INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION

Innovative Pathways to School Leadership

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No Child
LEFT BEHIND SM

Innovative Pathways
to School Leadership

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Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the sixth publication in the Innovations in Education series: *Innovative Pathways to School Leadership*. This series, published by my Department's Office of Innovation and Improvement, has already identified concrete, real-world examples of innovations in five important areas: public school choice, supplemental educational services, charter schools, magnet schools, and alternate routes to teacher certification.

As we approach the third anniversary of the *No Child Left Behind Act,* early evidence shows that America's schools are meeting the challenge of moving our students toward proficiency in reading and math. The people most responsible for this progress are the leaders of our schools, who play a critical and important role in developing a vision for a high-quality education for every student and in implementing and supporting a learning environment that is developed and shared by key stakeholders. *No Child Left Behind* puts enormous pressure on these leaders to increase student achievement and close the achievement gap. We want to ensure that they are provided with the tools and training they need to succeed in this endeavor. This guide is dedicated to them.

As readers may know, my father was a school principal, and my mother a librarian. They taught me the importance of education—to individuals, and to communities. I have been proud to honor their examples by serving as superintendent of the seventh-largest school system in the nation, and now as secretary of education. But I never forget that the most challenging—and rewarding—leadership roles in education are on the front lines in the schools.

We know from decades of research and common sense that a strong school leader is an indispensable ingredient for school improvement. Yet, for too long, we have been satisfied with preparation programs that often lack rigorous standards and a coherent, systemic approach for recruiting, preparing, and supporting school CEOs. However, that is changing. A consensus is forming across political and ideological perspectives that our nation needs to tap new sources for school leaders, as well as support the talented educators already in the system.

We are still in the early days of this movement to create innovative, effective pathways to school leadership. In fact, while many states have made great progress in tearing down the barriers that keep talented individuals out of the teaching profession, similar barriers remain largely in place for potential school leaders. Nevertheless, even under current constraints, entrepreneurial school districts, states, higher education institutions, and others have developed promising programs that draw new talent into leadership roles and provide job-embedded preparation and support to ensure the success of these leaders in today's schools.

This guide highlights six of these programs. They are a diverse set—rural and urban, focused on traditional public schools and on charter schools, and so forth. But they all have a few things in common: an unrelenting

commitment to program rigor and quality; a clear vision of strong school leadership; a cohort structure that encourages candidates to support one another throughout their careers; and a culture of continuous improvement. Most of these programs are relatively young. While they have not been in place long enough to have extensive data proving their effectiveness, they do appear to have some promise for success. It is our hope that these pioneering programs will provide ideas and strategies that help to strengthen school leadership preparation and professional development efforts.

Those of us at the federal level will continue to keep an eye on these promising programs and root for their success and replication. We will also continue to encourage and promote the efforts of those who are in schools and on the front lines, doing the difficult but exhilarating work of fulfilling the promise to leave no child behind.

Rod Paige
U.S. Secretary of Education

December 2004

Introduction

Unequivocal urgency shapes our national discussion of public education. Students strive to meet new academic standards while their teachers work to improve the quality and equity of education opportunities. Yet achievement gaps persist, particularly in urban and rural schools. The demand for effective leadership is clear. We need school leaders who visualize successful student learning, understand the work necessary to achieve it, and have the skills to engage with others to make it happen. How can we prepare more individuals to meet these challenges?

This guide highlights six diverse examples of the hard work underway across the country to answer that question. These programs are offering innovative pathways to school leadership, and people like Kyle Dodson are signing on.

Kyle Dodson hadn't planned to become a public school principal at this stage of his life. Although part of him was drawn to the idea of working with urban youths, his life had taken him in a different direction. He had earned a bachelor's degree in history from Harvard University and an MBA from Columbia University. In January 2003, he was working as the director of multicultural student affairs at Saint Michael's College in Vermont. The thought of enrolling once again at a university just to "jump the hurdles" of getting an administrative credential held no appeal.

But when a friend told Dodson about an expedited principal preparation program called Boston Principal Fellowship Program (BPF) that focuses on developing effective leaders for Boston's most challenging schools, something resonated. Taking this step would mean moving his family, but, on the other hand, he could earn a Massachusetts Administrative Credential without needing to return to school. And at the other end of this one-year program, he would be prepared to take the helm of an urban school—a prospect that until that point had seemed out of reach.

Dodson says BPF spoke to him because he wanted to make a difference in the lives of urban youths, especially African-American students "who need some hope in their lives." Kyle's philosophy is, "Deal with life as it is and work to change it to what you want it to be." Being a principal would give him an opportunity to do that work. So, with his family's support, he applied to BPF and was accepted in June 2003 as a fellow in the program's first cohort.

Dodson was just the kind of candidate a nontraditional program hopes to attract. In addition to a graduate degree in management, Dodson brought a background of

successful leadership experience; a deep understanding of the most pressing issues facing urban education; strong skills in building relationships with students and adults; an ability to analyze and interpret data; and a passion for the work.

In May 2004, Dodson was hired as the principal of a new school in Boston. Looking ahead to the challenge, he said: "I believe that all young people want to and can learn at high levels. I also believe that there are some very basic principles and practices that will best provide a young person with an opportunity to be successful. One of the primary tasks seems to be creating an environment where the dizzying array of societal and personal challenges that each student brings to the building can be stabilized and brought under control long enough to develop the skills and competencies that will give that young person options."

It's too soon to know the full impact Dodson will have at his school, but he brings with him the skills, the leadership qualities, and the understanding of students' context that promise success. These include the determination and ability to create a culture of high-quality performance that energizes, motivates, and supports teachers who, in turn, can help their students hurdle the achievement gap.

Dodson embodies the promise of new pathways to school leadership such as BPF and the five other unique programs introduced in this guide. All are based on the premise that by inventing new pathways to school leadership, attracting experienced and successful leaders, focusing on the essential elements of school improvement, and clearing unnecessary hurdles along the path, they can attract high-quality professionals to lead schools where they are most needed. Most of these programs are relatively young in their development.

They are testing and learning new ways to do things that are creative responses to the urgent need in their particular settings for high-quality principals. In doing so, they demonstrate innovative strategies that can be adapted to other settings.

Preparing the Next Generation of School Leaders

Great schools have great leaders. That's the compelling if obvious message from two decades of research on effective schools.[1] Yet finding effective leaders is not easy. As with many things, when it comes to principals, the central issue isn't quantity, it's quality. While most states have plenty of people who are credentialed as school administrators—often more than they need—many school districts report having too few highly qualified candidates to fill their vacant positions. The shortage of top-notch principals is worrisome in the face of the escalating demands of *No Child Left Behind*. The job of a principal, always challenging and complex, is becoming even more so.

New expectations for principals run well beyond traditional requirements of managing school operations. Recent and ongoing research[2] points to some key actions that effective school leaders consistently demonstrate. Notably, successful principals[3] establish an intense focus on learning and communicate its centrality in everything they do. Their high expectations combine with a sense of urgency to focus attention on learning for all subgroups of students, including the economically disadvantaged, racial and ethnic minorities, students with disabilities, and English language learners. No excuses override their commitment to student learning. Effective school leaders understand that they are in a position to mobilize others by:

» articulating and modeling core values that support a challenging and successful education for all;

» establishing a persistent, public focus on learning at the school, classroom, community, and individual levels;

» working with others to set ambitious standards for learning; and

» demonstrating and inspiring shared responsibility and accountability for student outcomes.

Current research[4] also suggests that effective school leaders set a tone of mutual trust and respect among teachers, students, parents, and community members. They take deliberate action to understand their school communities and form partnerships that focus on learning both inside and outside of the school.

These leaders garner the full range of resources available for their schools, and they develop alliances to proactively seek support for student and professional learning goals. Moreover, they deeply understand effective instructional strategies and help teachers learn them. Indeed, they create structures and time for teachers to collaborate, examine student work together, identify instructional improvement strategies, and learn from one another. They frequently visit classrooms and coach classroom teachers in how to analyze student achievement data so that they can make more effective instructional decisions.

These leaders act strategically to: define and guide needed improvements in teaching and learning; identify teacher-leaders who have the potential to guide and support others' learning; create opportunities to share responsibility and leadership for learning; make workplace improvements that contribute to improving instruction and learning; build organizational coherence; and engender confidence among students and teachers that, individually and together, they will successfully achieve their learning goals and sustain continuous improvement over time.

Traditional education administration programs and certification procedures are producing insufficient numbers of these leaders. State laws and regulations generally set forth certification requirements for public school principals,[5] which typically require a set number of years of teaching experience and the completion of university coursework in education administration. Customarily, students self-enroll into traditional preparation programs, rather than being recruited, and selection procedures in these programs rarely include a screening to determine candidates' leadership experience and potential along with other preferred qualities and dispositions (e.g., belief that all students can learn, ability to handle pressure, commitment to excellent teaching).

In most cases, once accepted, individual candidates progress through a curriculum that includes a series of discrete courses that are not connected to the reality of a school leader's actual work. Often such coursework presents the complexity of what principals do as a set of independent components, leaving candidates to put the pieces together on their own with little practical school administrative experience or context. Moreover, traditional preparation programs are unlikely to customize or personalize coursework to prepare potential principals to effectively lead schools with the particular characteristics of those in which they will work (e.g., high-poverty, low-achieving urban schools; schools with a majority of English learners; isolated rural schools).

The pressing need for a greater number of principals capable of meeting higher expectations has generated

FIGURE 1. **Characteristics of Profiled Programs**

Program/Location/ Program Initiated	Admission Requirements	No. of Applicants	No. of Participants	Participant Demographics	
BOSTON PRINCIPAL FELLOWSHIP Boston, Mass. 2003	Bachelor's degree; three years experience in teaching, youth development, or management; pass state licensure exam	(2004) 65	(2004) 10 (2005) 11	2004 Gender: 2004 Ethnicity: 2005 Gender: 2005 Ethnicity:	60% female 64% White 26% Afr. Am. 5% Asian Am. 5% Hispanic 70% female 70% Afr. Am. 20% Hispanic 10% White
FIRST RING LEADERSHIP ACADEMY Cleveland, Ohio 2003	First Ring superintendents nominate participants with teaching credentials who are employed in First Ring Schools and have demonstrated leadership potential	1–3 per district	(2004) 26 (2003) 26	2004 Gender: 2004 Ethnicity:	62% female 70% White 30% Afr. Am.
LAUNCH (Leadership Academy and Urban Network for Chicago) Chicago, Ill. 1998	Master's degree; Illinois Type 75 Administrative Credential; six years teaching experience; previous leadership	(2004) 175	(2004) 21	2003 Gender: 2003 Ethnicity:	76% female 44% Afr. Am. 28% Hispanic 28% White
NJ EXCEL (New Jersey Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership) Monroe Township, N.J. 2003	Master's degree; five years teaching experience; requirements specific to four different models	(2005) 145	(2005) 100 (2004) 109 (2003) 66	2004 Gender: 2004 Ethnicity:	76% female 83% White 8% Afr. Am. 8% Hispanic 1% Asian Am.
NEW LEADERS FOR NEW SCHOOLS New York, N.Y., Chicago, Ill., Washington, D.C., Memphis, Tenn., and San Francisco Bay Area, Calif. 2000	Bachelor's degree; five years professional experience; two years K–12 teaching experience; demonstrated leadership	(2005) 1,100	(2005) 90 (2004) 56 (2003) 52 (2002) 31 (2001) 13	2004 Gender: 2004 Ethnicity:	60% female 60% Afr. Am. 30% White 7% Hispanic 3% Asian Am.
PRINCIPALS EXCELLENCE PROGRAM Pike County Schools Pikeville, Ky. 2002	Holds or is eligible to hold principal certification	(2004) 25 (2003) 21	(2004) 15 (2003) 15	2004 Gender: 2004 Ethnicity:	33% female 100% White

Cost Per Participant	Percent Placed Following Program	
$60,000 fully paid residency and coursework $4,000 optional expense to fellow for UMASS credits/degrees	2004:	60% as Principals 30% as Asst. Principals 10% Other Administrators
$21,000 for coursework and site-based practice $4,000 optional expense for CSU units	2004:	25% as Principals and Asst. Principals
$65,000 fully paid internship and coursework	2004:	42% as Principals 34% as Asst. Principals 24% as Central and Area Administrators
Tuition-based Model 1 $6,500 Model 2 $7,500 Model 3 $9,500 Model 4 $3,000	2003 (January cohort): 2003 (July cohort):	51% as Principals, Asst. Principals 35% as Principals, Asst. Principals
$65,000 fully paid coursework and yearlong full-time residency (within the LEA salary schedule)	2004:	60% as Principals 35% as Asst. Principals
$12,000 fully paid coursework, residency, instructional materials, substitute costs	2004:	73% as Principals, Asst. Principals, Deans

promising reforms in some traditional administrator preparation programs, such as cohorts of candidates who train together, field-based experiences, and more practical application of coursework. These reforms are hopeful and well-intentioned, but insufficient. The urgent and compelling need for large numbers of effective school leaders requires more. It calls for accelerated and intensely focused preparation programs that strategically recruit and rigorously screen potential candidates, then immerse them in authentic coursework and integrated field experiences that prime candidates for success in challenging and demanding school settings.

Bold New Approaches

This guide looks at six pioneering programs that recruit and prepare principals in inventive ways. Building on their states' modifications to leadership credentialing requirements[6]—and the ability of state-approved preparation programs to apply for waivers from existing certification requirements—these innovative and entrepreneurial programs are developing new recruiting strategies to attract potential leaders from beyond the traditional pipeline of experienced teachers who self-select into the profession through university-based coursework. One way they are streamlining the preparation process is by accepting candidates who meet highly selective criteria, including successful leadership experience along with effective skills in communication, interpersonal relationship-building, data analysis and interpretation, strategic thinking, and problem solving. These programs concentrate learning experiences on the knowledge and skills needed to succeed as a principal in challenging circumstances. They provide intensive supports such as mentoring and coaching by experienced successful principals. Moreover, they

emphasize the principal's role as a catalyst for change and prepare principals to hold themselves accountable for student achievement results.

All of these programs have the same aim: generating highly qualified principals. But each does it in a way that reflects its unique roots and context: an urban school district's need for well-prepared leaders who can carry out its school reform agenda; a rural district building an internal leadership pipeline; a consortium of "first ring" urban-suburban school districts developing a shared pool of highly qualified principal candidates; a state school administrators association determined to create an expedited route to the principalship; a large urban school district's administrators' union committed to recruiting, preparing, and supporting fledgling principals; and a national nonprofit organization focused on developing a new generation of highly skilled urban principals.

The six programs featured in this guide offer promising practices for others who aim to develop innovative solutions to our schools' urgent demand for greater numbers of effective school leaders, particularly in high-need urban and rural schools. While each program is unique, they collectively reflect our emerging understanding of what it takes to be an effective school leader and of what it takes to develop that leader.[7]

The innovative programs profiled in this guide have attracted a range of experienced and talented leaders, including many who otherwise would not have considered becoming school principals because of the barriers—real or imagined—they encountered. These programs appeal to individuals who want to lead challenging schools in specific urban or rural settings and those who want a deeply practical, "real-life" preparation experience. They illustrate commitment, ingenuity,

and a variety of practices from which other programs may learn and which can be adapted to other settings and school leadership contexts.

Case Study Sites and Methodology

The six programs featured in this guide are: Boston Principal Fellowship Program, Boston, Mass.; First Ring Leadership Academy, Cleveland, Ohio; LAUNCH (Leadership Academy and Urban Network for Chicago), Chicago, Ill.; NJ EXCEL (New Jersey Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership), Monroe Township, N.J.; New Leaders for New Schools, New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Memphis, and San Francisco Bay Area; and Principals Excellence Program, Pike County, Ky. Basic statistics about these sites appear in figure 1. For a narrative summary of each site's context and program description, see Part II of this guide.

These sites were selected from a larger pool of possible programs through the benchmarking methodology that underlies this study. Adapted from the four-phase benchmarking process used by the American Productivity and Quality Center, as well as general case study methodology, the study proceeded through several phases (described more fully in appendix A).

A study scope or conceptual framework was developed at the beginning of the project to guide site selection and analysis. Developed from an examination of relevant research literature, the framework was reviewed and refined by a panel of experts. Figure 2 outlines the final study scope and guiding questions.

