CHANGE AGENTS: HOW STATES CAN DEVELOP EFFECTIVE SCHOOL LEADERS
CONCEPT PAPER

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New Leaders

GEORGE W. BUSH INSTITUTE
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Center for American Progress

Our two organizations applaud the release of this timely report that will help states to ensure that a high-caliber principal leads every school in the nation. These are hard hitting, no-nonsense recommendations that build on our organizations' previous work on the state's role in improving leader preparation, entry into, and continuation in the profession. They are also in line with our focus on rigorous educator evaluations based on effectiveness measures.

The principal job is so important yet is often overlooked in national policy conversations that to date have focused primarily on teachers. While strong teachers are absolutely critical to student performance, we believe that any educator policy improvement efforts should logically include school leaders. We know from the research that principals—as leaders of the teaching professionals on campus—are best positioned to ensure that every student has a great teacher year after year and the consecutive years of learning that makes them college and career ready.

The principalship is not easy work. Many people have an outdated image of the school principal as someone who holds the key to the building, oversees the bus and extra-curricular schedules, and keeps order throughout the school. But the reality is the job has changed dramatically. From day one, principals are expected to shape and articulate a vision of academic success and bring staff on board; consistently collect and analyze school data; develop and support teachers to improve instruction; create a safe school culture oriented towards student success; and advance student achievement—all within a challenging environment.

This report highlights the very important role that states play in cultivating leadership talent. The fact is many of our state policies need updating. Most state policies do not reflect the latest research on the skills and behaviors of effective principals nor do they require aspiring principals to demonstrate competency before obtaining a license enabling them to obtain a school leader position. State leadership policies should be reconsidered given this research and the ability to incorporate principal effectiveness measures into preparation program approval and licensure decisions.

Our two organizations also recently released separate papers highlighting current

challenges in state policies impacting principals and encouraging states to take action to expand the supply of high-quality school leaders by using the levers of more rigorous approval of preparation programs, more appropriate initial and renewal licensing requirements, and connecting these processes to educator evaluations tied to measures of student and school effectiveness. While we are agnostic on the type of prep programs, we believe all programs should be held to high standards of practice, outcome measures of their graduates, and with consequences for poor program performance based on these measures. We are opposed to compensation based on the Master's degree salary bump devoid of actual job performance and effectiveness considerations. And we support streamlined governance structures that combine support with accountability. All in all, the paper speaks to our concern about improving human resources management at the state and district levels and doing quality control at the front end through rigorous entry requirements.

New Leaders brings a new voice to this very important topic. With more than ten years of on-the-ground experience training school leaders to turn around underperforming schools, New Leaders has tremendous insight into the challenges school leaders face and how state and district policies and practices can hinder or support principal success. This report and the accompanying companion guide build on New Leaders' experience in the field and give states tools and strategies to reframe policies to bolster the principal talent pipeline.

While recent state efforts to infuse additional rigor and promote accountability into school leadership policies are encouraging, there is still much work to do to ensure that dynamic and effective principals are leading every school. We hope this new report helps states take action to implement proactive and coherent strategies for expanding the numbers of talented school leaders. Our schools and students deserve no less.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush Institute   Center for American Progress

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About New Leaders

Founded in 2000 by a team of social entrepreneurs, New Leaders is a national nonprofit that develops transformational school leaders and designs effective leadership policies and practices for school systems across the country. Our experience preparing principals and recommending them for licensure in eight states as well as our services work at the state level informed our recommendations in this paper.

THE IMPORTANCE
OF LEADERSHIP

THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP

PRINCIPALS AS CHANGE AGENTS

Great principals are change agents. As school leaders, they are the lynchpin of effective implementation of any school-level reform and are crucial to student success. Indeed, research shows that strong principals have a powerful multiplier effect: they support effective teaching, build an achievement-based school culture, and align resources to meet goals that translate into student success. Principals account for 25 percent of a school's total impact on student achievement[1] and can have a greater impact on all students than teachers because principals ensure effective instruction year to year across the entire school.[2] The best way to see effective teaching and student achievement gains at scale is to deepen the bench of great school leaders.

While there is no shortage of certified principal candidates, superintendents have long reported that many principals are not prepared for the job—41 percent believe principals should be better at their jobs and only 33 percent believe that principals are better prepared now than they were in the past.[3] A RAND Corporation report commissioned by New Leaders found that only 77.5 percent of new principals across six urban districts were still in the role after 3 years. While some principals may be choosing to leave the profession, RAND's data suggest that districts are replacing principals due to ineffectiveness in improving student achievement.[4] Additionally, according to the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals, "heightened accountability requirements under which schools operate have significantly increased the complexity of the work of the principal."[5]

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1. Leithwood, K., Louis, K. S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). How Leadership Influences Student Learning. New York, NY: Wallace Foundation; Marzano, R.J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. (2005). School leadership that works: From research to results. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

2. Branch, G., Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G. (2012). Estimating the effect of leaders on public sector productivity: The case of school principals (pp. 45). Washington, D.C.: National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education.

3. Farkas, S., Johnson, J., Duffett, A., & Foleno, T. with Foley, P. (2001). Trying to Stay Ahead of the Game: Superintendents and Principals Talk about School Leadership. New York, NY: Public Agenda.

4. Burkhauser, S., Gates, S., Hamilton, L., & Ikemoto, G. (2012). First-Year Principals in Urban School Districts: How Actions and Working Conditions Relate to Outcomes. Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation.

5. Clifford, M. & Ross, S. (2012). Rethinking Principal Evaluation: A New Paradigm Informed by Research and Practice. Washington, DC: National Association of Elementary School Principals and National Association of Secondary School Principals.

The principal is the best-positioned person to ensure successive years of quality teaching for each child and critical to the success of any school-level reform.

Principals as Change Agents
Highly effective principals establish a clear and compelling vision for high-quality instruction in their roles beyond just "building manager."

Instructional Leader
Ensure rigorous, standards-based, goal- and data-driven learning and teaching.

Human Capital Manager
Build and manage a high-quality staff aligned to the school's vision of success for every student.

Culture Builder
Develop an achievement- and belief-based school-wide culture.

