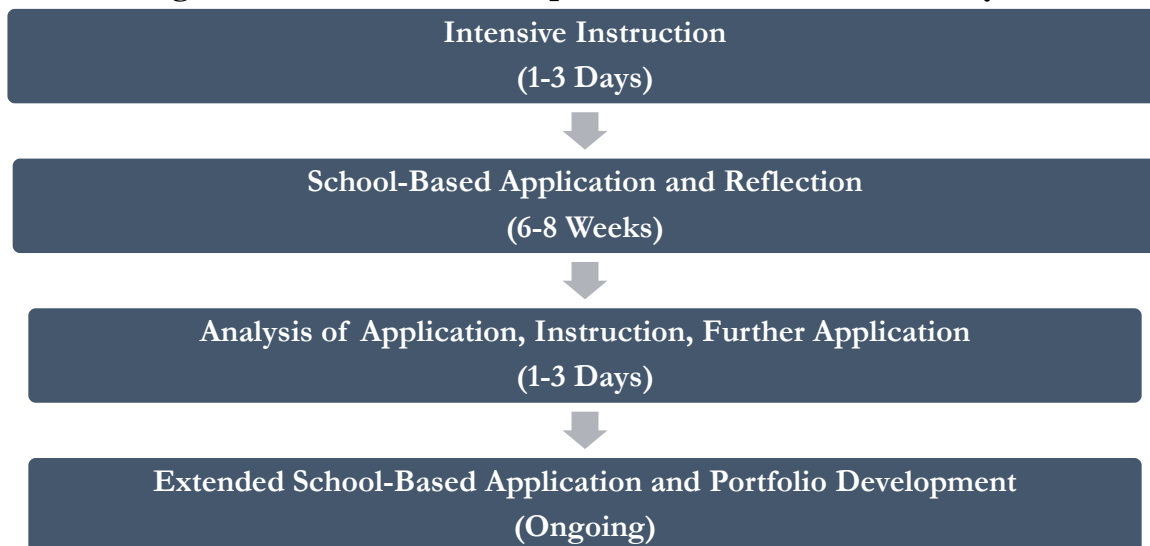
development. Green Dot Public Schools, a network of college-preparatory public charter schools located in Los Angeles, has developed an approach to administrator development called the 95/5 model. In order to empower principals to “make effective decisions related to instruction and management” during the 95 percent of their time spent at their school site, five percent of their time is expected to be spent off-site engaging in targeted professional development opportunities.⁸⁵ Examples of instructional topics selected by Green Dot administrators include “Re-classification of English-Language students,” “Read 180,” and “What makes an ideal leader – art vs. science.”⁸⁶

*Case Study: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Leadership Curriculum Modules*⁸⁷

The SREB leadership curriculum involves modules on a variety of topics, which can be implemented to develop principal competencies as well as train school leadership teams. The framework is research-based, focuses learning experiences in the school context and prioritizes student outcomes, promotes professional learning community, and permits collaboration between multiple stakeholders. These are all principles previously commended as important factors in professional development program design.

The SREB Leadership Curriculum Modules are delivered in a four-step process:

Figure 4.3: SREB Leadership Curriculum Module Delivery⁸⁸



⁸⁵ “School Model.” Green Dot Public Schools. http://www.greendot.org/about_us/school_model

⁸⁶ “Principal Development: Selection, Support, & Evaluation,” *Op. cit.*

⁸⁷ “SREB Leadership Curriculum Modules: Engaging Leaders in Solving Real School Problems.” Southern Regional Education Board. <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/principal-training/Documents/SREB%20Leadership%20Curriculum%20Modules.pdf>

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

Modules have been created for the following topics:

- ❖ Using Data to Lead Change
- ❖ Creating a High-performance Learning Culture
- ❖ Fostering a Culture of High Performance: Changing Practice by Using Data
- ❖ Providing a Focused and Sustained Professional Development
- ❖ Organizing Time, Space, Staff, and Resources to Improve Student Achievement
- ❖ Building and Leading Effective Teams
- ❖ Communicating Effectively in a High-performing School
- ❖ Leading Change: Building and Maintaining a Focused Drive Toward Student Achievement
- ❖ Coaching for School Improvement
- ❖ Prioritizing, Mapping and Monitoring the Curriculum
- ❖ Leading Assessment and Instruction
- ❖ Meeting the Standards: Looking at Teacher Assignments and Student Work
- ❖ Encouraging Students to Complete a Rigorous Curriculum: Personalizing the Learning Environment
- ❖ Literacy Leadership
- ❖ Numeracy Leadership
- ❖ Developing Internship Programs for School Leaders
- ❖ Mentoring School Leaders in Competency-based Internships

Project Evaluation Form

Hanover Research is committed to providing a work product that meets or exceeds member expectations. In keeping with that goal, we would like to hear your opinions regarding our reports. Feedback is critically important and serves as the strongest mechanism by which we tailor our research to your organization. When you have had a chance to evaluate this report, please take a moment to fill out the following questionnaire.

<http://www.hanoverresearch.com/evaluation/index.php>

Caveat

The publisher and authors have used their best efforts in preparing this brief. The publisher and authors make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this brief and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. There are no warranties which extend beyond the descriptions contained in this paragraph. No warranty may be created or extended by representatives of Hanover Research or its marketing materials. The accuracy and completeness of the information provided herein and the opinions stated herein are not guaranteed or warranted to produce any particular results, and the advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every member. Neither the publisher nor the authors shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. Moreover, Hanover Research is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. Members requiring such services are advised to consult an appropriate professional.