Initially, 60 potential sites were identified using online search descriptors such as "alternative leadership preparation," "alternative principal certification,"

FIGURE 2. Study Scope and Guiding Questions

1. **The program's vision of high-quality school leadership and what it takes for school leaders to be ready to succeed.**

   ›› What is your vision of high-quality school leadership?

   ›› What are the mission and goals of the program?

   ›› What are the differences between your program and other school leadership preparation programs?

2. **The innovative and entrepreneurial strategies the program employs to identify and recruit potential school leaders.**

   ›› What kinds of participants is the program designed to attract?

   ›› Where do you market the program?

   ›› What criteria do you use to identify and select participants?

3. **The program's design and participants' practical learning experiences.**

   ›› What are the components of the program?

   ›› How do program participants interact with mentors, experts, coaches, and models?

   ›› What follow-through experiences and support does the program offer program participants during their induction phase of development?

4. **The evaluative strategies the program uses to determine its effectiveness in preparing high-quality school leaders.**

   ›› What performance standards does the program use to evaluate its effectiveness in preparing high-quality school leaders?

   ›› How are school performance and student achievement data used to evaluate the program's effectiveness?

   ›› How are data used to revise and refine the program?

   ›› Are any external evaluation or research studies of this program available?

5. **The program's long-term sustainability.**

   ›› How is the program financially and organizationally sponsored?

   ›› What are the prospects for long-term viability of the program?

   ›› How is the program building organizational and financial sustainability for the future?

   ›› How can your financial, structural, and organizational procedures serve as models for school leadership programs with similar goals?

"alternative administrative certification," "expedited certification," and "accelerated certification." A screening process honed the list to 18 sites. These second-round sites were selected based on four criteria: (1) candidates are recruited into the program based on demonstrated leadership experience; (2) the program offers an accelerated route to certification; (3) the program is currently accepting candidates; and (4) it has evidence of promising practices in the 24 areas of the study scope, such as screening candidates using stated criteria, having tailored, field-based programming, and providing strong mentor support. The 18 potential sites were then screened using a weighted criteria matrix based on the study scope. The final six sites scored between 24 and 20 on a scale of 24 possible points and were ranked as the top six. In addition, they represented a range of geographic locations and types of programs.

Data collection took place through: two-day on-site visits; interviews with program administrators, faculty, current candidates, and graduates; and review of documentation. This guide is synthesized from a more comprehensive research report that includes case descriptions and cross-site analysis of key findings.

This descriptive research process suggests promising practices—ways to do things that others have found helpful, or lessons they have learned about what not to do—and practical "how-to" guidance. The recommendations in this guide are based on a qualitative analysis of data from each site and do not represent experimental research or quantitative analysis that can yield valid causal claims about what works. Therefore, readers are advised to judge the merits of these suggestions according to their understanding of the reasoning behind them and their fit with local circumstances.

Part I: Elements of Innovative Pathways to School Leadership

The six innovative programs in this study evolved in response to school districts' frustration in finding and keeping adequate numbers of well-prepared school principals who are willing and able to lead challenging schools to high performance. In each case, the founders of these "grow-your-own" programs determined that existing ways of attracting and preparing principals for these jobs were falling short of what was needed in their particular context.

These pioneering programs seek to recruit successful and experienced leaders from both within and without public education and prepare them to be ready to succeed as leaders in challenging public school settings. To do so, each program has started with a clear vision of the kinds of leaders needed to meet the needs of its constituent districts and regions. In addition, each has developed rigorous recruiting and candidate selection criteria, a meaningful and relevant program of coursework and fieldwork, and processes for building and sustaining the program over time.

Guiding Vision of Powerful School Leadership

Driving the development of each program was a compelling belief in the importance of highly committed and high-performing school leaders—individuals who were prepared to successfully mobilize the necessary knowledge, skills, resources, and energy to challenge and overcome institutionalized barriers to student achievement and to generate conditions in which all students achieve successful outcomes. Each of the six programs began with a clear and highly focused vision of the kinds of leaders needed within its specific context, and each continues to relentlessly pursue that vision through its program structure and design.

The vision of Kentucky's Principals Excellence Program (PEP), which serves rural districts, exemplifies the deliberation that characterizes each program: "The Principals Excellence Program will transform the principalship in underserved rural school districts from school management to visionary instructional leadership that assures high-quality learning for all rural students." That vision permeates all facets of PEP's program and is the basis for decisions about program design and refinement. Eight program objectives define PEP's path to achieve the vision.

FOCUSING THE PROGRAM: WHAT MAKES A GREAT PRINCIPAL?

Extensive research over the last two decades has contributed to our understanding of what it takes to be—and to develop—an effective principal.[8] Analysis of these data yields a clear picture of what effective principals do, what they know, what they believe about student learning, how they interact with teachers, and how they reach out to parents and the broader community. The most significant and instructive finding emerging from the research is this: Leadership matters—a lot. Simply stated, it takes an effective principal to make a successful school. When leaders mobilize action by declaring a focus on learning and then lead from a set of fundamental values and beliefs about learning and about students' ability to achieve, their schools are more likely to identify, set, and achieve ambitious goals for student learning.

While it's clear that good school leaders share common characteristics, it's equally clear that effective leaders are deeply attuned and responsive to the environment in which they operate. It makes sense that productive community outreach and parental engagement are likely to look very different in the hills and hollows of rural Kentucky than in the densely packed urban neighborhoods of Boston, Chicago, or New York City.

Similarly, successful instructional leadership and teacher development may require a different approach in a high-turnover district where a significant percentage of teachers each year are new to the profession as compared to a district with large numbers of veteran educators and an active mentoring program. So while all six sites highlighted in this guide have grounded their program development and goals in the significant body of research about effective school leadership, each has interpreted that research against the backdrop of the districts it serves. The aim is to prepare the next generation of leaders to be able to step in and do well by any school but, most of all, to be effective in each program's constituent district or districts, able to engage with the district's vision of school improvement, and ready to undertake the hard work required to realize it. Operating on the belief that "great principals lead great schools," the New Leaders for New Schools program defines a great principal as one who coaches and inspires teachers to reach and teach every child and collaborates with students' parents, families, and communities to make schools work. The program boldly aspires to transform American education by creating a critical mass of such principals in urban school districts.

The Boston Principal Fellowship Program (BPF) evolved from the district's ambitious whole-school reform initiative and its superintendent's conviction that school leadership is the single most important factor in each school's success. In support of that conviction, he allocated district funds and other resources to create an internal leadership development program to enhance the skills of the district's current principals, preparing them to carry out their critical role in Boston's whole-school reform plans. The superintendent also launched a "grow-your-own" preparation program—Boston Principal Fellowship Program (BPF)—that immerses participants in the daily work of effective principals and then places them in some of the city's neediest schools. The program's driving vision is that principals are "instructional leaders who effectively improve the teaching and learning process in their schools." (See figure 3 for Boston's competencies of effective principals.)

Boston School Leadership Institute

Competencies of Effective Principals

Effective Principals:

- Understand how children and adults learn.

- Analyze instruction and student learning through regular classroom observations and provide detailed feedback to teachers that supports instructional improvement.

- Use data to measure student learning, instructional improvement and to drive planning.

- Create a school community that is devoted to social justice, high expectations for all, and equity in students' opportunity to learn.

- Understand the achievement gap and implement explicit strategies to close the gap.

- Develop and communicate a shared vision and common understanding of effective classrooms and instruction and organize the school on it.

- Create a collegial environment in which leadership is shared, professional practice is made public, risk-taking and innovation are supported, and consistent, high-quality instruction is paramount.

- Understand the needs and assets students, parents and the community bring to schools and build strong relationships with all constituents.

- Use the school budget, human resource functions, and other resources strategically to support improved student learning.

- Develop and maintain a safe and disciplined learning environment and manage building operations in support of student learning.

- Reflect on practice and continually refine leadership, based on learning and experience.

New Jersey's EXCEL (Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership) program intends to prepare its candidates to be "visionary leaders with the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and readiness for them to be effective agents of change and improvement and effective instructional leaders who actively advocate for and guide the achievement of high academic standards by all students."

The concept of the principal as a "change agent" also guides the First Ring Leadership Academy in Cleveland, which defines an effective principal as "a change agent able to lead a school community to improve instruction so that all students in First Ring schools achieve at high levels." Similarly, Chicago's LAUNCH identifies a highly qualified principal as one who is "ready to lead the school to high achievement by continuously improving teaching and learning so that every child realizes his or her educational potential." Each of these programs delineates—in a set of standards—the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors one needs to grow into the role of instructional leader, and then structures selection criteria, curricula, an apprenticeship, and performance measures around those standards.

A Powerful, Guiding Vision:

›› **Conveys a clear, focused picture of what an effective school leader does to improve instruction and learning;**

›› **Reflects evidence-based research;**

›› **Mobilizes action to attain it; and**

›› **Keeps the program on track.**

The critical importance of the program vision in these six programs is illustrated in the many significant ways their visions have provided a clear focus and sense of purpose for them. LAUNCH incorporates its vision and focus into a standards-based assessment program. Twenty-four indicators of effective leadership serve as the foundation for both its instructional program and its formative assessment of candidates' leadership competencies.

Invest in Being Selective

All six programs offer an accelerated pathway to becoming a principal. While the programs differ from one another in design and structure, they share such characteristics as a rigorous curriculum, demanding field-based projects, and an expedited timeline. All of the featured sites agree that their programs do not have the luxury of time to shape a candidate's belief system about student learning or to develop foundational leadership skills. Candidates must come with these qualities fully developed. In short, they need to be able to hit the ground running. Furthermore, each program invests substantially in its candidates. (Figure 1 details the cost per participant in each program.) Ensuring a good return on that investment is a high priority.

All programs strongly emphasize that they are not remedial; instead, they aim to transform individuals with a proven track record of leadership into school principals who can effectively promote great instruction and learning in their schools. They say the secret to their success is not so much the specifics of their instructional program—important as that effort is—as it is to enroll the right candidates.

Each program deliberately screens and selects participants who are already equipped with the appropriate

experiences and dispositions to become powerful principals. And each provides those participants with an accelerated program whose every element powerfully radiates from its vision.

Each of the six programs defines the ideal candidate slightly differently, but the personal traits and leadership competencies sought are similar in all. The programs seek people with a passionate and demonstrated commitment to academic improvement for every student, a genuine belief that all children are intelligent and will learn and make progress, given the right circumstances. They want self-aware individuals who understand great teaching and learning, are creative problem solvers, and have strong communication and collaboration skills. To that end, each program starts with a comprehensive screening process based on program-specific criteria that reflect its guiding vision of powerful school leadership. (See figure 4 for an example of screening criteria from New Leaders.)

All programs require at least a bachelor's degree; in New Jersey and Chicago, candidates must have a master's degree. All require professional experience, including some teaching, although Boston accepts those with a youth development background. In some instances, programs are designed specifically to develop new principals; others also look to further develop individuals who are already working as principals or assistant principals.

Beyond such basic requirements, the programs also look at more qualitative factors. Boston, for example, asks candidates to articulate their personal theories of leadership. New Leaders seeks people with an unrelenting commitment to ensuring that every child achieves at high levels. Its selection criteria (see figure 4) are

based on its vision of effective school leadership that consists of high expectations and respect for every child, instructional leadership, school-family-community partnerships, data-driven decisions, collaboration and distributed leadership. The PEP screens its candidates for a strong knowledge of instruction, curriculum, and assessment, along with an understanding of Kentucky's statewide reform program. PEP looks for a commitment to improving rural schooling conditions and an appreciation of Kentucky's rural culture; it also screens for a belief in the capacity of every student to achieve Kentucky's academic standards.

RECRUITMENT

The starting place for attracting good candidates, as well as for dissuading those not qualified, is the recruitment process. Program directors spoke of beginning a

Tested Recruiting Strategies:

›› **Market in places where you are most likely to find the ideal program candidates (e.g., relevant conferences, publications, local media);**

›› **Use word-of-mouth (e.g., current participants' connections and networks);**

›› **Expand outreach through partnerships with related organizations (e.g., local colleges, teacher unions, community youth centers); and**

›› **Seek nominations from other respected leaders (e.g., superintendents, principals, curriculum supervisors).**

FIGURE 4. New Leaders for New Schools Candidate Selection Criteria

New Leaders for New Schools Selection Criteria *(listed alphabetically)*

1. Belief in the Potential of All Children to Excel Academically
- Believe each and every child can excel academically
- Take personal responsibility for ensuring high academic achievement for every child
- Demonstrate the personal drive and commitment to eliminate the disparity of educational quality that exists

2. Commitment to Ongoing Learning
- Seek feedback and reflect on experiences to grow and develop
- Demonstrate humility and willingness to continually improve
- Commit to the coaching and the development of adults

3. Communication and Listening
- Possess written and verbal skills to communicate with clarity, conciseness, and appropriateness to multiple audiences
- Demonstrate poise and professionalism in diverse situations
- Listen actively

4. Interpersonal Skills
- Build successful one-on-one relationships
- Value each person's perspective and treat people with respect
- Relate to adults and children: understand where they are coming from, what they need, and how to meet their needs
- Diffuse anger and find common ground to move people towards solutions
- Exhibit confidence and competence under pressure

5. Knowledge of Teaching and Learning.
- Identify exemplary teaching
- Provide feedback and guidance to improve instructional strategies
- Enable students to attain results despite significant challenges

6. Problem Solving
- Work proactively to solve problems and reach effective solutions
- Analyze and diagnose complex issues to develop strategic plan
- Identify concrete outcomes as a way to evaluate results

7. Project Management to Deliver Results
- Articulate a clear vision, set agenda, and implement goals
- Select, prioritize, and communicate strategies effectively to reach goals
- Balance day-to-day tasks and urgent needs with progress towards goals
- Delegate decision-making and authority in responsible manner

8. Self-Awareness
- Identify accurately personal strengths and areas for development
- Demonstrate integrity by acting in a manner that consistently reflects stated values and beliefs
- Understand how you are perceived by and impact others

9. Team Building
- Collaborate effectively
- Read group dynamics accurately
- Mobilize adults to take action and hold them accountable for reaching common goals
- Engage and empower others to take responsibility in decision-making to achieve results

10. Unyielding Focus on Goals and Results
- Confront difficult situations head-on and implement diverse solutions to get results
- Achieve results despite obstacles by demonstrating persistence, determination, and relentless drive
- Exhibit resilience to persevere and overcome setbacks
- Take personal responsibility for finding solutions when faced with challenges
- Be decisive and hold people to core values when it counts

year ahead of their start dates to publicize and promote the opportunity. Chicago's LAUNCH, for example, issued 3,200 brochures in November 2003 to spread the word to prospective 2004 participants about what the program is, who might qualify for admission, and where the application could be found online. New Jersey's EXCEL relies largely on word-of-mouth generated by its graduates, but also recruits via the publications of its parent organization, a statewide principals and supervisors association.

New Leaders for New Schools targets its marketing and recruitment in hopes of attracting not just those currently working in a school system, but also those who have led community organizations, nonprofits, and youth development programs. It utilizes an executive search-style approach of creating local, regional, and national networks. As a result, more than half of the new leaders are considered "nontraditional" in that they were from outside the public school systems with which New Leaders works, although all participants have strong K–12 experience. For its first 150 fellowships, New Leaders received over 2,600 applications representing a selection rate of 6 percent.

Several programs, such as LAUNCH and PEP, seek nominations from school or district administrators. In Cleveland, participants are handpicked by participating superintendents based on their perceived potential as schools leaders or, in the case of assistant principals or officially designated teacher-leaders, their actual performance. Program staff report that this recruitment approach has the added bonus of sending a message that the districts value the capacity development of their own staff.

THE SCREENING PROCESS

Each program has structured a clearly defined and multiphased process for screening applicants. The first phase may be the application itself, designed in some cases to help ensure that candidates self-select based on rigorous criteria. Succeeding phases involve interviews and, in some programs, performance assessments.