A Vision for the Future
To create a highly effective principal corps of change agents, states need to develop a strong pipeline that identifies and attracts school leaders with adult leadership skills

Indeed, a lot is expected of principals today. Beyond the traditional "building manager," highly effective principals play three key roles, identified through case studies of New Leader principals that examined which leadership practices led to dramatic student achievement gains:

- Instructional Leader—To ensure rigorous, standards-based, goal- and data-driven learning and teaching;

- Human Capital Manager—To build and manage a high-quality staff aligned to the school's vision of success for every student; and

- Culture Builder—To develop an achievement- and belief-based school-wide culture.[6]

Aligned to these three crucial roles, highly effective principals—or change agents—establish a clear and compelling vision for high-quality instruction at the school; hire, develop, and evaluate teachers against those expectations for instruction; and build learning-centered school cultures that retain great teachers and help them thrive.[7] These crucial roles are supported by operations and systems that support learning and are enhanced by a principal's personal leadership characteristics.

These myriad responsibilities make the principal the best-positioned person in every school to ensure successive years of quality teaching for each child and critical to the success of any school-level reform. States must focus on school leaders—principals implement new standards; they analyze teacher and student data; they recruit, develop, evaluate, support, and retain the best teachers; and they build and lead teams to turn around our lowest performing schools. State accountability systems are driven by expectations that students and schools will achieve these outcomes. Yet, state policies in both principal preparation and licensure often lack this focus in determining who can lead schools. Consistency between state policy and expectations for principals will help all actors in the system move in tandem towards the same ultimate goal: academic excellence for all children.

This concept paper is a primer for states that want to build a pipeline of highly effective principals by reforming the way they hold preparation programs accountable for results and improving their licensure system. It lays out current challenges in the field, describes a case for outcomes-focused school leadership, and makes policy recommendations for achieving that vision. The paper is accompanied by an important resource, the *Change Agents Companion Guide*, which serves as a framework state policymakers can use to explore fundamental questions of purpose and design based on a new vision for leadership and an assessment of tools at their disposal. Now is the time for states to build a pipeline of change agents—school leaders who get results for students.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Setting the bar for who can lead a school is among a state's highest-impact activities to support all students. This will allow states to get the highest potential people into school systems on the front end and ensure they are effective throughout their career.

In order to create a highly effective principal corps of change agents, states need to develop a strong pipeline that identifies and attracts effective teachers, teacher leaders, and other school-level leaders with adult leadership skills. State policies and practices must then ensure that the strongest potential leaders—including former teachers who left the education profession and developed broader leadership expertise through different careers—have clear pathways to the principalship. Those pathways include rigorous preparation with a coherent and relevant curriculum, opportunities for clinical practice, assessment of skill attainment, and ongoing support. Finally, states and districts can continue to monitor principal performance on-the-job to ensure that principals remain fit for the important work of leading teachers and shaping students' futures.

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6. New Leaders (2011). Urban Excellence Framework. New York: New Leaders.

7. Adams, E., Ikemoto, G., & Taliaferro, L. (2012). Playmakers: How Great Principals Build and Lead Great Teams of Teachers. New York, NY: New Leaders. Augustine. C. et al (2009). Improving School Leadership: The Promise of Cohesive Leadership Systems.

To make this vision a reality, states will need to work collaboratively with programs that prepare school leaders to create approval and renewal systems for preparation programs that are informed by program outcomes. To ensure principal preparation is working and that principals in the field remain effective, states will also need to develop better licensure criteria with regular, performance-based renewal cycles.

This work is not easy, but it is important. Changing dynamics—such as increased movement of principal candidates across state lines and state capacity during tight budget times—are certainly a challenge. But determining who is prepared to educate our children—by approving preparation programs and determining licensure status—is a core responsibility of the state. By investing in more effective approaches, states can develop higher quality programs and create a more efficient state role. This work should not be taken on lightly: it

will require dedicated time and a committed focus. And these improvements need to be coupled with other state investments in reforms such as improved data systems and principal evaluations. Finally, states will need to work together with districts, preparation programs, educators, and other stakeholders to achieve high-quality implementation.

Fortunately, there are an increasing number of resources for states ready to take on this challenge. In addition to this concept paper and companion guide, several publications have increased attention on principal preparation, especially the authority and power of states to influence their principal pipeline.[8] As states, institutions of higher education (IHEs), districts, and non-profit organizations have begun to work together to re-imagine principal preparation, models for state action are emerging.

8. Augustine. C. et al (2009). Improving School Leadership: The Promise of Cohesive Leadership Systems. Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation. Briggs, K, Cheney, G.R., Davis, J. & Moll, K. (2013). Operating in the Dark: What Outdated State Policies and Data Gaps Mean for Effective School Leadership. Dallas, TX: George W. Bush Institute. Cheney, G. & Davis, J. (2011). Gateways to the Principalship: State Power to Improve the Quality of School Leaders. Washington, DC: Center for American Progress. Cheney, G., Davis J., & Holleran, J (2010). A New Approach to Principal Preparation: Innovative Programs Share Their Best Practices and Lessons Learned. Fort Worth, TX: Rainwater Leadership Alliance. Darling-Hammond, Linda, LaPointe, Michelle, Meyerson, Debra, and Orr, Margaret, (2007). Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World: Lessons from Exemplary Leadership Development Programs – Final Report. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation. Mitgang, L. & Gill, J. (2012). The Making of the Principal: Five Lessons in Leadership Training. New York, NY: The Wallace Foundation. Hambrick Hitt, D., Tucker, P., Young, M. (2012). The Professional Pipeline for Educational Leadership: A White Paper Developed to Inform the Work of the National Policy Board for Educational Administration. Charlottesville, VA: University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA).

THE CHALLENGE: PRINCIPAL READINESS GAP

Is your state satisfied with the quality of your administrative certification programs? A low bar for state program approval allows low-quality programs to stay in operation. These programs fail to meet one or more of the characteristics of effective leadership preparation. For example, they do little outreach to prospective candidates and admit candidates based on low admissions standards that are not aligned to leadership potential. They graduate large numbers of people who never apply for leadership positions, suggesting they may have completed the program simply to obtain the automatic pay raise that comes with the receipt of a Master's degree in administration. Their coursework is fragmented, unrelated to the increasingly rigorous demands of a principal's job, and led by faculty with little practitioner experience. Program delivery is mostly lecture-style and—without a district partner—provides few opportunities for candidates to practice new skills. Where required, clinical internships do not embed the candidates in a school-based leadership role. At the conclusion of predetermined seat time hours, candidates are recommended for initial licensure without being asked to effectively demonstrate mastery of critical skills in an authentic setting. Program completers head off to the principalship with no plan for ongoing support.

Now imagine a highly effective teacher in your state—a promising change agent—who has been given the opportunity to practice adult leadership by managing grade-level meetings at her school. She excelled in peer-to-peer interactions and is interested in expanding her reach by becoming a principal. She explored local preparation programs looking for a setting where she can practice and develop her leadership skills and learn how to effectively manage others; set a vision for her school; and invest students, teachers, parents, and the broader community. If her option is a low-quality program that lacks rigor and has long seat-time requirements with no opportunity to engage in real leadership practice, she begins to consider the hurdles ahead of her on the path to school leadership—and your state may lose a talented change agent.

