

INVESTING  
LEADING  
LEARNING

CYPRESS-FAIRBANKS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Leadership Development Continuum



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**Mission**

Our mission is to increase student achievement by developing quality leaders who invest in others.

**We Believe...**

- quality leaders improve student achievement.
- leaders grow leaders.
- leadership development must be systemic, individualized, and ongoing.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the United States, teacher effectiveness has been at the center of education policy debates. As a result, states across the country, including Texas, continue to examine ways to improve teacher preparation, hiring and placement practices, professional development, and evaluation.

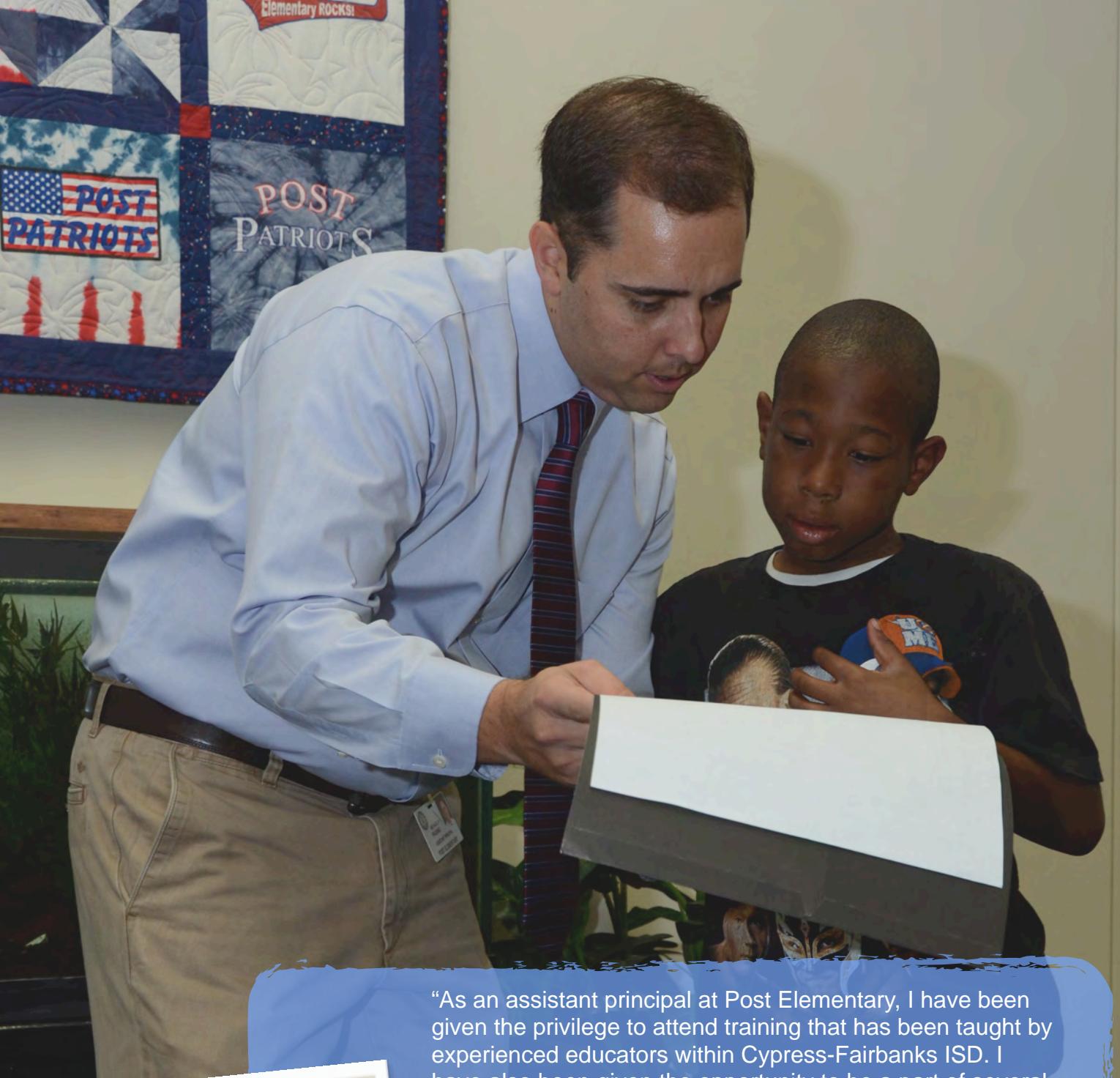
Although none would argue that continuing to improve teacher quality and effectiveness is critical for improving student performance, far too often, discussions center only on the quality of the classroom teacher and overlook the people ultimately responsible for improving teacher and school effectiveness—the campus principals.

A growing number of studies are providing evidence of what conventional wisdom and the voices of parents and teachers have said all along—effective principals and school administrators matter. They drive school improvement and establish the culture that facilitates growth in students and staff. According to a recent study conducted by the Wallace Foundation, school principals are the second most critical factor to student success, second only to classroom teachers.<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, another study found that 25 percent of a school's total impact on student achievement can be attributed to the principal.<sup>2</sup>

Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District has long recognized how critical the principal is in leading school improvement efforts. Moreover, in a district that continues to be one of the largest, fastest-growing, and rapidly changing in the state of Texas, the call to action has never been greater to ensure the district attracts, develops, and retains talented campus leaders in every position. CFISD recognizes this can only be achieved through a collaborative approach where all are invested in strategic thinking and innovation.