In New Leaders, the application is a weeding tool. It defines criteria (e.g., skills in project management, communication, listening, relationship-building) and requires would-be candidates to answer 14 complex questions designed to reveal how well their backgrounds,

An Effective Selection Process:

» **Defines the ideal program candidate and establishes application requirements that reflect that ideal;**

» **Screens applicants using criteria that reflect the vision and the application requirements;**

» **Uses multiple measures such as interviews, on-demand writing, performance tasks, observations, and assessment rubrics to select participants;**

» **Takes place over multiple days to evaluate the candidate in a variety of contexts; and**

» **Involves multiple assessors with a variety of perspectives, knowledge, and experiences.**

experiences, and personal qualities meet the criteria. Similarly, Chicago and Boston applicants receive prompting questions for which they must develop essay responses that are scored by program teams.

In most programs, the screening process is followed by an interview phase. The most intensive and elaborate of these is New Leaders. The roughly 50 percent of applicants who make it through the first screening must then participate in a second screening that includes an hour-long interview with two staff members and requires applicants to produce a written analysis of a case study. About half of the applicants are successful. These individuals then go on to a full-day interview with staff and program mentors, which includes role-playing and the evaluation of a simulated classroom lesson.

In Boston, teams of principals, teacher-leaders, district administrators, and higher education faculty interview candidates, who are also rated on a performance assessment in which they are asked to conduct a teacher observation and assessment at a designated school. Chicago uses a similar panel approach (theirs consists of principals, administrators, and staff from Northwestern University) for interviewing the 30 percent of candidates who make it past the initial application screening. New Jersey's screening requires candidates to formally present a professional portfolio, complete a writing sample that includes a statement of their educational philosophy and personal vision for school leadership, and respond to problem-based scenarios.

Design a Meaningful, Relevant Program

For all these programs, six key elements help to ensure an experience that is meaningful for candidates and relevant to the needs of their students and schools:

1) knowledgeable, committed leadership within a partnership structure; 2) a standards-based curriculum incorporating clear performance indicators; 3) instructional design based on adult learning theory; 4) an intensive, focused induction; 5) a supportive cohort structure; and 6) a school-based practicum, involving expert mentors.

CREATE A PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE

All of the programs studied operate as partnerships between a school district or multiple school jurisdictions and other entities, notably universities and foundations. Such partnerships often support the initial costs of program staffing, design, and development, and they contribute to the program's long-term sustainability.

Cleveland's First Ring Leadership Academy, for example, is led by a collaboration of the 13 school districts that encircle the city. Their superintendents, working in partnership with Cleveland State University, launched the academy in response to the critical shortage and high turnover of qualified principals in their districts. Figure 5 is the interview guide that academy staff used to identify the superintendents' program priorities. Each superintendent commits to identifying two or more promising leaders for each academy cohort and supporting them through the academy, then sharing the pool of academy graduates across First Ring districts to fill principal vacancies. The university is committed to customizing the program for participants and making personalized services and resources available to them so that they have every opportunity to become effective school leaders.

The New Leaders national team is a diverse mix of social entrepreneurs and leaders from education, business,

Creating the First Ring Leadership Academy

Asking the Right Questions – First Ring Superintendent Interviews

Mission and Purpose

- Think of a school principal in your district who is doing it right, what is s/he doing?

- Think of a school principal in your district who is not doing well, what is s/he not doing?

- Is there a leadership gap? What is it?

- What do you think this Academy should be all about?

Content and Design

- What is important for school principals to know?

- How should school principals learn that knowledge?

- How would you describe your preparation to become a school superintendent?

Recruitment

- Who should become school principals?

- Are you increasing the number of women and minorities in your school principal positions?

- Does your district mentor new principals?

- Do you have someone in mind for the first cohort of the Academy?

Retention

- What discourages qualified applicants from applying to school leadership positions?

- How do you keep good principals in the job?

- How might the Academy address issues of retention?

Morin 1/25/04

and public policy. They staff a program that operates as a partnership of five metropolitan school districts—in New York City, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Memphis, and the San Francisco Bay Area—and several of the nation's leading venture philanthropists. Further support comes in the form of strategic consultancy from the Monitor Group, a leading strategy firm, and pro bono legal assistance from Kirkland and Ellis, a major New York City law firm. New Leaders provides the framework for public and private sector leaders to join together and commit time and resources to transforming public school leadership.

Boston's and Chicago's district-based programs also benefit from partnerships. Boston's operates as a collaboration of the Boston Public Schools and the University of Massachusetts. Chicago's LAUNCH is operated by the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association in collaboration with Chicago Public Schools and Northwestern University. NJ EXCEL partners with the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association and the Association's Foundation for Educational Administration. Kentucky's PEP is a dynamic partnership between the Pike County School District, a deeply rural Appalachian community, and the University of Kentucky in Lexington.

DEVELOP A STANDARDS-BASED CURRICULUM

Across all six programs, standards guide the structure and sequence of the leadership curriculum and establish indicators of effective practice. In each case the curriculum derives from local- or state-adopted performance-based standards, such as the New Jersey Professional Standards for School Leaders. All of them delineate what school leaders need to know and be able to do at various points in their careers,

and all of them draw from the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers in 1996.[9]

In each case, overarching leadership standards are integrated with the specific kinds of knowledge and skills the particular program was founded to develop. Boston, for example, focuses on effective practices as defined by Boston's six Essentials of Whole School Improvement (see figure 6), which emphasize principals' need to deeply understand instruction and organize the entire school enterprise to improve student learning. Likewise, New Leaders focuses on 12 essential competencies that reflect research on the practices of urban school principals who have successfully turned around low-performing schools. Chicago's program is guided by the seven leadership proficiencies in that district's educational improvement plan.

The First Ring Leadership Academy (FRLA) in Cleveland developed its curriculum by identifying and prioritizing the recurring and challenging issues and concerns that the next generation of leaders will encounter in the schools FRLA serves. From a priority-setting process that used a focus group consisting of a cross section of district and community leaders, five persistent leadership challenges emerged as critical: increasing student diversity; parent and community involvement; communication; legislation and politics; and the need to balance priorities. FRLA then cross-checked these five themes with the ISLLC standards to ensure that they were embedded in all learning experiences. The end result is a curriculum scope that integrates FRLA contextual issues with the ISLLC standards and indicators.

FIGURE 6. Boston Public Schools' Essentials of Whole School Improvement

<u>Six Essentials of Whole School Improvement</u>

Essential 1: Effective instructional practice and a collaborative school climate lead to improved student learning.

Essential 2: Student work and data drive instruction and professional development.

Essential 3: Investments in professional development improve instruction.

Essential 4: Shared leadership sustains instructional improvement.

Essential 5: Resource use supports instructional improvement and improved student learning.

Essential 6: Schools partner with families and community to support student learning.

BASE THE INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN ON ADULT LEARNING THEORY

The structure and focus of the instructional part of each program varies, but each involves a combination of coursework and fieldwork, and each is organized around a cohort and small groups. This approach is in keeping with adult learning theory, which holds that significant learning results from experiences that allow adults to: 1) engage with meaningful content; 2) socially process the information; and 3) construct their own meaning through a self-regulated process.

BEGIN WITH AN INTENSIVE AND HIGHLY FOCUSED INDUCTION EXPERIENCE

Most of the programs initiate candidates with a rigorous induction experience designed to help participants develop a strong conceptual framework for understanding—and later applying—a deep knowledge of the leadership theory that drives the program. Whether it is

a summer residency or an accelerated course sequence, these experiences demand an intense commitment, leading candidates to describe them variously as a "drop-everything-else dedication" and "the most challenging and powerful learning experience I've ever had." They serve multiple purposes, including testing a participant's commitment and drive to take on the challenging role of being a fully invested and effective school leader and arming candidates with the conceptual knowledge and informational resources that they will need on the job. In effect, these induction experiences serve as a final screening. Participants who cannot or do not want to make such a commitment opt out.

The New Leaders program, which aims to equip participants to be catalysts of urban change, starts with a six-week summer institute at the Wharton School of Management in Philadelphia where the group focuses on developing instructional, transformational, and operational leadership skills. At this early stage, bonding

and network-building are valuable natural outcomes. Chicago holds a five-week summer leadership academy at Northwestern University's Kellogg Graduate School of Management, emphasizing instructional leadership. Skills are built around the school district's principal leadership competencies, including creating a student-centered climate, improving teaching and learning, and increasing parent involvement and community partnerships. During this beginning phase, the fellows in the program have opportunities to build an "urban network" that offers networking connections for fellows throughout their careers.

NJ EXCEL initiates candidates during a demanding two-week summer residency. This expedited learning experience introduces candidates to the rigorous theory- and research-based curriculum and the action-research projects they will be expected to complete. At this point, candidates also begin to assess their knowledge and skills against specific standards and criteria.

DEVELOP A SUPPORTIVE COHORT STRUCTURE

All programs use a cohort group structure and all report that participants find cohort interactions to be the most valuable element of the program. Cohorts allow participants to proceed through the program with the safety and support of a learning community. Members of the cohort construct meaning and make sense of new contexts by comparing experiences, and they generalize theories of action by sharing individual successes and failures. In short, over the course of their time together, they adopt new identities, in essence "becoming" principals. Together, they evolve from teacher or other professional into an account-able educational leader who knows how to manage a school and improve teaching and learning. Far from disbanding at program completion, the cohort tends to be an ongoing source of support as people progress in their careers.

In the Principals Excellence Program, the cohort of approximately 15 is a uniquely defined community of learners that remains intact throughout the entire program year. Early and ongoing community-building strategies help to create a sense that the cohort is a safe haven for problem solving and brainstorming. Boston's fellows report that this kind of ongoing interaction led them to recognize the expertise of their colleagues and allowed them to benchmark their own progress with that of other cohort members.

Cleveland's program puts a premium on developing trust and reliance among cohort members as a means of creating a strong network of new leadership within the 13 First Ring school districts. The expectation is that cohort members will sustain and support each other as they begin and continue through their careers as school principals, directors, and superintendents.

New Jersey's cohort structure develops collegiality, collaboration, and peer support as candidates engage in a range of program activities. All candidates participate in regional inquiry groups, which meet regularly and continually communicate online to discuss readings, problem-based activities, and day-to-day challenges. Members of each regional inquiry group also support one another with peer reviews and feedback related to action research and school-based projects. Each group works with an "e-mentor" who facilitates the group's activities and serves as its primary advisor. (See figure 7 for a description of e-mentor responsibilities.)

FIGURE 7. NJ EXCEL e-Mentor Responsibilities

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e-MENTOR RESPONSIBILITIES

Communication

- Plans minimum of 18 hours face-to-face Inquiry Group meetings scheduled at time/site by the group
- Conducts ongoing communication with candidates using NJ-EXCEL's On-Line Learning Community (e-mail, Discussion Board, Instant Messenger)
- Conducts additional individual/group meetings as needed at discretion of candidates and e-Mentor

Coordinating and Guiding Inquiry Group Meetings and Other Ongoing Activities

- Extends discussions from cohort seminars on critical topics and tasks
- Conducts discussions of research and readings
- Conducts problem-based and critical analysis activities (case studies, in-basket activities, simulations, ect.) within group meetings and/or continuing discussion as Discussion Board activity using NJ EXCEL's On-Line Learning Community
- Stimulates information sharing and networking activities
- Plans peer reviews that provide feedback to candidates related to their projects and portfolios
- Arranges inter-district activities as appropriate

Providing Individual and Group Guidance, Support, and a Collegial Environment

- Guides ongoing self-assessment, reflection, feedback for development of Professional Growth Plans (PGP)
- Guides development of Action Research and Job-Embedded Projects
- Conducts peer reviews of projects and portfolios to encourage feedback and continuous improvement

Candidate Assessment and Recordkeeping

- Maintains the NJ EXCEL Requirements Checklist for each assigned candidate, submit complete Checklist to NJ EXCEL Coordinator for Research and Evaluation at end of program
- Conducts quarterly reviews of candidates' portfolios to determine progress toward completion of program requirements:
  - Professional Growth Plan (PGP)
  - Personal Educational Platform (professional philosophy, vision for school leadership, personal professional code of ethics)
  - Reflective Journal
  - Inquiry Group Log
  - Internship Log
  - Action Research Project
  - Action Research Project Presentation
  - Job-Embedded Projects
  - Leadership e-folio
  - Module Activities
- Completes formal assessment of Action Research Project, Action Research Project Presentation, and Job-Embedded Projects using NJ EXCEL Rubrics
- Completes an e-Mentor Assessment Report at the end of the program that reflects the e-Mentor's summative assessment of the candidate's overall performance

Participation in Other NJ EXCEL Activities

- Attends Candidate Orientation scheduled at beginning of program
- Attends training for NJ EXCEL's On-Line Learning Community scheduled at beginning of program
- Attends Action Research Project Presentations for Inquiry Group scheduled at end of program
- Attends External Portfolio Reviews scheduled at end of program
- Attendance at 1-2 e-Mentor Organizational Meetings during the year as needed

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Innovations in Education: Innovative Pathways to School Leadership

INCLUDE A SCHOOL-BASED PRACTICUM WITH EXPERT MENTORS

Participants in all six programs identified their fieldwork—a school-based internship, or residency—as second only to cohort interactions in effectiveness in engendering powerful professional learning. In most of the programs, participants are paired with mentor principals—professional experts committed to sharing successful practices and supporting the development of effective new principals. These programs use specific practices for identifying and selecting mentors. Several have published guidelines for mentoring and require mentor training that is focused on key instructional components, expectations, and program beliefs and value systems.

In Boston, the residency is the primary framework for learning. Each fellow has a paid, yearlong residency, four days a week, with one of Boston's most effective principals. As with all of these programs, Boston puts forth great effort into ensuring that theory and practice are integrated. Therefore, a course on learning theory, for example, is coupled with classroom observations of students and teachers during the residency. These observations are guided by the mentor principal to hone the fellows' skills in understanding students' learning processes and the instructional strategies of effective teachers. As one former fellow said, "The school was my classroom, and my teacher was my mentor principal. He identified what I needed to know by having me do the real work, and then he gave me feedback." That kind of mentoring helps the fellows construct meaning from the theory they are learning in their 70 days of coursework.

Since the fellow-mentor relationship is the linchpin of the program, great care is taken to identify excellent mentors based on demonstrated leadership and mentoring skills, their schools' success in implementing the six Essentials of Whole School Improvement, and raising student achievement. Equal care is then taken in matching a fellow to a mentor.

Chicago's fellows begin a yearlong paid internship (again, with exemplary mentor principals) that includes both an elementary and secondary experience. Mentor principals are selected through an application and screening process. They are required to attend a half-day session at the summer leadership academy as well as seminars on coaching and feedback. Fellows and mentors sign a contract for each site experience—one elementary and one secondary—that explains each person's role in working to develop the fellow's skill in Chicago's principal leadership competencies. (See figure 8 for the mentor contract.)

New Leaders residents enter into a formal yearlong, full-time relationship with a successful mentor principal who shares his or her knowledge and experience and creates opportunities for the resident to take the lead in multiple aspects of the urban principal's role. The most direct support, however, is provided by a specially trained leadership coach who visits each resident and mentor at least once a week. Working with no more than 10 residents, coaches help structure the resident-mentor relationship, as well as assist residents in integrating theory from coursework into their day-to-day leadership challenges. Coaches are recruited from a pool of outstanding, retired urban principals, and they undergo their own training as a cadre in addition to attending the residents' summer coursework and seminars.

FIGURE 8. LAUNCH Mentor Contract

LAUNCH

2003 Apprenticeship Contract
Mentor

MENTOR_____

FELLOW_____

SCHOOL_____

DATE_____

I, _____, Principal of_____
                                                            School

agree to the following conditions during the Apprenticeship (August 18, 2003 – January 30, 2004):

1. Allow the LAUNCH principal to shadow and work with me in all aspects of the principalship.

2. Meet with my LAUNCH principal regularly, one-on-one, to plan, discuss and debrief day-to-day activities.

3. Include the LAUNCH principal on my Administrative Leadership Team.

4. Attend and actively participate at all LAUNCH professional development sessions.

5. Commit to provide opportunities for the LAUNCH principal to learn and practice all of the principal proficiencies listed in the Apprentice Guidebook, with particular focus on skills in categories L (Learning) and N (No experience).