THE CHALLENGE: PRINCIPAL READINESS GAP

THE CASE FOR IMPROVING PRINCIPAL PREPARATION

While there are examples of high-performing principal preparation programs based at IHEs, there is an urgent need to overhaul the current approach to principal preparation in order to accelerate the pace of improvement—raising the bar for all types of preparation programs and holding all programs accountable for outcomes.

INSUFFICIENT PREPARATION

Despite the growing research base demonstrating the impact of the principal, the current state of educational administration preparation programs is not sufficient to prepare the principals our country needs.[9] In an oft-cited 2005 study, Arthur Levine concluded that "the majority of programs range from inadequate to appalling, even at some of the country's leading universities."[10] Since 2005, a number of providers have worked to create more rigorous programs and some new entrants to the field have explored promising strategies. The Wallace Foundation's *Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World: Lessons from Exemplary Leadership Development Programs* and the Rainwater Leadership Alliance's *A New Approach to Principal Preparation: Innovative Programs Share Their Best Practices and Lessons Learned* highlight some of those best practices, including those that collaborate with districts to provide authentic residency-based programs.[11] However, some programs have not improved and a number of the new entrants are not of high quality. Without incentives and accountability from the state, some programs continue to resist making program improvements.[12] Given the need for great principals and the increasingly complex expectations of school leaders, states have a responsibility to accelerate the overall improvement of their programs.

Principals reinforce this level of dissatisfaction with their preparation. In one survey, 96 percent of principals agreed that on-the-job experience had been better training than their graduate programs and two-thirds indicated that their preparation programs were "out of touch" with the skills principals needed, such as using data to oversee instruction or hiring, evaluating, and supporting teachers.[13] Perhaps due in part to this insufficient preparation, jobs in educational administration are not attracting young teachers.[14] Poor

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9. Leithwood, Kenneth et al (2004).

10. Levine, A. (2005). Educating School Leaders. Washington, DC: The Education Schools Project.

11. Darling-Hammond, Linda et al (2007).

12. Augustine. C. et al (2009).

13. Farkas, S., Johnson, J., & Duffet, A. with Syat, B. & Vine, J. (2003). Rolling Up Their Sleeves: Superintendents and Principals Talk About What's Needed to Fix Public Schools. New York, NY: Public Agenda.

14. Simon, R.A., & Newman, J.F. (2004). Making time to lead: How Principals Can Stay on Top of It All. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS). (2006-2007). Occupational Outlook Handbook. Washington, DC: USBLS.

There is an urgent need to overhaul the current approach to principal preparation in order to accelerate the pace of improvement.

Insufficient Preparation
96 percent of principals agree that on-the-job experiences were better than their graduate programs.

Disconnected Preparation Programs
Many programs lack rigor, focus too narrowly on management and administration competencies, and do not provide opportunities for authentic practice.

Weak Program Approval Systems
In terms of initial approval, states are artificially limiting the choices for principal preparation.

Misaligned Incentives
Principal preparation programs are not preparing candidates who become school leaders. Only 20 to 30 percent of graduates from traditional programs have served as principals.

recruitment and preparation means that school districts must spend extra time and money to identify the right candidates to become principals and help them learn critical skills on the job.

DISCONNECTED PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Strong principal preparation programs have a rigorous selection process, pair rigorous curriculum with a strong clinical component, and are committed to program review and improvement.[15] They also systematically recruit high-caliber candidates, use an ongoing assessment cycle to tailor learning, and focus on effective applications of lessons.[16]

Most preparation programs do not contain all of these elements. Instead, many states have created a focus on course hours over opportunities to practice and assess candidates for mastery of necessary skills and competencies in a clinical setting. In most states, credit hour expectations are too high, resulting in an overemphasis on seat time to the detriment of clinical experiences. There is no magic number of courses or seat time requirements; instead candidates should be expected to accomplish necessary competencies.

Many programs lack rigor, focus too narrowly on management and administration competencies, and do not provide opportunities for authentic practice.[17] According to a review of a subset of accredited programs in states that have undergone system reform, more than half still implement weak curriculum and operate without a conceptual framework. The study also found these programs could benefit from anchoring learning experiences in practice experiences.[18]

Studies have also found that course work often lacks focus on the day-to-day responsibilities of principals.[19] For example, despite the changing expectations and evidence that a principal's attention on teacher development results in better classroom instruction and higher student achievement,[20] many principals are not prepared to walk into the role as an instructional leader. In fact, recent research shows that principals only spend 8 to 17 percent of their time on instructional leadership activities.[21] According to a recent Gates' Foundation report, the lack of time spent on leading instructional practice is due in part to an "expertise gap" where principals have not mastered the skills to be effective instructional leaders.[22]

15. Cheney, G et al (2010).

16. Hitt, D. et al (2012).

17. Darling-Hammond, Linda et al (2007). American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE),(2001). PK-12 Educational Leadership and Administration. Washington, DC; AACTE. Copland, M.A. (1999). Elmore, R.F. (2000). Building a New Structure for School Leadership. Washington, DC: The Albert Shanker Institute. McCarthy, M. (1999). The Evolution of Educational Leadership Preparation Programs. In J. Murphy & K.S. Louis (Eds.), Handbook of Research on Educational Administration: A Project of the American Educational Research Association. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Murphy, J. & Vriesenga, M. (2004). Research on Preparation Programs in Educational Administration: An Analysis. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri-Columbia, University Council for Educational Administration. Orr, M.T., & Barber, M.E. (2005). Collaborative Leadership Preparation: A Comparative Study of Innovative Programs and Practices. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal.

18. Murphy, J., Moorman, H., McCarthy, M (2008) A Framework for Rebuilding Initial Certification and Preparation Programs in Educational Leadership: Lessons From Whole-State Reform Initiatives. New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University.

19. Hess, Frederick M., and Andrew P. Kelly. Learning to Lead? What Gets Taught in Principal Preparation Programs. PEPG 05-02. Rep. Cambridge: Program on Education Policy and Governance, Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government, 2005.

20. Supovitz, J. Sirinides, P., & May, H. (2010). How Principals and Peers Influence Teaching and Learning. Educational Administration Quarterly.

21. Horng, L.E., Jlasik, D., & Loeb, S. (2010, August). Principals' Time Use and School Effectiveness. American Journal of Education. Supovitz, J.A., & May, H. (2011). The Scope of Principal Efforts to Improve Instruction. Educational Administration Quarterly. Supovitz, J.A. & Buckley, P. (2008, March). How Principals Enact Instructional Leadership.