6. Commit to provide the support and guidance necessary to make the LAUNCH principal successful in the apprenticeship.

_____   _____
Mentor Signature   Date

* I have seen and am aware of the responsibilities of the Mentor.

_____   _____
Fellow Signature   Date

Build and Sustain Over Time

Each program studied conducts ongoing evaluations on several levels, using evaluation findings to continuously improve program performance and outcomes in ways that will help to sustain the program over time. The progress of each participant is tracked for both formative and summative purposes. Systematic monitoring of overall program effectiveness yields data used to guide program improvements.

ASSESSING CANDIDATE PERFORMANCE

The intent of candidate assessment in the six programs is to prepare candidates for success as principals in challenging schools. Indeed, each sees assessment as a learning tool. Rather than casting blame when assessment identifies the need for improvement, this system of intelligent accountability rewards learning and continued effort. The programs also recognize the need for public accountability, using assessment to verify and validate candidates' competency and readiness to take charge in a real school with the education of real students at stake.

In addition to serving as the foundation of each program's curriculum, the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards provide a framework for assessing candidates' performance and are the gauge by which candidates and program staff alike assess a candidate's professional growth over time. Each program has contextualized the ISLLC standards and aligned them with program performance goals. For example, NJ EXCEL's School Leader Standards Framework includes the six ISLLC standards and adds a seventh for technological leadership, a key program goal aligned with Technology Standards for School Administrators. NJ EXCEL inducts candidates into its program by

developing their understanding of the standards-based requirements, expectations, and performance criteria against which their success in the program is measured. At the start of their program experience, candidates assess themselves against the program's standards-based performance indicators. EXCEL then uses data from those assessments to guide instructional, mentoring, and coaching efforts. It also publishes for each cohort group a summary of program requirements, the timeframe for completing the requirements, a description of the assessments, and an indication of who will assess their performance. To prepare candidates for

A Successful School Leadership Program:

» **Focuses on the program's vision of an effective school leader;**

» **Uses a standards-based instructional program with clear performance indicators and outcome expectations;**

» **Designs instruction based on adult-learning theory and personal sense-making;**

» **Includes a residency or internship with an exemplary principal and the expectation that the resident will be accountable for instructional leadership responsibilities;**

» **Uses a cohort structure and provides frequent opportunities for reflecting on and discussing learning experiences and outcomes; and**

» **Personalizes participant learning through close monitoring, coaching, and follow-through support after placement.**

success, EXCEL provides them with exemplars of the types of work products and performances that have been judged as meeting the standards and have contributed to effective leadership on the job.

Chicago's LAUNCH program aspires to develop leaders capable of transforming ineffective schools into organizations that work for all students. LAUNCH has translated the ISLLC standards into its own Principal Competencies, which form the foundation of the program's standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Its five standards and 24 performance indicators represent the goals that successful LAUNCH candidates will achieve. To facilitate their success, the program provides candidates with an assessment tool that they are expected to monitor throughout their program experience. To this end, LAUNCH has created a clear and focused assessment guide with a structure that lays out its standards and performance indicators in a page-by-page format. Each page presents one of the five standards with its related performance indicators, a description of the indicators at their highest level of performance, a list of competency-based learning opportunities, and a four-stage rubric that describes four developmental stages of competency (rudimentary, emerging, competent, and transformative).

That assessment guide enables candidates to continuously assess their progress, and it provides a focus for coaching and mentoring. Candidates use the feedback information to develop their own professional growth plan, and then use that plan as a tool for setting developmental goals. They document their work in a professional portfolio that is assessed by LAUNCH staff members, coaches, mentors, and others, using a rubric with which candidates have been familiarized.

Other programs follow a similar process. In Boston, fellows begin the program by completing a self-assessment on the district's 11 competencies of effective principals. Based on this assessment, the fellows work with their mentors and program staff to develop a personal learning contract that provides a map for their first four months. At the end of that period, both fellow and mentor review the contract, benchmark progress made toward its goals, and revise or set new goals for the balance of the program.

When participants begin Kentucky's PEP, they complete a comprehensive six-part survey that enables them to establish baseline data about their leadership skills. It also asks them to develop their own vision of the kind of leader they want to be. (Figure 9 displays one page of the 10-page survey.) The completed survey serves as a self-assessment and goal-setting tool that participants can use throughout their PEP experience to monitor their leadership development.

Every program maintains a rigorous academic gauge of candidate performance and publishes a grading or rubric system that is used for assessing the quality of candidates' coursework assignments, projects, and other work products. Most programs use a portfolio system as a cumulative file of projects, products, assessments, and observation records that document and verify candidates' professional growth and their readiness to successfully assume the role of leader in a difficult school.

ASSESSING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

The most telling data about a program's performance are those that portray its ability to reach its goals. In the case of school leadership preparation programs, data about the performance of graduates in leadership roles

FIGURE 9. Principals Excellence Program Self-Assessment

Last four digits of SS# __ __ __ __
January 2003

Part V: Self-Assessment of Leadership Skills

In this part of the questionnaire, please give your candid assessment of your skills as a school administrator. Please respond to each statement in two ways. The first series of responses asks you to describe <u>how it is</u> today for you at the beginning of PEP (i.e., a beginning assessment). The second series of responses asks you to indicate <u>how it should be</u> for you at the close of PEP (i.e., a closing assessment). The possible responses for each series are:

  a. <u>Not</u> this way at all
  b. <u>Slightly</u> this way
  c. <u>More</u> this way than not
  d. <u>Largely</u> this way
  e. <u>Completely</u> this way

Circle the appropriate letter in the response column. Your <u>two</u> answers to the same question many vary.

<u>As an instructional leader, I have the skills to:</u>	How it is					How it should be				
	Not				Completely	Not				Completely
	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
75. Ensure that decisions about curriculum, instructional strategies, and professional development are based on research literature, professional literature, school and district data, and other contextual information.	a	b	c	d	e					
76. Establish a culture of high expectations for self, student, and staff performance linked to a collaboratively developed and implemented school improvement plan.	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
77. Evaluate teacher and staff performance by employing a variety of supervisory models.	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
78. Assess the culture and climate of the school through student peer groups, informal teacher leaders meetings, and surveys.	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
79. Measure, assess, and evaluate multiple sources of student data to determine effectiveness of educational program.	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
80. Identify, classify, and address barriers to student learning.	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e
81. Monitor and maintain successful instructional practices that sustain ongoing student learning.	a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	d	e

82. *Complete the following statement*: Examples of instructional practices for learning success are ___.

will provide a lens for assessing program effectiveness. Most of the programs in this study are not far enough along in their development to use this lens. Nonetheless, Chicago's LAUNCH program, which initiated its first cohort in 1998, is taking a courageous look at student performance on standardized tests in the schools where its graduates are serving as principals. LAUNCH has compiled five-year profiles of these schools to track student performance on the district's mandated standardized tests from 1999 through 2003. Each year these schools have made an average gain, with the highest gains in math. By tracking their graduates using school performance data, LAUNCH intends to investigate the relationship between its school leadership preparation program and improvements in student learning.

In Chicago, a public education fund has supported several external evaluations of LAUNCH's progress and outcomes relative to its goals. Findings indicate that LAUNCH principals perform more like veteran principals than their non-LAUNCH counterparts. Indeed, their leadership actions demonstrate that they understand the complexities of the principal's role and are able to guide instructional improvement from the outset of their principalship. In addition, findings show that LAUNCH has been able to recruit and place Latino principals, who traditionally have been underrepresented in Chicago public schools and that LAUNCH graduates appear to be more active than either other new leaders or veteran principals in obtaining professional development for themselves and their faculties.

Every program in the study relies on many partners and multiple measures to help evaluate and continuously improve itself. Feedback from candidates and mentors, as well as candidates' progress—as evidenced by their portfolios, for example—help gauge program and faculty effectiveness and guide mid-course and annual improvements. The First Ring Leadership Academy (FRLA) in Cleveland and PEP in Pike County use "barometer" surveys and focus groups to help identify perceptions about program responsiveness and effectiveness.

FRLA is also partnering with the Batelle Memorial Institute, a third-party evaluator, to establish a program evaluation protocol that will be used to collect field data about FRLA's graduates working in new leadership positions. The protocol process will collect observational and interview data that FRLA staff plan to use to identify program-wide strengths and weaknesses. Batelle evaluators will also use data collected by Academy staff, conduct surveys and observations, and establish a control group of non-participating first-year principals for comparison purposes.

In keeping with its core philosophy, New Leaders puts a major emphasis on using data analysis to determine program effectiveness. Data on candidate success, for example—during and after the program—provide feedback on the selection process. The program also tracks candidate placement rates and monitors student achievement results over time in schools led by program graduates. New Leaders' strategy of ongoing assessment ensures the development of outstanding principals, while also creating key learning to continuously improve the program model and to share with the field.

New Jersey EXCEL annually evaluates its program design and effectiveness against six program standards and related performance rubrics that are aligned

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PROGRAM EVALUATION DESIGN and STANDARDS

NJ EXCEL's Program Evaluation Design and Standards are aligned with the program accreditation process and standards utilized by the *National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)* and the *National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA)* to ensure that *NJ EXCEL's* program effectiveness will be measured according to professional expectations for high quality leadership preparation.

Six (6) Program Standards are applied to the *NJ EXCEL Program.* Program Standards #1 and #2 focus on candidate performance outcomes, and Program Standards #3 through #6 address the components of a coherent program that supports candidate learning and performance. Together, the six Program Standards are designed to present strong evidence about the coherence, effectiveness, and results of the NJ EXCEL Program. A description of data sources for Program Standards 1, 3, 4 and 5 is attached. *Program Evaluation Rubrics* are designed to delineate the elements of each standard and describe three levels of program effectiveness for each element (Unacceptable, Acceptable, Target).

Program Standard #1
Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions (for New School Leaders)

Description
Candidates know and demonstrate the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to function as school leaders who have the ability to effectively create an environment that supports student learning and guide instruction that results in high achievement for all students. Assessments indicate that candidates meet performance standards aligned with *NJ Standards for School Leaders* and ISLLC national school leader standards and Technology Standards for School Administrators (TSSA).

Program Evaluation Rubrics:
Candidate Knowledge and Skills (including Technology)
Candidate Dispositions and Ethical Behavior (including Diversity)
Candidate Application to Practice: Performance

Program Standard #2
Assessment System and Program Evaluation

Description
The program's assessment system collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and program implementation to evaluate and continually improve the program.

Program Evaluation Rubrics:
Assessment System
Data Collection, Analysis, & Evaluation
Use of Data for Program Improvement

(Rev. March 2004/Manual Section 1)

with national accreditation standards for universities (see figure 10). The evaluation data are used to make formative adjustments in the program and they feed in to EXCEL's five-year evaluation plan that will report the program's long-term effectiveness.

All of the programs have demonstrated a culture of continuous improvement and professional excellence. Each defines success differently, but all show relentless energy in striving to achieve it.

Summary

The six leadership preparation programs in this study are distinct strategic responses to one underlying crisis: the pervasive need to identify, recruit, prepare, and place high-quality principals in our nation's schools. While this crisis is most acutely experienced in challenging urban and rural areas, the problem of an insufficient applicant pool or pipeline of effective school principals is spreading into every region of the United States. Without more innovative pathways to leadership certification, the problem is likely to worsen with 40 percent of current school principals eligible for retirement in the very near future.[10]

Simultaneously, across the country, elected officials, policymakers, parents, and educators themselves are pressing schools for higher returns on the public

Common Features Across the Six Innovative Programs:

1. An initial base of support that includes partnerships with key stakeholders and funders to finance "start-up" costs of planning, development, and early implementation;

2. A commitment on the part of program developers to do the extremely hard work of developing, establishing, and implementing the program over a minimum of three to five years;

3. A research-based vision of what an effective principal does to lead instructional improvement and student achievement gains;

4. A focused theory of action about program development and instructional design based on the vision;

5. School leadership performance standards and outcome assessments aligned with the vision and theory of action;

6. Candidate selection criteria and screening process that reflects the vision and the capability of the program;

7. Structuring participant groups into continuing cohorts that frequently meet to discuss what they are experiencing and learning about the principal's job;

8. Authentic learning experiences that incorporate on-the-job, practical realities of the principal's work;

9. Frequent structured opportunities for participants to do personal reflection and performance assessment; and

10. Structured program monitoring and assessment through feedback, participants' performance in the program, and participants' success on the job after the program.
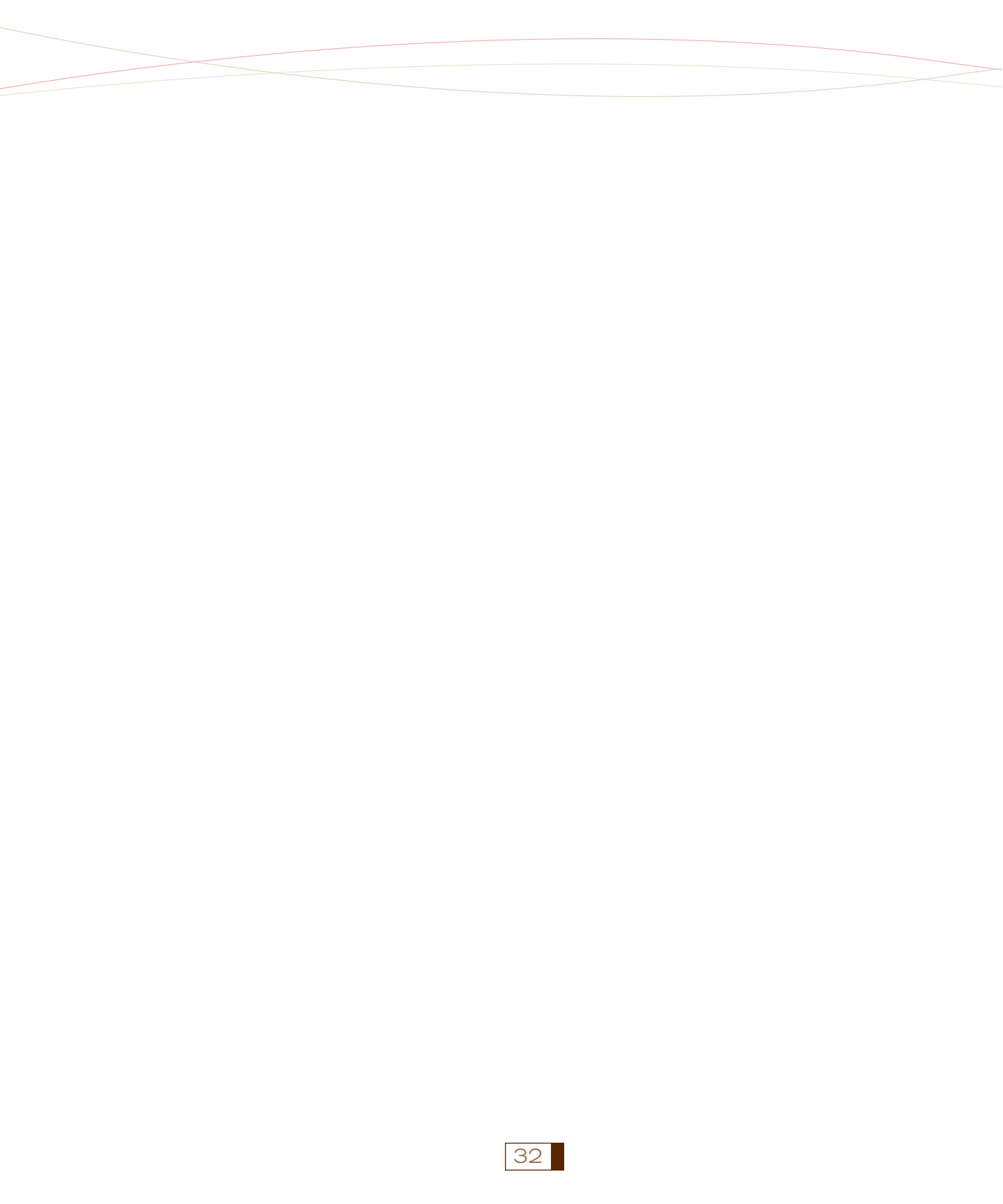
investment. This press for improvement reflects discontent with the results our schools are yielding and our understanding that, as a society, we are not yet meeting our responsibility for ensuring that every child achieves academic success. A growing body of research suggests that we will only be able to do that when we improve the ability of principals to skillfully remove barriers to learning and put in place conditions for academic success.[11]

Each program had a unique creative approach that enabled it to move beyond traditional structures. Every program started with a profound belief that what currently existed was insufficient for meeting the urgent need. An ability to work both with and around existing structures, leaving them intact and building relationships with them, allowed the innovative new programs to gain some footing, then some traction, and, ultimately, make sure-footed progress.