22. Jerald, C. (2012). Leading for Effective Teaching: How School Systems Can Support Principal Success. Seattle, WA: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

FROM THE FIELD: PROGRAM REDESIGN

Programs like Auburn University, Florida International University, the University of Kentucky, Rowan University, and East Carolina University have all taken steps to revamp the way they prepare principals. These programs clarified their program theory, aligned their work to standards (including the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISSLC), the Educational Leaders Constituent Council (ELCC), and state leadership standards), stepped up candidate recruitment and selection, revisited their content and instruction, raised expectations for internship experiences, and considered how best to assess principal candidates among other changes. For example, East Carolina University now uses district input for candidate selection. Auburn emphasizes active learning and practice by providing field-based experiences in each course. And the University of Kentucky implements a continuous assessment plan, including an online portfolio and capstone project. The field will learn more about the results of these redesign efforts as additional outcomes data become available.

The latest research on adult learning indicates that principals should have ample opportunities throughout their preparation program to apply what they are learning in authentic settings.[23] But current programs often do not offer clinical experiences—or the practice opportunities they do offer are unsuccessful due to weak supervision without a clear plan for integrating field experiences with the broader curriculum.[24] A misplaced focus on hours of field experience clocked over the authenticity of the experience has hampered the success of this strategy.

Many programs do assess their candidates, but do not integrate these assessments into deep clinical practice experiences. This renders them unable to conduct authentic observation and assessment of candidates in adult leadership roles and therefore unable to assess the competencies in a manner that is aligned to current principal expectations. As districts leaders continue to feel that new principals are underprepared for their current role, programs need to rethink assessment to ensure their rigor and alignment match job expectations.

Finally, principal preparation programs too often operate in silos without engaging system partners, such as school districts, in program design. In order to meet the needs of districts, preparation programs must be aware of the needs of the field. One weakness in program redesign efforts to date has been the lack of partnership between preparation programs and school districts.[25] Programs that have taken steps toward redesign or are pioneering promising strategies can help inform the field.

WEAK PROGRAM APPROVAL SYSTEMS

Despite the critical responsibility to approve and re-approve preparation programs, many states do not collect key information to inform program review and 19 states do not know how many future principals graduate each year from state-approved principal preparation programs.[26] The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) monitors state progress against several "learning-centered leadership policies," including steps states have taken to improve preparation and licensure. Their study indicates that over the last decade significant progress has been made in focusing preparation programs on the principal's role in student achievement, but only some progress has been made in identifying promising future leaders and offering multiple pathways to the principalship.[27] Research has identified best practices for principal preparation, but most states are not using this research to change the ways principals are

23. Cheney, G. R., et al (2010); Louis, K. S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K. L., & Anderson, S. E. (2010). Investigating the links to improved student learning: Final report of research findings. Learning from Leadership Project. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota.

24. Fry, B., O'Neill, J. & Bottoms, G. (2006). Schools Can't Wait: Accelerating the Redesign of University Principal Preparation Programs. Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board.

25. Fry, B. et al (2006).

26. Briggs, K. et al (2013).

prepared.[28] Additionally, while states have taken steps to redesign preparation program approval processes, there is still much work to be done.[29]

Great variability persists across states in course content, experiences, and expectations for graduation, and program approval decisions are led by various state entities (e.g., state departments of education or credentialing commissions). The authority to approve preparation programs and the authority for setting leadership standards may differ within a state, leading to misalignment between the expectations for preparation of aspiring principals and the expectations of the job. This problem is further exemplified in teacher preparation: in three states the authority for one or both of these actions for teachers is jointly held by multiple bodies and in ten states different state bodies have authority over one or the other.[30]

The current program approval process employed by most states does not incent preparation programs to adopt research-based best practices nor does it hold programs accountable for outcomes for renewal decisions. According to another study conducted by SREB, "current state policies and strategies intended to promote redesign of principal preparation programs… have fallen short in producing the deeper change that would ensure all candidates master the knowledge and skills needed to be effective school leaders."[31] A study by the RAND Corporation found that states were uniquely positioned to improve leadership by sunsetting all pre-service leadership programs, thereby forcing them to reapply for accreditation. "Without this type of accountability,

universities were reluctant to reform their programs … universities did not have incentives to improve the rigor of their programs because it might discourage candidates from enrolling and completing them, thereby decreasing revenues."[32] A robust program approval process can help states raise the expectations for the quality of principal preparation programs and develop a pipeline of principals who get results for students.

In terms of initial approval, states are artificially limiting the choices for principal preparation. Currently 84 percent of approved principal preparation programs in the country are based at traditional universities and in 19 states only IHE-based programs are allowed to offer a pathway to the principalship.[33] These policies often assume that only IHE-based programs have the necessary structures and delivery methods for principal preparation. Yet, there are successful principal preparation programs at a range of institutions. In addition to schools of education, other providers—including school districts and non-profit organizations—that include best practices related to selection, content, clinical practice, and candidate assessment can help prepare effective new principals. Likewise, there are less successful programs of every type. In particular, states should be cautious regarding the rise of weak online programs with no residency component that are poorly aligned with the qualities of effective principal preparation. Decisions on program approval should be made based on the characteristics and outcomes of programs, not by the category of program.

27. Bottoms, G. & Egelson, P. (2012). Progress Over a Decade in Preparing More Effective School Principals. Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board (SREB).

28. Darling-Hammond, Linda et al (2007). Rainwater Leadership Alliance (2010). A New Approach to Principal Preparation: Innovative Programs Share Their Best Practices and Lessons Learned. Fort Worth, TX: Rainwater Leadership Alliance.

29. Southern Regional Education Board (2007). Schools Need Good Leaders Now: State Progress in Creating a Learning-Centered School Leadership System. Atlanta, GA: SERB.

30. National Council on Teacher Quality (2012). 2012 State Teacher Policy Yearbook: Improving Teacher Preparation National Summary. Washington, DC: NCTQ.

31. Fry, B. et al (2006).

32. Augustine. C. et al (2009).

33. Briggs, K. et al (2013).

When it comes to program renewal, 28 states do not collect a single outcome measure on preparation program graduates and 34 states do not consider any outcome measures from preparation program graduates for renewal decisions.[34] Without key data points on measures such as placement rates, retention rates, district satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, and impact on student outcomes, it is difficult for states to ensure that the supply of principals entering the workforce in their state meets their need. Using outcomes data as part of program renewal is an essential shift, and requires a data system that can track principal data and connect it with program outcomes.