Part II:
Program Profiles

Innovations in Education: Innovative Pathways to School Leadership

Boston Principal Fellowship Program, Boston, Mass.

Partners	Program Initiated	Admission Requirements	No. of Participants	Participant Demographics	Length of Instructional Program	Certification, Credits Earned
University of Massachusetts, Broad Foundation, U.S. Department of Education	2003	Bachelor's degree; three years experience in teaching, youth development, or management; pass state licensure exam	(2005) 11 (2004) 10	**2004** Gender: 60% female Ethnicity: 64% White, 26% African American, 5% Asian Am., 5% Hispanic **2005** Gender: 70% female Ethnicity: 70% African American, 20% Hispanic, 10% White	Twelve months that include: five-week summer intensive; yearlong residency; 60 days of coursework; and two years of support following placement.	Initial Principal License Option of MEd Or CAGS from UMASS

In 1995, after analyzing schools that were effective in teaching low-income urban students and reviewing the effective-schools literature, Boston came up with six Essentials of Whole School Improvement to guide its own efforts:

» Essential 1: Effective instructional practice and a collaborative school climate lead to improved student learning.

» Essential 2: Student work and data drive instruction and professional development.

» Essential 3: Investments in professional development improve instruction.

» Essential 4: Shared leadership sustains instructional improvement.

» Essential 5: Resource use supports instructional improvement and improved student learning.

» Essential 6: Schools partner with families and community to support student learning.

At the heart of Boston Public Schools' improvement effort is the core belief that leadership is the single most important factor in bringing about real school change. This belief is manifested in the district's School Leadership Institute (SLI), developed to recruit, prepare, and support the next generation of Boston's school leaders. In 2003, SLI launched the Boston Principal Fellowship (BPF) in response to the district's need for skillful new principals who could "hit the ground running." SLI also established the New Principal Support System to provide follow-through and coaching for new principals. In combination, these two programs build a strong, knowledgeable and committed school leadership workforce in Boston's neediest schools.

The BPF set out to identify, recruit, prepare, place, and support new principals in its most challenging schools and to serve as the district's preferred pathway to principalship. The first BPF cohort of 10 "fellows" started in June 2003, followed in June 2004 by a second cohort of 11 fellows. After successfully completing an intensive 12-month experience that integrates theory and practice, candidates may apply for a principal or assistant principal position. Once these beginning principals start their new job, the SLI provides two years of support through its new principal support system.

Selection Process

The most important step in preparing new principals, stresses the BPF executive director, is to "get the right people on the bus." Recruiting and screening potential candidates is a carefully structured process. The district actively and broadly recruits candidates through its Web site, through announcements and advertisements in national school leadership journals, local newspapers, and through recommendations from other principals. Word-of-mouth is another reliable source.

The BPF admissions process consists of a written application (including two essays), a performance assessment for semi-finalists, and an interview for finalists.

Minimally, applicants must have a bachelor of arts—a master of arts is preferred. In addition, applicants must have:

» A minimum of three years experience in teaching (any p–16 level), youth development, social work, counseling, or nonprofit or business management;

» Evidence of experience as a successful leader;

» Willingness to relocate (if necessary) and commit to working in Boston Public Schools for a minimum of three years following fellowship;

» The ability and time commitment for immersion in an intense yearlong learning experience that includes some nights and weekends, academic coursework, research, reports, and field-based projects; and

» Official results from (or proof of registration to take) the Communication and Literacy Skills section of the Massachusetts Test for Educator Licensure.

Applicants who successfully make it through the initial screening participate in an interview with a BPF team looking for individuals who: see themselves as lifelong learners; understand the elements of effective instruction; display an ability to think outside the box and be a critical thinker and a complex problem solver; demonstrate good listening skills; exhibit an ability to work as an effective team member; articulate a personal theory of leadership; demonstrate persistence and follow-through; and display a knowledge of current research and literature related to educational leadership.

Screening teams at all stages consist of principals, teacher-leaders, higher education faculty, and Boston Public Schools central office administrators.

Fellows become employees of the Boston Public Schools and receive a full salary and benefits that are comparable to the position they leave in order to participate in the program. In accepting the salary, fellows agree to work in the Boston Public Schools for three years. Upon completing the residency and course requirements, they have the option of receiving a master's degree or a certificate of advanced graduate studies from the University of Massachusetts–Boston. The cost of this option, estimated at $4,000, is the responsibility of the fellow.

Program Design and Practical Learning Experiences

The BPF curriculum integrates the theory behind Boston's six Essentials with the knowledge and skills required to implement them and carry out the pivotal role of instructional leader. The two major program components are a yearlong four-days-a-week residency with one of Boston's most effective principals—a mentor principal—and 85 days of coursework and seminars. Fellows participate in coursework for five weeks in the summer and one day per week and one weekend per month during their residency experience. The classes take place at the BPS professional development center and are taught by national experts, district leaders with recognized expertise in one or more topics, and faculty from local universities. To help synthesize their learning, fellows are given assignments designed to address real needs in the schools where they work as residents or issues they will face as new principals. For example, one resident developed a weekly training program for new teachers on instructional strategies to accelerate children's early reading development. They also keep reflective journals, using them in part as a source for questions that can be discussed in the seminars.

Mentor principals are selected because of their demonstrated leadership skills, their schools' success in implementing the six Essentials and raising student achievement levels, and their skills in and commitment to mentoring. Because a strong match between a fellow and mentor principal is critical to each candidate's success, pairings are made with great care.

One 2003–04 program participant said, "The school was my classroom, and my mentor principal was my teacher. He identified what I needed to know by having me do the real work, and then he gave me feedback." This candidate saw the fellow-mentor relationship as a critical laboratory for testing his emerging theory of leadership: "The most important thing I learned was how to organize and work through groups of adults. That's how a principal improves the school."

In addition to the residency, considered by most fellows to be the program's most significant source of learning and preparation, many program graduates cite their interactions with

fellow cohort members as another critical element of BPF. They came to recognize the expertise of their colleagues and were able to benchmark their own progress against that of their cohort members.

The program curriculum and residency are designed to engender 11 very concrete competencies that Boston has defined as essential to effective school leadership (e.g., understanding how children and adults learn). Since each fellow comes to the program with a different set of skills and experiences, candidates start in July by doing a self-assessment related to the competencies. The results are then used to develop an individualized learning plan that guides the first six months of a candidate's fellowship. The plan outlines specific types of experiences and activities that a fellow and his or her mentor will focus on during the residency. Some examples include planning and implementing a parent engagement strategy, leading a faculty meeting to analyze student performance data and identify their instructional implications, and conferencing with a set of parents regarding their child's learning progress.

In January, the fellow, his or her mentor principal, and the BPF executive director review the candidate's progress on the learning goals and, based on that assessment, revise or set new goals for the next three months. Fellows also begin to identify their placement goals for the following school year (e.g., principal, assistant principal). In early May, the same trio meets again to review the fellow's progress and readiness to assume the full responsibility of a principalship. The fellow's self-assessment and mentor feedback, along with the observations of the BPF executive director, guide decisions regarding the kind of position a fellow is ready to take on during the next school year.

BPF's curriculum is organized into a developmental sequence that builds fellows' understanding of the principles and practices that underlie the BPF Essentials. The content is structured into four "cornerstone" initiatives and one "capstone" initiative, all addressing some number of the competencies, illustrating the interconnection of the Essentials, and integrating the coursework and the residency. Collectively, the initiatives provide a continuous, yearlong focus on critical levers for school improvement. Cornerstone and capstone instructors include principals and other school leaders, higher-education faculty, and community leaders.

As part of the first cornerstone, Analyzing Instruction and Supporting Improvement, fellows observe students and teachers in their classrooms to hone their understanding of students' learning processes and the instructional strategies of effective teachers. Building on this foundation, they then learn elements of teacher supervision and evaluation and examine how to use these processes as levers for instructional improvement. Finally, through participation in regular "learning walks" both at their residency school and in schools across the city, they become skilled in analyzing instruction in classrooms and schools and in giving feedback that supports improvement in practice.

In the second cornerstone, Family and Community Engagement, candidates deepen their understanding of how schools can most effectively partner with parents and the community and how the principal can lead this effort. Fellows build their understanding of family and community interests by participating in their school's School Site Council and School Parent Council. Simultaneously, they assume leadership of a team to examine family and community engagement at their school. This builds their skills in research, needs assessment, asset mapping, action-plan development and implementation, working with a diverse population, and facilitating and mobilizing teams.

In the third cornerstone, Leadership and Management, fellows deepen their understanding of what a principal does to enhance the learning and achievement of all students. Through coursework and individual learning plans, and by assuming leadership and closely observing their principal mentor and school leaders, fellows develop and are expected to demonstrate a deep understanding of how leaders promote core values to shape culture and bring about organizational change. At the same time, through coursework and engagement with and analysis of operations, budgets, and the use of other resources, fellows develop and begin to practice a theory of management. This cornerstone culminates in fellows developing transition and entry plans to be used when they assume school leadership roles.

The fourth cornerstone, Scaling Up Instructional Improvement, focuses on what is required to reach every classroom,

every teacher, and every student. Fellows learn the skills required to implement a continuous cycle of improvement, including analyzing and using data on student performance and teacher practice to support improvement; identifying instructional priorities; creating and implementing professional development that supports teachers in addressing instructional priorities; tracking implementation and impact through classroom observations and student performance; and continually refining the cycle in response to data.

The capstone, Leadership and Learning, ties together all of the competencies of effective principals and the four cornerstones of the program. Leadership is a specific set of skills introduced through the Leadership and Management cornerstone, as well as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that cut across all the cornerstones. Fellows' leadership determines their effectiveness in their residencies and, looking forward, their effectiveness as principals who are able to: create a vision; organize a school around that vision; develop a culture that places students and their learning at the center; create relationships and structures essential to implementing the vision; and hold high expectations for students and staff and support them in reaching the expectations.

In the spring, as fellows complete the program, they meet individually with BPS district administrators and pursue positions for the next school year. Fellows who are hired as principals continue to receive mentoring and coaching support for two years following their placement. Fellows point to this continuing support and the additional support from networking with their cohort members as key elements in their early successes as school leaders.

Key Success Factors

Although BPF is in an early stage of development, its impact on BPS is impressive. BPF fellows demonstrate an ability to "hit the ground running" when they become principals—especially in challenging and low-performing schools. As a result of its districtwide school improvement efforts over the last seven years, Boston is realizing steady improvements in student achievement and has made significant progress in closing the achievement gap that exists between black and Hispanic students and white students. The district has been recognized nationally for having a coherent and comprehensive

improvement strategy that yields results, most recently as a semi-finalist for the prestigious Broad Prize in education. The district anticipates that BPF will play a significant role in its continuing improvement because of the "ready-to-succeed" principals the program produces. The BPF Program received seed funding from the U.S. Department of Education's School Leadership Program and the Broad Foundation that will sustain it through 2006. Planning is underway to secure more long-term funding to ensure BPF's continued contribution to Boston Public Schools.

The BPF model demonstrates how a school district can prepare principals to lead schools through whole school improvement grounded in leadership theory and principles and targeted to the goals of the district. BPF leaders and participants attribute the program's success to the following key elements:

» The vision of a new model of school leadership specifically focused on the Boston Public Schools' six Essentials of Whole School Improvement;

» A research-based theory of action about effective school leadership;

» A rigorous, thoughtful screening process to select applicants with the most potential;

» A strongly held core belief that all children can and will learn when the principals of their schools are effective, knowledgeable instructional leaders;

» Strong support and leadership from the district superintendent;

» Understanding of the principal's pivotal role in whole school improvement;

» Alignment of program curriculum with state and national leadership standards and performance indicators;

» Consistent use of data and feedback to strengthen the program;

» Direct and frequent feedback to fellows from faculty, mentor principals, and BPF staff; and

» Tight articulation among standards, BPS Essentials, residency, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

First Ring Leadership Academy, Cleveland, Ohio

Partners	Program Initiated	Admission Requirements	No. of Participants	Participant Demographics	Length of Instructional Program	Certification, Credits Earned
Cleveland State University, 13 First Ring Suburbs Consortium school districts, Ohio Department of Education, U.S. Department of Education, Local Foundation Support	2003	First Ring superintendents nominate participants with teaching credentials who are employed in First Ring Schools and have demonstrated leadership potential	(2004) 26 (2003) 26	**2004** Gender: 62% female Ethnicity: 70% White, 30% African American	Fifteen months that include 11 2.5-day modules and site-based practice in the interim between sessions.	Principal License 2 CSU credits for each 2.5-day module

Cleveland, Ohio, is surrounded by 13 suburbs known as the "First Ring Suburbs," each struggling with the same issues facing large urban core cities: poverty, transiency, violence, underemployment, and achievement gaps aligned along racial lines and diversity. In 2002–03, the 13 school districts in this First Ring reported a 25 percent turnover in school principals. This crisis, along with other negative trends, such as the detrimental effects of high student mobility and low overall test scores, inspired the creation of the First Ring School Superintendents' Collaborative. The superintendents' most urgent concern was a shortage of principals. After exploring several options, they concluded that the most promising solution would be to identify principal candidates from within their own districts: highly skilled teacher-leaders who, with appropriate training and support, could rise to the challenge of leading the change and innovation necessary to reverse the effects of high student mobility and poverty, to utilize student diversity as a resource, and to close the achievement gap.

In 2003, districts in the Collaborative joined forces with Cleveland State University's College of Education to create the First Ring Leadership Academy as an accelerated route to principal licensure and certification. The academy's mission is to recruit, train, and retain school leaders capable of meeting challenges unique to First Ring school districts, thereby increasing regional capacity for educational leadership and school reform. Its program is built around a belief system that sees the principal as key to creating school environments where all children are learning all of the time. The three driving beliefs of the academy are that great schools are places where every child learns and achieves at high levels; that it

takes a great principal to lead a great school and make things happen; and that the most fundamental work of a principal is to improve instruction and create a learning environment where each child is a high achiever.

Selection Process

Superintendents in the First Ring school districts identify and nominate candidates to apply to the academy. Each is judged to possess "the raw talent to become a high-quality leader." Once nominated, candidates complete a formal application process and are screened for admission by the Acceptance Committee, which includes representative superintendents from the First Ring districts and members of Cleveland State University's Education Administration faculty. The academy accepts candidates by cohort group. Each cohort of 26 includes two to three candidates nominated by each of the 13 districts. Participating superintendents say that this process sends a strong message throughout their districts that there is a deep internal capacity among staff to take on challenging leadership roles. In some districts, staff interest and capacity is great enough that superintendents have generated candidate waiting lists. To be admitted to the academy, each nominee must make a three-year commitment to stay in the First Ring Suburbs when joining the program.

A key part of the application process is the requirement that candidates articulate a personal theory of action regarding school leadership. The selection criteria identify candidates with a strong understanding of the challenges facing First Ring schools and a commitment to accept those challenges and transform low-performing schools into places where all

students can meet high standards. The screening panel includes university faculty, First Ring district administrators, funders, and academy staff.

Those who are ultimately chosen to participate in the program have been deemed most likely to become strong instructional leaders who can meet the needs of First Ring schools. Most candidates have a master's degree in education, and some have a doctoral degree.

Program Design and Practical Learning Experiences

A guiding theory of leadership informs all aspects of the program: an effective leader is a change agent who guides a school community toward improved instruction so that all students achieve at high levels. As the executive director asserts, "Excellent leaders stir the imagination so that others can see a new way to do things. Excellent leaders communicate a new model that inspires action."

Candidates are released from teaching to participate in 11 two-and-a-half-day training modules over a 15-month period. Each module emphasizes a different aspect of effective school leadership, and taken together, their scope and sequence lead to a developmental understanding of a school principal's core work: social justice; instructional improvement; curriculum articulation; teacher supervision and growth; communication; change theory; the use of technology to improve instruction and meet student needs; school oversight and management; parent and family involvement; and community development. Most training sessions take place on the Cleveland State University campus.

Academy candidates take on authentic site-based projects in the interim between each module. Such projects include supervising and coaching teachers, writing teacher performance reviews, organizing a parent group to accomplish a specific goal, and developing a site-specific teacher development training. During each interim period, candidates receive coaching and guidance from their districts' liaison. They also spend time shadowing and observing the principal, recording journal reflections on their observations, and participating in routine management tasks.

While focusing on the core work of a school principal, the coursework also includes time for discussing journal observations and site-based projects in relation to the module content. Cohort members point to these interweaving discussions as their most enduring learning experiences. They also state that building their cohort network during these sessions extends their learning because they call on one another for peer coaching and advice.

Participants generate a portfolio based on the projects and tasks they complete so that they can subsequently share their work with employers. The portfolio is also used for assessing candidate achievement in the program. Candidates are also required to create a Capstone Presentation about a successful project and what they learned from it, and then present it at an annual leadership conference they are responsible for planning.

Academy staff facilitate ongoing cohort networking activities in which candidates have opportunities to share with and learn from one another beyond their initial 15-month program.

Key Success Factors

The First Ring Leadership Academy had received strong local philanthropic support. Although the program is less expensive than traditional pathways to certification, it does have tuition fees, which go directly to the university. The First Ring districts support the program by providing release time to candidates.

To understand the impact of the program over time, First Ring has instituted a long-term assessment plan. An independent research organization will be evaluating the academy's content and structures in addition to establishing a control group of non-participating, first-year principals. Essentially, the assessment will determine whether or not the academy's non-traditional, standards-based program has created skilled leaders for First Ring schools.

According to anecdotal evidence, the academy has already added value in the districts. The executive director of the academy reports that teachers in the First Ring schools are

now using different instructional models reflective of the learning of academy graduates.

The First Ring Leadership Academy staff and faculty have identified the following key factors as contributing to their success so far:

» The commitment to build authentic relationships with all of the stakeholders;

» The collaboration and support of the First Ring superintendents;

» The vision of an excellent principal as a change agent that focuses the curriculum and program experiences for candidates;

» The enduring belief that every child can achieve high standards;

» The recognition that an effective, knowledgeable instructional leader understands the instructional process that ensures that every child meets high standards;

» The understanding that adult learners are most successful when learning experiences are authentic and relate to their actual work demands;

» A well-designed, developmental curriculum that builds and reinforces an understanding of the core work of the principal; and

» The use of portfolios as the means of assessing candidate progress.

LAUNCH (Leadership Academy and Urban Network for Chicago), Chicago, Ill.

Partners	Program Initiated	Admission Requirements	No. of Participants	Participant Demographics	Length of Instructional Program	Certification, Credits Earned
Chicago Public Schools (CPS), Chicago Principals & Administrators Association, Chicago Public Education Fund, Northwestern University	1998	Master's degree; Illinois Type 75 Administrative Credential; six years teaching experience; previous leadership	(2004) 21	**2003** Gender: 76% female Ethnicity: 44% African American, 28% Hispanic, 28% White	Twelve months that include: 4-week summer institute, 10 full-day professional development classes; 5-day case study project; 2 (fall and spring) retreats; yearlong full-time internship.	Illinois Administrators Academy recertification hours

Like many large urban school districts, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) faces a shortage of well-qualified principals. But the need for quality leadership is made even more pressing by the district's ambitious improvement plan, Every Child, Every School. "Our goal," says CPS's chief executive officer, is "to make every Chicago public school a school of choice, and by that I mean that it must be a school that families of every income choose to attend, no matter what the obstacles or challenges." A core strategy for achieving that goal is to ensure that an effective principal guides every school.

Begun in 1998, the Leadership Academy and Urban Network for Chicago's aspiring principals—LAUNCH*—is one of five professional development programs created under the aegis of the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association and operating as part of the Chicago Leadership Academies for Supporting Success (CLASS). CLASS seeks to develop leaders who embody the knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, and aspirations needed to pilot Chicago's schools to increased student achievement. Three of the programs provide professional development for principals at a different point on the experience continuum: aspiring, beginning, experienced. The fourth helps principals and other CPS leaders meet legislated requirements for professional development.

* LAUNCH is one of three preparation programs chosen by CPS to ready principals for district schools. The other two are the University of Illinois at Chicago and New Leaders for New Schools, which is also featured in this guide.

LAUNCH is guided by an executive director and a director—both recognized as exemplary principals—who provide direct, hands-on leadership for all program components: marketing, recruiting, selection, program development, curriculum design, follow-through with fellows, and assessment and evaluation. Their vision, shared by CLASS and supported by CPS, is having a highly qualified principal in every Chicago public school ready to lead that school to high achievement by continuously improving teaching and learning so that every child realizes his or her educational potential.

Selection Process

Marketing and recruitment activities seek to draw strong assistant principals, teacher-leaders and other promising individuals who meet the requirements. LAUNCH asks current principals and other administrators to nominate applicants who have demonstrated leadership potential. In addition, during its most recent recruitment campaign, LAUNCH sent 3,200 brochures to attract prospective applicants.

LAUNCH eligibility requirements include a master's degree in education, at least six years of experience as a teacher, an Illinois Type 75 Administrative Certificate in Supervision and Administration, and some prior leadership experience. Beginning in November 2003, the program posted its online application and requirements on the CLASS Web site. Applicants must submit a completed application packet by the date specified for a particular cohort.

A careful screening process by program directors and mentor principals seeks to identify the best possible candidates. The process considers a range of factors: thoroughness of application; coherence of ideas; recommendations for leadership potential; self-awareness; passion for improving student learning; and knowledge of leadership and school improvement and of instructional improvement research and literature. About 30 percent of applicants move forward to the interview process.

LAUNCH staff invite selected candidates to participate in panel interviews with three-person teams of experienced principals, administrators and representatives from the foundation community. Building on the application analyses, these probing interviews focus on candidates' ability to clearly state personal theory of leadership; self-awareness; passion for improving student learning; understanding of how to work through adults to achieve school improvement; knowledge and ability to articulate instructional improvement strategies; and ability to work as an effective team member. Also considered is the coherence and articulateness of candidates' verbal responses.

As a result of the 2004–05 application process, which began in November 2003, 21 candidates were accepted for the program out of an applicant pool of 175.

Program Design and Practical Learning Experiences

LAUNCH fellows participate in a rigorous educational program designed to accelerate, intensify, and deepen the knowledge, skills, and experience of principal candidates. It includes three integrated components: a Summer Leadership Academy, a yearlong internship, and the Urban Network.

The Leadership Academy is a five-week intensive program at the James L. Allen Center of the Kellogg Graduate School of Management on the campus of Northwestern University. Fellows benefit from the expertise of LAUNCH staff, faculty from the Kellogg Center, and nationally recognized researchers, authors, leaders, and educators from across the country and Canada. (The Kellogg Center provides its faculty and conference facilities to LAUNCH at no cost.) Fellows spend their first and last weeks on campus to develop a community of practice that will sustain their collegial interdependence.

The academy curriculum is aligned to seven leadership proficiencies directly related to Chicago's Educational Improvement Plan, Every Child, Every School: school leadership; parent involvement and community partnerships; creating a student-centered learning climate; professional development and human resource management; instructional leadership (improving teaching and learning); school management and daily operations; and interpersonal effectiveness.

Fellows assess themselves on these proficiencies, using a rating system that includes Mastery, Competency, Learning, and No Experience. Based on this self-assessment, they create their own professional growth plan, which is used to guide the apprenticeship experience and to assess progress throughout participation in the program.

After completing the summer academy, LAUNCH fellows begin a semester-long, full-time paid apprenticeship, working with mentor principals recognized throughout CPS as extraordinarily successful leaders. (Mentor principals, selected through an application and screening process, attend the Summer Leadership Academy and Mentor Seminars on coaching and feedback.) During the apprenticeship, funded by the district, each fellow completes both an elementary and a secondary experience.

For each site experience, fellows and mentor principals complete an apprenticeship contract that clearly delineates each person's responsibilities and roles. Fellows work to address proficiencies identified in their self-assessment and they maintain a portfolio that documents the planning and completion of pertinent proficiencies. During the apprenticeship, the group of fellows meets monthly for a full-day seminar with the LAUNCH staff and other members of the summer academy faculty.

Finally, the Urban Network provides ongoing professional development, support, and networking opportunities for LAUNCH fellows. The network is a dynamic and vibrant social structure that sustains fellows' commitment to LAUNCH

goals, serving as a source of accurate information, expertise, assistance, and collegial interactions. It brings together fellows across all cohorts to participate in two-day seminar retreats each quarter—two at the Kellogg Center and others in similar conference settings. Fellows also participate in other events, such as issues meetings, career forums, and reunion dinners. The strength and liveliness of the Urban Network distinguishes LAUNCH from other principal preparation programs because it is a continuing source of professional support throughout the careers of its graduates. It also publishes an online newsletter that keeps fellows connected to one another and provides them with information updates, meeting schedules, and a resource directory.

Fellows graduate in June following their year-long apprenticeship, and are then eligible to apply for school leadership positions in Chicago schools. Fellows make a commitment to stay with the Chicago Public Schools for four years following their involvement in LAUNCH.

Success Factors

Over 188 individuals have completed the program, and of those, 65 currently serve as principals, while 64 are assistant principals. Because of the strong connection between LAUNCH and CPS's Every Child, Every School improvement strategy, CPS continues to support the program financially. Since 1999, CPS has invested over $4.8 million in LAUNCH. Other LAUNCH funding partners have included the Chicago Public Education Fund ($545,000 since 2000), the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and Northwestern University.

LAUNCH aspires to develop transformational leaders capable of turning ineffective schools into successful organizations that work for all students. It has translated the ISLLC standards into its own Principal Competencies, which form the foundation of the program's standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The five standards and 24 performance indicators represent the goals that successful candidates will achieve. To facilitate candidates' success, LAUNCH provides candidates with a self-assessment tool they are expected to utilize throughout their program experience. To support its use, LAUNCH has created

an assessment guide that lays out its five standards and 24 performance indicators in a page-by-page format. Each page includes one of the five standards, its performance indicators, a description of each indicator at the highest performance level, a list of competency-based learning opportunities, and a four-stage rubric that describes developmental stages of competency, from rudimentary to transformative. This document enables candidates to continuously assess their progress, and it also provides a focus for coaching and mentoring. Candidates use this feedback to develop a professional growth plan, and then use that plan as a tool for setting developmental goals. Candidates document their work in a professional portfolio that is assessed by LAUNCH staff members, coaches, mentors and others, using a rubric that is well known to the candidates.

Several external evaluations have reported the progress and outcomes of LAUNCH in relation to its goals. The Chicago Public Education Fund supported several studies by the Consortium of Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago. Early data suggest that LAUNCH principals perform at higher levels of effectiveness than their counterparts, have a deeper understanding of the school district's improvement plan, and are more effective in aligning their school improvements with the district's goals. Anecdotal data from district administrators describe LAUNCH principals as being able to step into the principalship and begin solving problems like a veteran.

The Broad Foundation selected LAUNCH as a showcase program in its benchmarking study. Broad plans to hold a two-day conference to highlight the findings of the study to allow other districts to learn from the knowledge and experiences of Chicago and then, with Broad support, accelerate the use of that knowledge to increase gains in student achievement by increasing the level and quality of school leadership.

One 1999–2000 fellow said she takes pride in being able to identify herself as "a LAUNCH leader" because the program's reputation is that it produces well-trained principals. She stated that the best thing about the program is, "Once you finish, you're not really finished. You always come back. As a principal, I'm always [facing dilemmas] that have no clear answers. If I have a problem or a question, I can call other

principals from my cohort and we pool our expertise [to resolve the issue]."

LAUNCH staff and participants cite the following factors as key to the success of the program:

» A vision of a new model of school leadership focused on instructional improvement and student learning;

» A strongly held core belief that all children can and will learn when the principals of their schools are effective, knowledgeable instructional leaders;

» An authentic, research-based, job-embedded curriculum;

» Attention to adult learning conditions and personalized professional development plans;

» Alignment of the curriculum with state and local leadership standards and performance indicators;

» Consistent use of data and feedback to strengthen the program;

» Direct and frequent feedback to candidates from faculty, field supervisors, and mentors; and

» Tight articulation among standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

NJ EXCEL (New Jersey Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership), Monroe Township, N.J.

Partners	Program Initiated	Admission Requirements	No. of Participants	Participant Demographics	Length of Instructional Program	Certification, Credits Earned
N.J. Principal and Supervisors Association, Foundation for Education Administration, N.J. State Action for Educational Leadership Project (Wallace), N.J. Department of Education	2003	Master's degree; five years teaching experience; requirements specific to four different models	(2005) 100 (2004) 109 (2003) 66	2004 Gender: 76% female Ethnicity: 83% White, 8% African American, 8% Hispanic, 1% Asian Am.	Twelve, 15, or 18 months that include: yearlong internship; instruction in summer, weeknights and Saturdays—225 hours (Model 1), 285 hours (Model 2), 350 hours (Model 3), 105 hours (Model 4 field-based internship).	Certificate of Eligibility for Principal (Models 1 and 2), Certificate for Supervisor and Principal (Model 3), Certificate for School Administrator (superintendent) Model 4 (American Council on Education)

New Jersey Expedited Certification for Educational Leadership (NJ EXCEL) emerged as a response to the shortage of highly qualified principal applicants across the state. Surveys of district superintendents conducted by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) in February 2001 found that 70 percent of the superintendents reported difficulty in filling principal positions with qualified candidates. Not surprisingly, shortages were more acute in districts with many low-performing schools. The NJDOE survey also identified a serious lack of diversity among the highly qualified candidates.

In response to the crises in number and quality of principal applicants, the New Jersey Principal and Supervisors Association (NJPSA) and its nonprofit Foundation for Educational Administration (FEA) created a broad-based initiative of related strategies entitled "The 3 Rs for School Leadership: Recruit, Retain, and Revitalize." NJ EXCEL, part of a continuum of programs run by the FEA, focuses on recruitment and preparation of high-quality school leaders. However, before NJ EXCEL could be initiated as an alternative pathway to certification, some legislative barriers needed to be addressed.

In April 2001, NJPSA submitted a proposal to NJDOE requesting revisions in the New Jersey Administrative Code that would authorize an expedited alternative to the traditional university-based master's degree required for principal certification, allowing entities other than institutions of higher education to provide a principal certification program. NJDOE approved the revisions in May 2002. The FEA then initiated the first NJ EXCEL cohort in January 2003. The program's mission is to increase, diversify, and improve the caliber of the school leader candidate pool in New Jersey by providing innovative, high-quality preparation in expedited pathways to certification for supervisor, principal, and school administrator.

Five core beliefs guide all of NJ EXCEL's work:

» All children can and must learn;

» School leadership and the quality of teaching are the two most critical factors in the improvement of student learning, and they are inextricably linked;

» Effective school leadership is the key to an individual school's success and to maximizing learning for all students;

» As the school's instructional leader, it is the principal who sets the tone, creates an environment that guides and supports learning for all those in the school community, and ultimately has the greatest impact on student performance; and

» It is the superintendent who sets the tone and direction for the district and supports the schools in their efforts to continuously improve teaching and learning for all students.

Selection Process

Recruiting participants for NJ EXCEL takes place in several ways. The most productive approach is through word-of-

mouth by current and previous candidates. Colleague-to-colleague marketing is attracting most new applicants. NJ EXCEL also recruits through the publications of its parent organization. A third recruitment approach now emerging as a good source involves superintendents: They are identifying teacher-leaders in their district and supporting their participation in NJ EXCEL with tuition and release time for coursework and internships. The program is developing additional recruitment strategies to identify and attract applicants from underrepresented groups.

Most NJ EXCEL participants self-select into the program; however, a formal application and selection process ensures that all candidates meet established criteria. Applicants typically come from such positions as instructional supervisor at a school or in a district office, high school deans and counselors, and teachers. All participants hold a master's degree in education and some hold doctoral degrees.