Seeding innovative new programs to prepare principals is not enough; the vast majority of future principals are trained through traditional programs. States need a "both/and" solution to improve principal effectiveness over the long term, enabling new high-quality programs while also improving traditional programs.

MISALIGNED INCENTIVES

Finally, many more educators are getting administrator licenses than are using them. Only 20 to 30 percent of graduates from traditional programs have served as principals. And more than 190,000 teachers across the country have Master's degrees in administration that are not necessary for their current employment.[35] By and large, principal preparation programs are not preparing candidates who become school leaders.[36] One incentive that might be driving candidates is the pay increase associated with the new credential, sometimes known as the "Master's degree bump." This misaligned incentive structure leaves little motivation for providers to improve the rigor of their courses or provide meaningful internship experiences. Since programs have a steady flow of candidates seeking a Master's degree, they may be reluctant to increase the rigor of their program, fearing candidates might instead seek out less demanding programs.[37]

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34. Ibid.

35. Grossman, T. (2011). State Policies to Improve the Effectiveness of School Principals. Washington, DC: National Governors Association.

36. Ibid.

37. Augustine. C. et al (2009).

THE CHALLENGE: WEAK LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Is your state certifying principals who are prepared to serve as school leaders? Many state licensing processes are weak. Too often a licensure decision is driven by: 1) completing the low-quality preparation program described previously, focused on inputs such as course hours and without sufficient assessment of skill development through practice in an authentic setting; and 2) taking an exam, that also doesn't sufficiently assess the application of skills. With these minimal inputs, a candidate could receive her initial license. In some cases this first license is the same one she will have for the rest of her career, with no differentiation in expectations for a beginner and an experienced veteran. Then, by demonstrating that the newly-minted principal logs a set number of professional development hours—that may or may not be related to the areas in which her performance indicates she needs to grow—she might be able to renew her license. Absent data on how she is doing on the job, her license is likely to be renewed every five years. Or, she might receive her license and never seek a principalship—only maintaining the license to guarantee a salary bump that is unrelated to the job she does.

THE CHALLENGE: WEAK LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

THE CASE FOR IMPROVING PRINCIPAL LICENSURE

Most state licensure systems lack rigor, are not closely aligned to the expectations for principals, and are disconnected from job performance. While 30 states currently have a two-tiered system of principal licensure that requires a provisional phase before obtaining a permanent license, in many states the requirements for initial licensure are not sufficiently robust and the expectations for re-licensure do not rely on information about performance on the job.[38] States could better use licensure to revamp how decisions are made—focusing initial licensure on clear evidence of readiness to succeed and basing renewal decisions on demonstrated effectiveness and the expectation of continued effectiveness.

LOW STANDARDS FOR INITIAL LICENSURE

State systems that grant initial principal licenses are not sufficiently robust to ensure principals are prepared to lead a school. While 46 states have standards for principal licensure,[39] the majority of states currently review only input measures—including graduation from a state-approved preparation program, teaching experience, a Master's degree, or passing an assessment—when licensing principals. These standards do not include a demonstration of readiness and instead focus on inputs that are not well correlated with principal effectiveness on the job.[40] And while 40 states require the completion of a supervised internship for initial licensure,[41] most are not deep clinical experiences where principal candidates can practice meaningful leadership responsibilities an authentic setting. This is critical for the effective demonstration of competencies (described in the companion guide) and as part of an aligned curriculum.

A number of states lack critical data on the principals licensed to serve in their state; seven states do not even collect data on the number of principals licensed annually.[42] While there is little research on principal licensure exams, studies have shown that the current teacher licensure tests are not predictive of beginning teacher effectiveness.[43] In order to be useful, principal exams should be examined for their predictive value, and include an objective assessment of a candidate's skills in a simulation of a realistic leadership situation.

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38. Briggs, K. et al (2013).

39. National Center for Education Statistics (2012). Table 3.4. State Standards and Requirements for Administrator Licensure, by State: 2011-12. Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences.

40. Cheney, G. et al (2011).

41. National Center for Education Statistics (2012). Table 3.4.

42. Briggs, K. et al (2013).

43. Mitchell, K., Robinson, D., Plake, B. &Knowles, K (2001). Testing Teacher Candidates: The Role of Licensure Tests in Improving Teacher Quality. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Most state licensure systems lack rigor, are not closely aligned to the expectations for principals, and are disconnected from job performance.

Low Standards for Initial Licensure

The standards that the majority of states use to license principals do not include a demonstration of readiness and are not well correlated with effectiveness on the job.

Wrong Focus for License Renewal

Only six states consider any effectiveness data when renewing principal licenses.

WRONG FOCUS FOR LICENSE RENEWAL

Most states do not tie renewal decisions to principal effectiveness. Currently, only six states consider any effectiveness data when renewing principal licenses;[44] the vast majority of license renewals have no tie between a principal's impact on teacher and student performance and licensure decisions. Instead, most states simply require principals to serve for a specified number of years or attend a set number of professional development sessions. Historically, states have lacked data on principal effectiveness. However, as states implement high-quality evaluation systems that reliably differentiate strong and weak principals, they can use this data to inform license renewal (see the companion guide for more information).

44. Briggs, K. et al (2013).

OUTCOMES-FOCUSED
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

OUTCOMES-FOCUSED SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

THE TIME TO TAKE ACTION

Principals are the change agents needed to deliver on the promise of educational achievement for all students. And states are in a unique position to push for change in the quality of new principals. According to a series of interviews with preparation program representatives, SREB staff were told that "substantial changes in programs would be made only when the state required it."[45]

There is reason to be optimistic. Over the last year 31 states have enacted a total of 43 laws to support school leader initiatives.[46] And in December 2012, 25 states committed to working to enact the recommendations of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to improve teacher and principal preparation.[47]

In terms of principal preparation programs, the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) continues to push colleges and universities to improve their practices through their program membership standards[48] and *Developing Evaluation Evidence: A Formative and Summative Evaluation Planner for Educational Leadership Preparation Programs*. In April 2013 the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) decided to revise the 2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for Education Leaders to better align leadership standards to the new principal role. And in March 2013, the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) proposed new draft standards for teacher preparation program accreditation. While not directly related to principal preparation, the draft standards represent a more rigorous and outcomes-focused accreditation process than the previous program standards used by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) (the two entities that merged to become CAEP). And the Educational Leaders Constituent Council (ELCC), which develops standards for principal preparation programs, might consider developing parallel standards based on similar design principles for school leader program accreditation.

On the licensure front, there has been a great deal of effort to improve teacher and principal licensure tests. Twenty-three states and the District

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45. Fry, B. et al (2006).

46. National Conference of State Legislatures.

47. CCSSO Task Force on Educator Preparation and Entry into the Profession (2012). Our Responsibility, Our Promise: Transforming Educator Preparation and Entry into the Profession. Washington, DC: Council of Chief State School Officers.

48. Young, M. D., Orr, M. T., & Tucker, P. D. (2012). University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Institutional and Program Quality Criteria: Guidance for Masters and Doctoral Programs in Educational Leadership. Charlottesville, VA: UCEA.

Now is the time for states to take action to improve their own processes for principal preparation and licensure in order to get the best candidates into our schools.

To Improve Principal Supply, Address Pre-Service Preparation
Of the seven major leadership domains that policymakers could consider across the continuum of a school leader's career, states should focus on the domain of pre-service preparation to build a strong leadership pipeline.

All Leadership Quality Work Begins with Standards
Setting a vision in state standards can foster a common understanding of great school leadership across all key sectors—from the state educational agency to preparation programs to individual districts.

Important Levers
The two important levers this paper focuses on within the domain of pre-service preparation are:
Evaluating and Approving Preparation Programs

Using Licensure and Re-Licensure to Ensure Effective Educators

of Columbia agreed to field test edTPA, a performance-based assessment designed to determine if a teacher is ready for initial licensure. And at least four states are moving forward to develop performance-based assessments for principals.

With all of this activity—and especially since any new ELCC standards will need time to be developed and implemented—now is the time for states to take action to improve their own processes for principal preparation and licensure in order to get the best candidates into our schools. This policy drive towards a focus on outcomes will create the needed change agents and also develop the necessary knowledge base all states can use to get better over time.
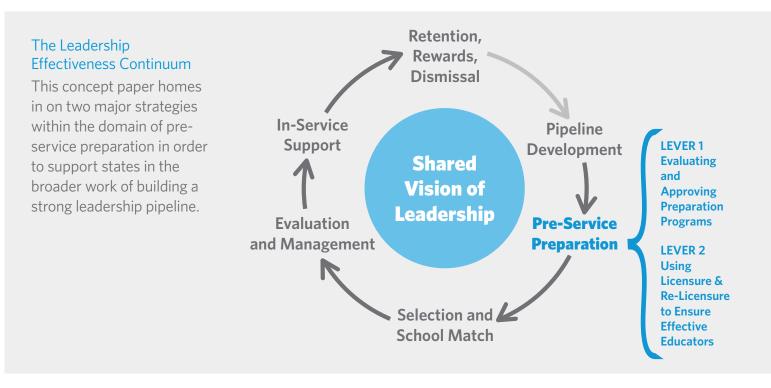
TO IMPROVE PRINCIPAL SUPPLY, ADDRESS PRE-SERVICE PREPARATION

There are two important levers for states taking action to improve their pipeline of change agents.

1 EVALUATING AND APPROVING PREPARATION PROGRAMS

2 USING LICENSURE AND RE-LICENSURE TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS

The Leadership Effectiveness Continuum

It is important to remember that these two levers must be considered as part of a larger, coherent school leadership reform agenda. As illustrated below, there are seven major leadership domains that policymakers could consider across the continuum of a school leader's career. Six domains of the leadership effectiveness continuum surround a seventh domain—a shared vision of leadership— and fit together as aligned components that impact a principal throughout his or her career. These domains start before the first day as a school leader, by focusing on pipeline development; pre-service preparation; and selection and school match. They continue through the principal's role once he or she enters a school, with evaluation and management; in-service support; and retention, rewards, and dismissal. All domains are rooted in a shared vision of leadership, which ensures alignment across the other domains. In a study of states funded by The Wallace Foundation to create cohesive leadership systems, the RAND Corporation found that principals in states with more cohesive leadership policies were more likely to focus on leadership practices that improve student achievement.[49]

The Leadership Effectiveness Continuum

This concept paper homes in on two major strategies within the domain of pre-service preparation in order to support states in the broader work of building a strong leadership pipeline.

Shared Vision of Leadership

Retention, Rewards, Dismissal

Pipeline Development

Pre-Service Preparation

Selection and School Match

Evaluation and Management

In-Service Support

LEVER 1 Evaluating and Approving Preparation Programs

LEVER 2 Using Licensure & Re-Licensure to Ensure Effective Educators

49. Augustine. C. et al (2009).

FROM THE FIELD: LEADERSHIP STANDARDS

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) recently worked to comprehensively overhaul their leadership standards. The new Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS) are a strong example of how a state focused the standards to emphasize state priorities and communicated the rollout of new expectations. The TILS revision was informed by ISLLC standards. According to TDOE, the new TILS will be used to align selection, preparation, licensure, evaluation, and professional development. The TILS were designed to set high standards for effective leadership based upon research and best practice, supporting leaders to reach those standards, and empowering districts to build a network of exceptional instructional leaders who get results. The revised standards can be found online.

ALL LEADERSHIP QUALITY WORK BEGINS WITH STANDARDS

As stated previously, all of this work is grounded in a shared vision of leadership. Setting a vision in state standards can foster a common understanding of great school leadership across all key sectors—from the state educational agency (SEA) to preparation programs to individual districts. States can use these standards to establish consistent and coherent expectations for principals throughout their career so that the role they are prepared for matches the job responsibilities they assume.

Specifically, a state's principal standards should define what it takes to graduate from a preparation program and receive a preliminary license as well as the professional standards a principal must meet for re-licensure. To be effective, the standards should be short, evidence-based, and actionable. Instead of focusing too broadly, standards should zero-in on the most important aspects of a principal's job. As mentioned earlier, ELCC may update its standards for educational administration program accreditation. Similarly, the ISLLC standards, which a number of states use as their own standards, are expected to be updated and simplified. In fact some leading states and districts have used refined versions of the ISLLC standards as an important input for their own design work with stakeholders to create more specific and focused standards.