The completed application packet must include copies of all state certifications and graduate degrees, the applicant's job description, a current resume, and evidence of authorized sponsorship and commitment from the applicant's school district. At a formal interview with NJ EXCEL staff, applicants complete a writing sample and present a professional portfolio or work samples that exemplify both their leadership and supervisory practice and their knowledge of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and learning. After the interview, NJ EXCEL notifies successful applicants of their acceptance, and they begin the program in appropriate cohorts.

Program Design and Practical Learning Experiences

The goal of NJ EXCEL is to prepare eligible educators to meet state requirements for New Jersey supervisor, principal, and school administrator certification. Intended program outcomes are that these candidates will demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required in the areas of visionary, instructional, and community leadership, as well as strategic management.

To meet this goal, the program offers four models designed to match the individual's educational and professional experience and to offer an expedited path to three areas of state certification. The four models are:

Model #1: Certificate of Eligibility for Principal—designed for practicing supervisors with five or more years of supervisory experience (12 months; 225 instructional hours plus 60-hour school-based internship);

Model #2: Certificate of Eligibility for Principal—designed for classroom teachers and educational specialists holding a supervisor certificate OR practicing supervisors with zero to four years of supervisory experience (15 months; 90-hour school-based internship and guided inquiry into supervisory practice);

Model #3: Supervisor Certificate and Certificate of Eligibility for Principal—designed for classroom teachers and educational specialists (18 months; 350 instructional hours and 30-hour supervisory internship, plus 90-hour school-based internship); and

Model #4: Certificate of Eligibility for School Administrator (Superintendent)—designed for individuals who have a certificate of eligibility or standard certification for principal (6–12 months plus 105-hour project-based district-level internship).

NJ EXCEL's program design, curriculum, and assessments are aligned with the New Jersey Professional Standards for School Leaders and national Technology Standards for School Administrators (TSSA). These standards provide a framework for the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of effective school leaders. The standards also establish NJ EXCEL's expectations for candidate performance in four interrelated areas of school leadership: Visionary Leadership, Instructional Leadership, Community Leadership, and Strategic Management.

Addressing each of the four areas, the program's problem-based curriculum structures job-embedded and internship projects that emphasize the action research process, data-driven decision making, and technology-driven research applications. Ten themes spiral through the entire program curriculum: educational leaders as agents of change and continuous improvement; legal and ethical behavior; systems thinking; strategic planning and management; creating and managing the learning community; using research, data, and technology to improve schools and learning for all students;

accountability for high academic achievement for all students; ongoing self-assessment, reflection, and professional growth; systematic inquiry into leadership and instructional practice; and application of research-based leadership and instructional improvement strategies in authentic contexts.

All candidates participate in regional Inquiry Groups, which meet regularly and also communicate online to discuss readings, problem-based activities, and day-to-day challenges. In addition, the members of each group support one another with peer reviews and feedback related to action research and school-based projects. Each Inquiry Group has an e-Mentor who facilitates the group's activities and serves as its primary advisor. Cohort advisors, seminar instructors, internship mentors, and field supervisors provide additional support related to program requirements and individual candidate needs through NJ EXCEL's online learning community, which enables candidates and faculty to easily interact with one another as a collaborative learning community of practitioners.

The required field experiences build on candidates' prior experiences and involve them in real tasks and problems that district and school leaders encounter. Each candidate receives at least one on-site visit by an NJ EXCEL field supervisor who observes him or her in the performance of specific job-embedded activities and provides feedback and additional support through one-on-one conferencing. All candidates must also participate in a supervised internship in a district or school other than their own. Each candidate's district must commit to providing release time or equivalent time accommodation in order for the candidate to participate in the internship. Candidates' internships are guided by exemplary school and district leaders—mentors selected and oriented by NJ EXCEL.

Key Success Factors

The NJ EXCEL program is financially self-sustaining as a result of tuition fees. The costs for candidates is less than state university tuition and, in most cases, candidates' school districts are willing to pay all or some of their fees.

The success of the New Jersey Principal and Supervisors Association in mobilizing the state to revise the administrative code to accommodate a new pathway to administrative

certification was the initial achievement that made NJ EXCEL possible. In the two years since the first cohort of participants began the program, NJ EXCEL has demonstrated great success in attracting and preparing excellent school leaders.

Testimonials from participants, past and present, also speak to its impact. Many report that the culture of the program builds their confidence and commitment. In fact, many participants do not want the program to end, even after they earn certification. "This program has changed my life," says one. "I'm much more passionate about student learning." For another, the program "removed the barriers I felt to becoming a principal. Because of the program, I can be the kind of instructional leader I want to be." Anecdotal evidence also suggest that candidates' action research projects have had an impact on improving student achievement scores. In fact, in one case a candidate's project resulted in student scores increasing by 30 percent.

The NJ EXCEL staff and participants identify the following factors as contributors to the success of the program:

» The vision of a new model of school leadership focused on instructional improvement and student learning;

» A strongly held core belief that all children can and will learn when the principals of their schools are effective and knowledgeable instructional leaders;

» An authentic, research-based, job-embedded curriculum;

» Attention to adult learning conditions and personalized professional development plans;

» Alignment of the curriculum with state and national leadership standards and performance indicators;

» The consistent use of data and feedback to strengthen the program;

» The direct and frequent feedback to candidates from faculty, field supervisors, and mentors; and

» The tight articulation among standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

New Leaders for New Schools,
New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Memphis,
and San Francisco Bay Area

Partners	Program Initiated	Admission Requirements	No. of Participants	Participant Demographics	Length of Instructional Program	Certification, Credits Earned
School Districts: Chicago, Memphis, New York City, San Francisco Bay Area (Aspire charter school program), Washington D.C.; Broad Foundation; New Schools Venture Fund; Boeing; New Profit	2000	Bachelor's degree; five years professional experience; two years k–12 teaching experience; demonstrated leadership	(2005) 90 (2004) 56 (2003) 52 (2002) 31 (2001) 13	**2004** Gender: 60% female Ethnicity: 60% African American, 30% White, 7% Hispanic, 3% Asian Am.	Three years that include: 5–6 week summer intensive; yearlong, full-time residency; 4–5 day sessions during residency; 2 years of coaching and support following placement.	Principal certification (partner with local universities to ensure credentialing)

New Leaders for New Schools is a national, New York City-based nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster high academic achievement for every child by recruiting and developing the next generation of outstanding leaders for the nation's urban public schools. It has already established successful partnerships with public school systems and charter schools in New York City, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Memphis, and the San Francisco Bay Area, and plans call for expansion to additional urban areas each year.

New Leaders is the brainchild of three passionate co-founders: a former education policy advisor for the Clinton administration, an education reform advocate specializing in charter schools, and a former management consultant. In early 2000, New Leaders became the first nonprofit to win an award in the Harvard Business School's annual business plan contest. Funding offers followed, and in June New Leaders began operation. Five core beliefs undergird and drive every aspect of its work:

» Every child can reach high levels of academic excellence, regardless of background;

» Adults are accountable for building and maintaining systems to ensure that all children excel academically. Adults can and must do more to unlock the potential of each and every student;

» Delivering high-quality public education to all children is a cornerstone of our democracy, economy, and society, and it is critical to sustaining a just society that affords every child the full range of opportunities in life;

» Great principals lead great schools, coaching and inspiring teachers to reach and teach every child and collaborating with students' parents, families, and communities to make schools work; and

» With access to outstanding public schools, all children will develop the competence, critical thinking, and social and civic skills to reach their highest potential in the classroom and in life.

Selection Process

New Leaders aggressively recruits nationwide, seeking extremely talented people to become urban school principals. Recruitment for its 2004 candidates began in September 2003 with a campaign that included an executive-search-style approach of creating local and national nominator networks that extended to 17 education and professional conferences across the country. Many of its presentations were targeted to attract individuals outside the traditional education–based candidate pool. New Leaders received over 2,600 applications for its first 150 fellowships, representing a selection rate of 6 percent. Many applicants were also

attracted to New Leaders from Teach for America and The New Teacher Project pools.

A three-phase system is used to screen and select candidates based on nine selection criteria describing the qualities, values, and beliefs New Leaders seeks in its candidates. These criteria (along with descriptive indicators) are posted on the New Leaders Web site so potential applicants can assess their own readiness for the program:

» An unyielding belief in the potential of all children to excel academically;

» Persistence and determination;

» Problem-solving skills;

» Project management skills to deliver results;

» Knowledge of teaching and learning;

» Self-awareness and commitment to ongoing learning;

» Excellent communication and listening skills;

» The ability to build successful relationships; and

» The ability to collaborate and build teams.

The first of four application steps is the online completion and submission of a substantive 14-page questionnaire designed to capture an applicant's capacity on five of the selection criteria. (The remaining four criteria are assessed in following steps.) For example, one questionnaire item requires applicants to demonstrate a record of formal or informal leadership in bringing together diverse groups of adults to accomplish a common mission. Applicants must also have a bachelor's degree (or preferably a master's degree) and a minimum of five years of professional management or leadership experience in organizations such as nonprofits, military service, social services, and higher education and at least two years as a teacher. Approximately 50 percent of the applicants are screened out by the questionnaire.

Those who make it through this first screening then participate in an hour-and-a-half interview, which gives candidates an opportunity to share their experiences and discuss their interests in becoming urban school principals. At this stage, each candidate is also asked to write a 15-minute analysis of a case study. Approximately 50 percent of those interviewed successfully make it through this stage.

Successful first-round applicants are invited to participate in the final phase of the selection process—a full-day interview session. Activities during this phase include a written assignment, one-on-one interviews, case studies, role-playing, and a presentation. Candidates have the opportunity to experience a day in the life of a principal. Throughout the interview process evaluators use a comprehensive set of rubrics that are aligned with the selection criteria to rate applicants. Those who advance to this phase must bring to the interview their official transcripts, teaching certificate(s), at least one formal letter of reference from a supervisor, and a brief essay stating preferences for a mentor principal and school.

For the 2004 program, 56 candidates were admitted out of an initial pool of 1,100 applicants. New Leaders staff members assert that this acceptance rate of less than 6 percent demonstrates the rigorous and demanding design of the selection process and the aptness of the nine selection criteria. Over the last four years, New Leaders received over 2,600 applications for its first 150 fellowships.

Program Design and Practical Learning Experiences

New Leaders' program includes five years of support, a six-week intensive leadership training summer institute, a year-long, full-time residency with a mentor principal, on-site coaching, and working directly with a leadership coach—an outstanding veteran of an urban school principalship. New Leaders' curriculum content is closely aligned with the organization's core beliefs, selection criteria, theory of educational leadership, and the New Leaders Principal Leadership Competencies. These 12 essential competencies reflect research on the practices of urban school principals who have successfully turned around low-performing schools. To complete the program, candidates must demonstrate proficiency in all 12 competencies.

The program begins with a six-week Foundations Institute at the Wharton School of Management at the University of Pennsylvania. During this stage candidates attend university-level courses taught by outstanding principals, national education and leadership experts, and New Leaders staff. Courses focus on skill development in instructional and transformational leadership. This summer institute also helps to build a national community of peers focused on common goals.

Following the six-week summer institute, candidates are placed with carefully selected mentor principals at schools within partner districts for a full-time residency that spans the length of the school year. During this residency, candidates are expected to have direct responsibility for improving student achievement and teacher development and coaching. They also attend weekly seminars for ongoing professional development and peer support in their local districts, and they receive bimonthly visits from their leadership coaches. New Leaders coaches and field support staff lead the seminars and use participants' authentic experiences as a concrete basis for discussing school leadership theory. Because state certification requirements vary (e.g., some states have minimal requirements for teaching credentials while others have complex, multi-step requirements), New Leaders also creates opportunities for candidates to earn full state certification with a local university partner.

During the residency there are also four five-day Foundation Seminars, continuing the transformational and instructional leadership concentrations that began during the summer Foundations Institute. Held in program cities and attended by all residents, these seminars provide an opportunity for the national community to reconvene, share experiences, and provide peer support.

During the residency, candidates receive mentoring from a leadership coach, recruited from a pool of principals who have retired after successful careers leading excellent urban schools. New Leaders has developed a coaching-skills curriculum, and it brings the national cadre of coaches together for training four times a year. The coaches also participate in both the summer Foundations Institute and the four Foundations Seminars throughout the year. Coaches visit each resident and mentor principal at the residency site at least once a week to help structure the resident's working relationship and leadership responsibilities with the mentor principal. They also help residents define a personal leadership development plan and construct a professional portfolio of their accomplishments during the residency, and they serve as the faculty of record for residents' coursework and assignments. Coaches are also responsible for conducting formal assessments of residents' progress to evaluate each resident's readiness for the principalship.

All candidates are required to make a long-term commitment to the partner school district in which they are placed. In addition to completing their paid residency, they commit to spending a minimum of three years as a principal or an assistant principal in the district. Each successful new leader receives job-seeking support. They also receive at least two years of coaching and mentoring during their first principalship, along with opportunities for collaboration and problem solving with other new leaders.

Key Success Factors

New Leaders for New Schools has generated significant support from a wide variety of partners, including strategic consulting firm Kirkland and Ellis. Active funders of the New Leaders preparation program include several of the nation's leading venture philanthropists, such as the Boston-based New Profit, Inc., the Silicon Valley-based New Schools Venture Fund, and the Los Angeles-based Broad Foundation.

New Leaders' core philosophy and theory of action emphasize the use of data analysis as a means of determining personal, professional, organizational, and program effectiveness. Because the program is still relatively new, extensive success data is not yet available. However, program staff have been tracking placement rates since the beginning and that rate for successful residents is 95 percent, including 60 percent as principals and 35 percent as assistant principals. Close to 100 "new leaders" have emerged from the program and are now serving in urban schools around the country.

The New Leaders staff identify the following factors as important to program success:

» A commitment of the founders and staff to the program's vision, mission, and theory of action about ensuring that urban schools are environments in which all children achieve at high levels;

» A coherence between core beliefs, vision, mission, selection criteria, and principal competencies that provides a scaffold for everything the organization does;

» Rigorous application, screening, selection, and admission processes;

» Alignment of the curriculum with the selection criteria and principal leadership competencies;

» A culture of honesty, transparency, and feedback;

» A consistent use of data and feedback to strengthen the program;

» Direct and frequent support, feedback, and expertise from leadership coaches;

» The continuing leadership and ability of the national team to secure funding, streamline organizational operations, and monitor program coherence and quality; and

» Partnerships across the public and private sectors in each city—including the school district, corporations, foundations, and government.

Principals Excellence Program, Pike County, Ky.

Partners	Program Initiated	Admission Requirements	No. of Participants	Participant Demographics	Length of Instructional Program	Certification, Credits Earned
University of Kentucky, Ky. Department of Education, Ky. Association of School Administrators, AEL, U.S. Department of Education	2002	Holds or is eligible to hold principal certification	(2004) 15 (2003) 15	**2004** Gender: 33% female Ethnicity: 100% White	Twelve months that include: one day each week over academic year; one-week summer intensive.	18-21 UKY credits toward Level II Principal or Supervisor of Instruction certification

The Principals Excellence Program (PEP) is a partnership between the University of Kentucky and eastern Kentucky's rural Pike County School District, in cooperation with Morehead State University, which historically has trained most of the district's teachers and administrators. The program aims to enhance the leadership skills of practicing and aspiring principals in high-need Appalachian schools. Its overarching goal is to develop and refine a model for improved school leadership that ensures learning for rural school students considered at risk of academic failure. Its specific objectives are to:

1. Create a new generation of skilled instructional leaders and nurture a culture of learning that influences recruitment, preparation, and selection of future school leaders;

2. Institutionalize a grow-your-own strategy for empowering instructional leaders throughout the local community and within the school community of students and parents; and

3. Model and evaluate a program of preparation, professional development, and reculturation of school leadership to ensure learning for struggling students, utilizing a partnership among the local high-need rural school district, the state's larger land-grant university, and the regional public university that provides preservice preparation.

The PEP program consists of an interconnected series of seminar-workshops, field-based experiences, and structured reflections aimed at developing a professional community of principals who are able and willing to be change agents—reflective practitioners committed to lifelong learning and the use of data to drive decision-making. As a critical part of this advanced leadership development program, participants engage each semester in a field-based practicum intended to support situated learning under the guidance of carefully selected mentor principals and to develop participants' ability to conduct collaborative action research.