In order to identify and prepare future principals, states must also focus on pipeline development. This includes, removing barriers to entry into principalships (such as the requirement that principals obtain a Master's degree or restrictions on the types of activities teacher leaders can engage in before obtaining an administrator's license), finding ways to systematically expand the pipeline to bring new talent into the system, and developing talent already in the system. States should create opportunities for teachers to practice adult leadership skills in order to provide principals with a larger leadership team to support their work and to cultivate further school leader talent. This focus on a pipeline into the profession will help attract high-potential candidates to principal preparation programs. And through improved clinical experiences during principal preparation programs, as well as through increased responsibility when educators are in teacher leader or other school leadership roles (e.g., assistant principals, instructional coaches, etc.), effective teachers can have hands-on practice prior to taking on a principalship.
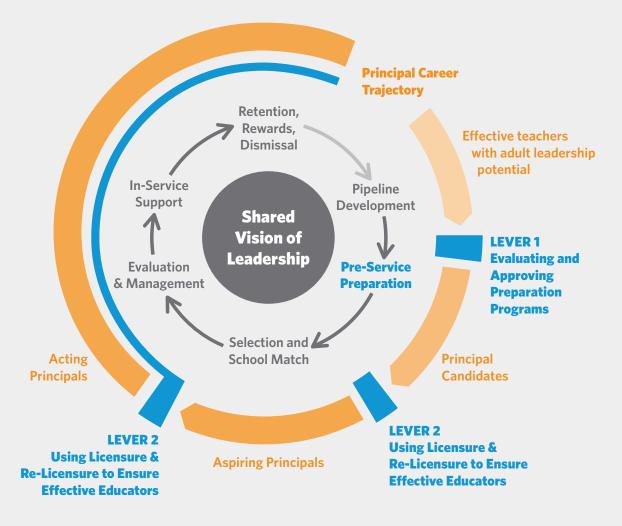
For more information on the other domains in the leadership effectiveness continuum, please refer to the New Leaders' publication *Re-Imagining State Policy: A Guide to Building Systems that Support Effective Principals.*

IMPORTANT LEVERS

The two important levers this paper focuses on within the domain of pre-service preparation can be used to achieve a number of goals. It is important for states to recruit talented people into their systems on the front end and ensure they are effective throughout their tenure. This starts by recruiting and selecting promising future leaders into principal preparation programs (lever: evaluation and approval of principal preparation programs), ensuring principal candidates have access to a strong curriculum with authentic adult leadership experiences to get the practice they need (lever: evaluation and approval of principal preparation programs), and expecting candidates to demonstrate their competence before starting the job (lever: initial licensure). On the back end, states can ensure principals are effective by basing long-term professional license renewal on evidence of principal effectiveness (lever: license renewal).

Principal Career Trajectory

The graphic below illustrates how the two levers intersect with the leadership domains along a principal's career trajectory. In addition to impacting the quality of professionals entering the system, policies in these areas will allow a state to periodically check for ongoing effectiveness on the job.

I. EVALUATING AND APPROVING PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS

States play a critical role in ensuring principal preparation programs are producing future principals with the necessary skills to become change agents and effectively lead schools. The state's major levers are initially approving programs to operate in their state (based on a review of a program's capacity to run a program, its operational structure, and plan to offer programmatic elements aligned to the latest research) and subsequently renewing or revoking program approvals (based on a review of a program's outcomes, its implementation of research-based best practices, and its plan for continuous improvement based on data).

The purpose of principal preparation programs is to prepare leaders for the principalship and ensure they are entering the school system prepared with the competencies they need to effectively lead a school that gets results for students. States can set specific expectations for preparation programs that are grounded in the state's leadership standards and research-based attributes of effective preparation, and hold all programs to those expectations through initial review and renewal processes.

1 | Raise the bar by designing a state structure for review and approval of principal preparation programs based on consistent expectations.

Ideally, identify a single entity tasked with both principal licensure and approval of principal preparation programs. Elevate the approval or non-approval decision to a clear set of decision-makers in order to promote accountability. Work with principal preparation programs to develop review processes focused on demonstrating alignment between the competencies emphasized in the preparation program and the state's leadership standards. Establish a process for selecting and training qualified preparation program reviewers and consider including representatives from successful preparation programs as a way to honor and leverage their expertise. Incent programs through fast-track reviews and other methods to address state priorities, such as preparing turnaround leaders.

2 | Focus the initial review of principal preparation programs on a demonstration of institutional capacity to implement a rigorous program plan.

In order to ensure new institutions have the capacity to run a successful program, work with preparation programs to develop an initial review process where programs demonstrate their capacity to effectively run a program and an operational plan to execute on a rigorous program design. The program's design should include a plan to recruit and select the highest potential candidates, certain research-based programmatic elements, and be aligned to the state's leadership standards. In particular, ensure programs include clinical practice in a sustained and

authentic setting where candidates can be evaluated on their leadership practice as part of program completion. Finally, expect preparation programs to demonstrate meaningful partnerships with one or more school districts (described in the companion guide) in order to identify high-potential talent and provide for authentic clinical practice experiences.

3 | Use outcome measures to differentiate the renewal process for principal preparation programs and as data points for continuous program improvement.

After a number of years running a program, require institutions to demonstrate the program's outcomes, implementation of research-based best practices, and continuous reflection and use of data for improvement. Outcome measures, including placement rates, retention rates, district satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, and impact on student outcomes can be used to differentiate the intensity and frequency of program review. How student outcome data is used may depend in part on your methodology: consider a number of factors such as outcome measures for high schools, longitudinal data, and the ability to control for prior student achievement. See the companion guide and RAND's report *Addressing Challenges in Evaluating School Principal Improvement Efforts* for more information.

4 | Hold all types of principal preparation programs accountable for results, including enforcing consequences for under-performing programs and providing incentives to high-performing programs.

Allow any program that meets a rigorous bar of program approval to prepare principals—including institutions of higher education, school districts, and non-profit organizations. Hold all programs to the same standards. Include support for program improvements and provide both incentives (for high-performing programs) and consequences (for low-performing programs). Implement a fast-track renewal process for high-performing programs whose graduates have high placement and retention rates and demonstrate evidence of effectiveness once they are placed as principals and have been leading the same school for three years. Given limited bandwidth, spend time doing a more in-depth review on a more frequent basis for programs that have weaker outcomes. Data can also help identify high-performing programs where the state can extract and highlight best practices. At the far end of the spectrum, subject programs that—even with support to improve—continue to produce the lowest-performing principals to consequences.

5 | Reinvest the fruitless "Master's Degree Bump" (salary increases based only on credentials) in more effective approaches.

Require districts to link salary increases to a teacher or principal's actual job, not their license or endorsement. While licenses and endorsements can be an important signaling tool, compensation should reflect a person's job and their effectiveness in the role. In order to ensure educators do not seek licenses or endorsements simply for a salary increase with no plans to take on additional responsibilities, take action to limit compensation increases to actual changes roles and responsibilities. Then redirect savings towards more effective approaches, including pilots of innovative compensation systems that help support and retain effective educators.

50. Burkhauser, S., Pierson, A., Gates, S.M., & Hamilton, L.S. (2012). Addressing Challenges in Evaluating School Principal Improvement Efforts. Santa Monica, CA: The RAND Corporation.

2. USING LICENSURE TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS

Another important responsibility for states is identifying which individuals are licensed to lead schools. The state's major levers are granting an initial license (based on successful completion of an approved preparation program), periodically renewing that leadership license (based on actual performance in the position of principal), and creating other endorsements to promote priority areas.

The purpose of a principal licensure system is to ensure new principals are prepared to enter the profession and practiced principals are demonstrating ongoing effectiveness. Licensure can also safeguard against insufficient use of high-quality principal evaluation data to make difficult personnel decisions at the local level. States can create a simple tiered licensure system that differentiates between a probationary license for early career educators and a professional license for educators who have demonstrated effectiveness in their role. The expectations for both licensure levels should be embedded in the state's leadership standards.

1 | Streamline and increase the rigor of licensure by providing a single licensure system for principals completing traditional or alternative preparation programs.

Create a single license for entry into the profession based on rigorous expectations of readiness, regardless of the pathway. While licenses should only be granted to aspiring principals that meet a high bar, be careful not to create a complex licensure system with too many levels of licensure or endorsement. Complex systems make it difficult to license an appropriate number of administrators and can inadvertently create barriers for hiring change agents.

2 | Develop an initial licensure process focused on a demonstration of the competencies necessary to lead a school.

Require completion of an approved preparation program, including a robust clinical experience, and passage of any relevant performance assessments, for receipt of an initial—or probationary—license. While aspiring principals can demonstrate their skills through either certification from an approved principal preparation program or passage of a performance-based assessment that reflects the authentic work of a school leader, approved preparation programs that have met a high bar are in a better position to assess competencies in an authentic environment.

Five ways states can use licensure to ensure effective educators.

Streamline and increase the rigor of licensure by providing a single licensure system for principals completing traditional or alternative preparation programs.

Develop an initial licensure process focused on a demonstration of the competencies necessary to lead a school.

Create a regular license renewal process focused on a demonstration of ongoing effectiveness.

Promote growth and improvement by recognizing ongoing achievements with a limited number of endorsements, such as opportunities for teacher leaders or advanced achievements for principals.

Encourage change agents to stay in the profession by working with other states to create a simple, but rigorous reciprocity process.

3 | Create a regular license renewal process focused on a demonstration of ongoing effectiveness.

Tie the effectiveness data drawn from a robust principal evaluation system—that reliably differentiates strong and weak principals—to license renewal. Grant a professional license to school leaders who have demonstrated effectiveness over time. If an evaluation system is still being built, consider additional factors in renewal decisions. (See the companion guide for more information.)

4 | Promote growth and improvement by recognizing ongoing achievements with a limited number of endorsements, such as opportunities for teacher leaders or advanced achievements for principals.

Recognize and encourage outstanding performance with a tiered system of optional endorsements. For example, endorse teachers who have a demonstrated pattern of effectiveness as teacher leaders and recognize principals who are effective over time with an advanced or master endorsement that is connected to shifts in job responsibilities or their performance. Use these endorsements to signal that educators have a certain level of professional expertise and are ready to have a broader impact. It is important that these endorsements do not create bureaucratic barriers for educators, but instead serve to acknowledge and celebrate good practice.

5 | Encourage change agents to stay in the profession by working with other states to create a simple, but rigorous reciprocity process.

Work together with other states to create a simple, but rigorous licensure reciprocity process through which talented educators from other states can become certified. Develop consistent definitions of critical inputs necessary to receive an initial license and come to agreement on the types of evidence that principals need to provide in order renew their license. These common understandings will help develop confidence in comparability across states.

CONCLUSION

Take a final moment for reflection. After instituting a new outcomes-focused process for principal preparation and licensure, your state has centered in on what matters most—student success. Robust outreach and rigorous selection are improving the caliber of principal candidate enrolled in various types of preparation programs across your state. With opportunity to practice, future principals are developing and mastering skills aligned with the rigorous demands of the job. Close partnerships with districts—or programs run directly by districts—result in authentic experiences and encourage coordinated efforts to develop and retain great talent in the system. Effective assessment systems—based on demonstrations of necessary competencies during candidates' clinical experiences—form the basis of initial licensure recommendations. And expectations of continued effectiveness reinforce principal evaluation systems and ensure principals continue to grow in their careers.

CONCLUSION

HIGH-QUALITY IMPLEMENTATION

Convinced of the need for change? Now comes the hard part—development of a detailed policy framework and high-quality implementation. As discussed in the introduction, the vision for success is a robust pipeline of change agents—effective educators with leadership potential entering rigorous preparation programs where they receive challenging and relevant curriculum, have opportunities to practice what they are learning, and demonstrate mastery before completing a program and receiving an initial license. Once in the field, these principals receive ongoing support and must demonstrate effectiveness to move from a probationary to a permanent license as well as renew that license moving forward.

In order to support this work, use the associated *Change Agents Companion Guide* to develop a policy framework. The companion guide goes into greater detail for each of the priority policies described above and outlines specific goals for designing new principal preparation approval systems and principal licensure and re-licensure systems. Even with this guide, be cognizant to implement policy changes well by involving stakeholders and staying true to your vision.

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

So how will you know if you are on the path to reach this vision? There are a few pieces of evidence that might demonstrate that you are headed in the right direction.

Approval systems for principal preparation programs:

- Consolidation of authority to approve principal preparation programs and license principals to one state agency with clear decision-making authority limited to an individual (e.g., the chief state school officer) or small group.

- Common understanding of expectations for principal preparation programs across the sector—from all types of principal preparation programs to school districts to principal candidates—including a recognition of why the elements are important.

- Increased numbers of effective teachers with adult leadership potential entering preparation programs.

- Authentic leadership practice opportunities aligned to rigorous curriculum provided to all aspiring principals as a part of a high-quality preparation program.

- Meaningful partnerships between preparation programs and school districts resulting in deep clinical practice and changes to program design to meet the articulated needs of the field.

- School districts knowing what to expect and demanding more from the programs that prepare new principals for their schools.

- A consolidated database with program outcomes that allows the state to differentiate program review and support based on real world impact.

- The non-renewal of consistently under-performing programs.

Licensure and re-licensure systems:

- A single "provisional license" for entry into the principalship based on a demonstration of skills either through certification from a preparation program or a robust performance assessment.

- Connections to a principal evaluation system to inform receipt of a "professional license," ongoing license renewal, and performance-based endorsements.

- Removal of superfluous licenses or endorsements such as grade-level specific licenses.

- Removal of incentives for licenses that are only linked to pay increases without corresponding changes in roles and responsibilities

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