Selection Process

PEP's recruitment and selection processes are aimed at finding the best possible leadership candidates. PEP requires that each candidate be nominated by an administrator or other staff member who perceives the candidate's leadership potential. Participants must be practicing principals, classroom teachers, or other education personnel who qualify to receive provisional administrator certification and who sign an agreement to complete the training and seek a position as a school leader. Recruitment guidelines identify specific characteristics needed by Pike County school leaders who will effectively serve children and youth considered at risk of academic problems. The candidate must:

» Understand Kentucky's Learning Goals;

» Believe that all children can learn at high levels;

» Have a thorough knowledge of curriculum and assessment;

» Demonstrate instructional leadership within his or her school community;

» Show evidence of being a master teacher;

» Work well as a team member;

» Show evidence of being a lifelong learner; and

» Understand the teaching and learning process.

PEP initially set out to identify and recruit from Pike County and other regional school districts two 15-member cohorts of practicing and aspiring school leaders for advanced leadership development. Candidates had been identified by Pike County district leaders as having the potential to become effective principals or assistant principals in the district's schools. While large geographically, Pike County has a small population, with most people living in little pocket communities. As a result, district administrators tend to know teachers and principals very well. This familiarity enables them to select good candidates. The first PEP cohort (January-December 2003) of 15 participants included eight practicing principals or assistant principals and seven aspiring principals who held administrator certification but currently served as classroom teachers, curriculum coordinators, deans or media specialists. The second PEP cohort (January-December 2004) included nine administrators and six teachers.

Program Design and Practical Learning Experiences

PEP is a practical, field-based, job-embedded leadership development program guided by leadership educators from the University of Kentucky and leadership practitioners from Pike County that is delivered through a closed cohort model. This cohort structure—a uniquely defined community of learners that remains intact throughout the entire program—is considered a key program element. Early and ongoing community-building strategies ensure the creation and maintenance of a risk-free learning environment within the cohort. PEP integrates multiple learning opportunities geared toward exposing participants to various situations and venues where diverse leadership skills can be developed. PEP includes: (a) biweekly full-day seminar-workshops; (b) biweekly clinical practicum during spring semester guided by elementary principal mentors; (c) biweekly clinical practicum during fall semester guided by secondary principal mentors; (d) ongoing Web-based activities; and (e) a summer institute involving all school administrators in the partnering district.

During the spring, PEP cohort members engage in a coordinated series of biweekly advanced educational leadership seminars and school-site action research activities. The seminars, delivered by University of Kentucky faculty in the Department of Administration and Supervision, focus on visionary and collaborative leadership practices. During alternative weeks, PEP participants work with mentor principals in selected elementary schools in Pike County, conducting action research to identify strategies to improve student learning.

During the summer, PEP cohort members join all Pike County school administrators for an intensive, weeklong leadership academy. For the program's first summer, a leadership consultant from the Kentucky Association of School Administrators Leadership Academy guided Pike County administrators in a review of the district's P-12 curriculum and intensive action planning to meet targeted student achievement goals in mathematics and science. That fall, the biweekly advanced leadership seminars with university faculty focused on instructional and ethical leadership practices. Action research was conducted in three secondary schools within Pike County.

The second cohort began the program in January 2004 and will continue through December 2004, following the same general pattern as the first, but in a more streamlined version that was developed based on feedback and program assessment. Nearby Johnson County became a partner for the second PEP cohort.

Pike County School District has developed and implemented a comprehensive model of administrator evaluation using the ISLLC standards performance indicators as the framework. Thus, to align with the district's administrator performance framework, the PEP curriculum is structured on the four central and recurring themes within the ISLLC standards:

» A vision for success;

» A focus on teaching and learning;

» An involvement of all stakeholders; and

» A demonstration of ethical behavior.

Both formal and informal data inform and drive the actions of PEP's instructional and leadership teams. Focus group interviews involving Cohort A members were conducted in

March 2003 and October 2003. Additional focus group interviews for Cohort A were scheduled for fall 2004. An evaluation survey was administered at the close of the first training module and at the beginning of the third module; another post-survey was administered at the close of Cohort A in December 2003. Formal data collection for Cohort B is proceeding in the same way.

Success Factors

Although PEP formally began in January 2003, its impact on the community of administrative practice was becoming noticeable during the summer institute held in Pikeville during June 2003. Pike County district leadership team members who observed the summer institute noted marked differences in interactions among district administrators: The group appeared to be a more supportive, collaborative community of practice. One participant-observer noted participants' increased displays of confidence and competence as educational leaders. According to the project director, practicing principals involved in PEP say, "they continue to learn more about the practice of educational administration through the PEP network—despite their breadth and depth of experiences as principals."

PEP receives grant funding from the U.S. Department of Education's School Leadership Development Program through September 2005 that allows for a formal program evaluation. Pike County School District hopes to be able to continue the program internally using district administrators as instructors.

Reflecting on the progress and successes of the program, University of Kentucky faculty, Pike County School District administrators, and PEP participants identified the following contributing factors:

» The collaborative partnership and shared vision between the Pike County School District—especially the superintendent—and the University of Kentucky faculty;

» Seed funding to support start-up costs;

» Shared responsibility between the university and the district for developing curriculum, monitoring PEP candidates' progress, and planning for the logistical implementation of PEP sessions;

» The integration of the curriculum with authentic tasks and reality-based examples from PEP participants' experiences;

» The ongoing assessment of cohort progress to ensure that program components were logically interconnected and delivered at relevant times to provide program coherence;

» The strong commitment of university faculty and district leadership to "get the job done" and then celebrate publicly to acknowledge accomplishments; and

» The consistent in-district monitoring of PEP activities by the district's director of curriculum and instruction and a leadership consultant who also provides on-site coaching support for new principals.

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WestEd is a nonprofit research, development, and service agency committed to improving learning at all stages of life, both in school and out. WestEd has offices across the United States and also serves as one of the nation's 10 regional educational laboratories.

WestEd's partner in developing this series of research reports and innovation guides is Edvance. Created by the American Productivity and Quality Center, Edvance is a resource for process and performance improvement with a focus on benchmarking, knowledge management, performance measurement, and quality improvement initiatives in education.

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Appendix A:
Research Methodology

The research design and methodology for this project is an adaptation of the four-phase benchmarking process used by the American Productivity and Quality Center (APQC), along with general case study processes. This guide is based on a longer and more detailed report that includes individual case studies of each of the six study sites and a cross-site analysis of key generalizable findings. While classic benchmarking looks for best or promising practices using quantitative measures and comparisons among organizations, most of the innovative programs in this study are too new to fully support this methodology. A brief overview of this project's adapted methodology follows.

Develop Conceptual Framework

A study scope or conceptual framework was developed from an analysis of research and descriptive information about school leadership preparation, including alternative route programs. Experts in leadership development and alternative route approaches were recruited to serve on an external advisory panel that provided feedback to refine the framework and prioritize issues to investigate. The resulting study scope and guiding questions directed all aspects of the study (see figure 2 on page 7).

Site selection was a multistep process to ensure that the guide would feature an array of practices reflected in the elements of the study scope and would represent a variety of geographic locations and contexts with which district administrators, university faculty members, and other key stakeholders could identify. Initially, 60 potential sites were identified based on public documents,

marketing materials, reports, and program Web sites using online search descriptors such as alternative leadership preparation, alternative principal certification, alternative licensure for school administrators, expedited certification, and accelerated certification.

A screening process filtered the list to 18 sites. These second-round sites were selected based on four criteria: candidates are recruited into the program based on demonstrated leadership experience; the program offers an accelerated route to certification; the program is currently accepting candidates; and the program has evidence of promising practices in the 24 areas of the study scope, such as screening candidates using stated criteria, tailored, field-based programming, and strong mentor support.

The 18 sites were then screened using a weighted criteria matrix based on the study scope (figure 2). The screen-

ing process was conducted through targeted phone interviews with program staff and thorough reviews of program materials including: recruiting and application procedures; selection criteria and screening process; curriculum scope and sequence; instructional manuals; residency experience; coaching; mentoring; participant evaluation and support; follow-through support; and program evaluation information. The selected six sites scored between 24 and 20 on a scale of 24 possible points and were ranked based on their weighted scores. In addition, they represented a range of geographic locations, contextual conditions, and types of programming.

Collect Data

Collecting detailed descriptive information from program staff, partners, funders, participants, and district leaders was key to understanding each program's practices, the outcome or impact each achieved, and the lessons learned from which others could benefit. The major steps to this phase involved finalizing the site visit interview guide based on the study scope and arranging and conducting site visits to the programs.

Each of the six sites hosted a two-day visit that included interviews with administrators, program participants, and partners, as well as observation of events when scheduling permitted. During the site visits, these key personnel and stakeholders were asked questions from the site visit discussion guide tailored to their particular role group. In addition, artifacts from the sites, such as applications, planning tools, interview protocols, curriculum materials,

and participant work were collected to provide concrete examples of program practices. The study team collated the information collected during the site visits and developed a case study for each site.

Analyze and Report

Once all the data were collected, the project team analyzed them to understand the promising practices uncovered throughout the benchmarking project, both within and across programs.

Two products resulted from this research: a report of findings and this practitioner's guide. The report provides a more detailed analysis of key findings across sites, a detailed case study of each site, a collection of artifacts, and key project documents. The practitioner's guide is a summary of the report intended for broad distribution.

Adapt

This guide offers descriptive examples of new ways to prepare school leaders for the challenging work awaiting them. Ultimately, readers of this guide will need to select, adapt, and implement practices that meet their individual needs and contexts. The guide will be broadly distributed around the country through presentations at national and regional conferences, as well as through national associations and networks. The guide is also accessible online at http://www.ed.gov/admins/recruit/prepare/alternative/index.html.

Appendix B: Resources

The organizations listed below are provided as examples of resources that may be helpful to the reader. Their inclusion should not imply an endorsement by the Department. There also may be many other useful resources on this topic.

The Broad Foundation works to improve k-12 urban public education through better governance, management, and labor relations. The foundation's goals are to train a broad, deep bench of current and aspiring leaders in education; to redefine the traditional roles, practices, and policies of school board members, superintendents, principals, and labor union leaders to better address contemporary challenges in education; to attract and retain the highest quality talent to leadership roles in education; to equip school systems and their leaders with modern tools for effective management; to provide tangible incentives for educators to advance academic performance; and to honor and showcase success wherever it occurs in urban education.

http://www.broadfoundation.org/

The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, based in Washington, D.C., supports research, publications, and action projects of national significance in elementary and secondary education reform, as well as significant education reform projects. In May 2003, the institute, along with the Broad Foundation, published *Better Leaders for America's Schools: A Manifesto*. The document contends that American public education faces a "crisis in leadership" that cannot be alleviated from traditional sources of school principals and superintendents. Its signers do not believe this crisis can be fixed by conventional strategies for preparing, certifying, and employing education leaders. Instead, they urge that first-rate leaders be sought outside the education field, earn salaries on par with their peers in other professions, and gain new authority over school staffing, operations, and budgets.

http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/

The Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) seeks to improve education—and the lives of children and their families—through positive and visionary change. Through its School Leadership for the 21st Century Initiative, IEL has published several informative reports on the state of school leadership and the need for highly qualified leaders in America's public schools. The task force report *Leadership for Student Learning: Reinventing the Principalship* (October 2000) suggests that the core mission of the principalship must be redefined as leadership for student learning. To "reinvent the principalship" for 21st century schools, communities must fill the pipeline with effective school leaders, support the profession, and guarantee quality and results. Guidelines and suggested questions are included for those who wish to start conversations on reinventing the principalship in their communities by bringing together diverse constituencies and empowering leaders with knowledge and applicable ideas.

http://www.iel.org/

The National Center for Education Information (NCEI) is a private, nonpartisan research organization in Washington, D.C., specializing in survey research and data analysis. NCEI is the authoritative source of information about alternative preparation and certification of teachers and school administrators. The Web site provides easy access to detailed information about policies and alternative certification routes in each state.

http://www.ncei.com/

The Haberman Educational Foundation, Inc. promotes research-based models for identifying teachers and principals—particularly educators who serve students at risk and in poverty. The Foundation's "Star Online Administrator Questionnaire" and "Online Pre-Screener" identify candidates who are likely to succeed in alternative administrative certification programs.

http://www.habermanfoundation.org/

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. In its publication *The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium: Standards For School Leaders* (1996), the ISLLC standards present a common core of knowledge, dispositions, and performances that link leadership to productive schools and enhanced education outcomes. The ISLLC standards have been used as a foundational source for the six programs in this guide.

http://www.ccsso.org/

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) is a nonprofit organization that provides information to state education policy leaders on many critical education issues. The ECS Web site offers data about what states are doing regarding alternative licensure and certification of principals and superintendents. Recent publications include: *Licensure/Certification: What States Are Doing—Administrator License Requirements, Portability, Waivers and Alternative Certification*, which contains information on license requirements, portability, waivers, and alternative certification for administrators and allows for comparing across states (April 2004), and *Certification of Principals and Superintendents in the U.S., 2003,* which provides information on school administrator certification requirements for each state. This document provides state-by-state information on regular path and alternate path certification requirements for school administrator certification.

http://www.ecs.org/

Notes

[1] Elaine McEwan summarizes 20 years of research on effective schools and discusses her analysis in *The traits of highly effective principals: From good to great performance* (Corwin Press, 2003).

[2] Murphy, J. and Louis, K. S. (1999). *Handbook of research on educational administration.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; Smith, W. F. and Andrews, R. L. (1989). *Instructional leadership: How principals make a difference.* Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Glickman, C. D. (2002). *Leadership for learning: How to help teachers succeed.* Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; and Elmore, R. J. (2000). *Building a new structure for school leadership.* New York: The Albert Shanker Institute.

[3] Newmann, F. M., Smith, B., Allensworth, E., and Bryk, A. S. (2001). *School instructional program coherence: Benefits and challenges.* Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research.

[4] For a perspective on the school community environment as a positive force for school reform, see Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: Probing the depths of educational reform.* London: The Falmer Press, pp. 84–103.

[5] Feistritzer, E. (January 2003). *School administrator certification in the United States, 2002.* Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Information.

[6] The 11 states reporting that they have approved innovative pathways to administrative certification include California (new legislation), Idaho, Kentucky, Maryland (intended for people already in the education system), Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Ohio (not used), Tennessee (not used), and Texas (only for people who have been teachers or principals). Although New Jersey, New York, and Oregon report having no alternate routes, they do have programs for non-traditional candidates to get into administrative jobs. Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, and Kansas have alternate routes for superintendents, but not for principals. Hawaii, which has only one school district, has an alternate route for principals. Florida passed legislation in 2002 giving local school boards authority to set their own alternative qualifications for persons wishing to become principals. Feistritzer, op.cit.

[7] Leithwood, K. and Duke, D. L. (1999). "A century's quest to understand school leadership." In Murphy, J. and Louis, K. S., *Handbook of research on educational administration.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 45–72.

[8] Haycock, K. (1999). *Dispelling the myth: High-poverty schools exceeding expectations.* Washington, D.C.: The Education Trust; Barkley, S., Bottoms, G., Feagin, C. H., and Clark, S. (1999). *Leadership matters: Building leadership capacity.* Atlanta, Ga.: Southern Regional Education Board; Fullan, M. (1993). *Change forces: Probing the depths of educational reform.* London: The Falmer Press.

[9] http://www.ccsso.org/Projects/interstate_school_leaders_licensure_consortium/standards_for_school_leaders/562.cfm. See also WestEd. (2003). *Moving standards into everyday work: Descriptions of practice.* San Francisco: Author.

Innovations in Education: Innovative Pathways to School Leadership

[10] NAESP Fact Sheet/NAESP 2002 Survey at http://www.naesp.org.

[11] Knapp, M. S. et al. (1995). *Teaching for meaning in high-poverty classrooms.* New York: Teachers College Press; Charles A. Dana Center. (1999). *Hope for urban education: A study of nine high-performing high-poverty urban elementary schools.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education; Blase J., and Blase J. (1999). "Principals' instructional leadership and teacher development: Teachers' perspectives," *Educational Administration Quarterly, 35* (3), 349–78.