We have many assets to deploy in this charge to improve outcomes for leaders and ultimately their students, including an incredible political, social, and community will to ensure that leaders and teachers are growing and thriving in the schools that serve our students. We have many people and programs ready and aimed to help current and aspiring campus leaders. The Leadership Development Continuum will help to translate, focus, and expand the many efforts already taking place across the district. We know that if we can combine educational best practices with district and community assets, as well as position these people and programs more strategically to invest in others, we will build the system we need, and we will ensure continued success.

This report explains the efforts of Cypress-Fairbanks ISD in examining career paths to principalship, creating ways to assess candidate readiness, aligning current policies and practices related to leadership development, and developing learning plans aligned with principal core competencies.



"As an assistant principal at Post Elementary, I have been given the privilege to attend training that has been taught by experienced educators within Cypress-Fairbanks ISD. I have also been given the opportunity to be a part of several leadership studies that have been taught by the top educators within the education field. These experiences have blessed me with the knowledge to improve my talents and skills to help provide an environment that will shape and build our students into future leaders of our community."

**Michael Pagano**  
**Assistant Principal, Post Elementary School**



# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CONTINUUM

The mission of the Leadership Development Continuum is to increase student achievement by developing quality leaders who invest in others. Each day approximately 112,000 students enter the schools of CFISD with the promise of a quality education that prepares them for life. Critical to their success is the quality of the classroom teacher and the ability of their leaders to provide safe schools focused on effective instruction, effective and efficient organizational management, and strong partnerships with parents and the community. This can only be achieved within an organization that is focused on investing in the continuous growth and professional development of its leaders at all levels.

## Our Vision

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD will be a premiere district in terms of how we invite, engage, develop, support, and maximize the incredible strengths and talents of its leaders. Dr. Mark Henry, superintendent of schools, has put a “stake in the ground” around this matter and has issued a strong call to action for Cypress-Fairbanks ISD to examine and improve current leadership development practices to ensure a learning organization that attracts, develops, and retains talented leaders at all levels, reflective of, and responsive to, its student population.

## Our Beliefs

- We believe quality leaders improve student achievement.
- We believe leaders grow leaders.
- We believe leadership development must be systemic, individualized, and ongoing.

## Leadership Development Committee Leading the Charge

The Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Leadership Development Committee (LDC) is leading the initiative on improving leadership development throughout the district. The LDC is made up of principals, associate principals, directors of instruction, assistant principals, heads of departments, and partners in higher education. Beginning in the Fall of 2012, the committee embarked on an eight-month process to gather information and conduct a comprehensive needs assessment while examining existing practices. As a result, the LDC identified priority areas and developed a course of action for achieving the desired results.



"As a member of the Cypress-Fairbanks team, I have many wonderful opportunities to develop as a leader. The continuous leadership development for principals has inspired me to keep my purpose, to focus on students, to attain the ultimate goal of achievement, and to stay passionate about success and life-long learning. In our leadership sessions, I have the opportunity to learn from others and build strong effective relationships with colleagues who represent quality leadership. There is no better way to grow than among those who will always be there to support and guide you; that's Cypress-Fairbanks ISD!"

**Jessica Hernandez**  
**Principal, Emmott Elementary School**



# WHY NOW? PATHWAYS TO BECOMING A PRINCIPAL

## Rationale

As schools continue to evolve to meet the needs of students from various backgrounds and abilities, district leaders, policymakers, and practitioners increasingly recognize the important role of school leaders in developing successful schools. According to several studies, principals are regarded as “central to the task of building schools that promote powerful teaching and learning for all students, rather than merely maintaining the status quo.”<sup>3</sup> As schools have evolved, so have the complex demands associated with the job of the principal, including: improving academic achievement; recruiting, developing, and retaining teachers; creating a learning culture within the school; and supporting improvements in student learning.<sup>4</sup> The preparation and ongoing development of leaders at every level cannot rely on chance, but must be addressed systemically and comprehensively. Moreover, in a district that continues to grow in its student population and, at the same time, is faced with a growing number of campus leaders eligible for retirement, succession planning is critical. These two forces combined have heightened the sense of urgency in leadership development as a district reform strategy and is the impetus for the work around this significant issue.

## A State Perspective

In the United States, roughly one in five public school principals leave their positions each year, and most schools are led by principals with less than five years of tenure.<sup>5</sup> More specifically, in the state of Texas, principal turnover is even greater. In Texas high schools, around 50% of newly hired principals remain in their positions for three years, and less than 30% still remain in a position after five years.<sup>6</sup> It is a natural assumption that principal succession should be avoided at all cost. However, in some instances, principal succession can be a positive factor in student performance, especially where there has been a preceding pattern of decline in student performance. Therefore, succession planning is not about simply staffing schools with qualified principals; instead, it is about ensuring schools across the state of Texas attract, develop, and retain a talented pool of principals who have a track record for success in leading schools. We believe CFISD can be a beacon district to the State in terms of attracting, preparing, developing, and retaining campus leaders along various pathways to principalship.

## A District Perspective

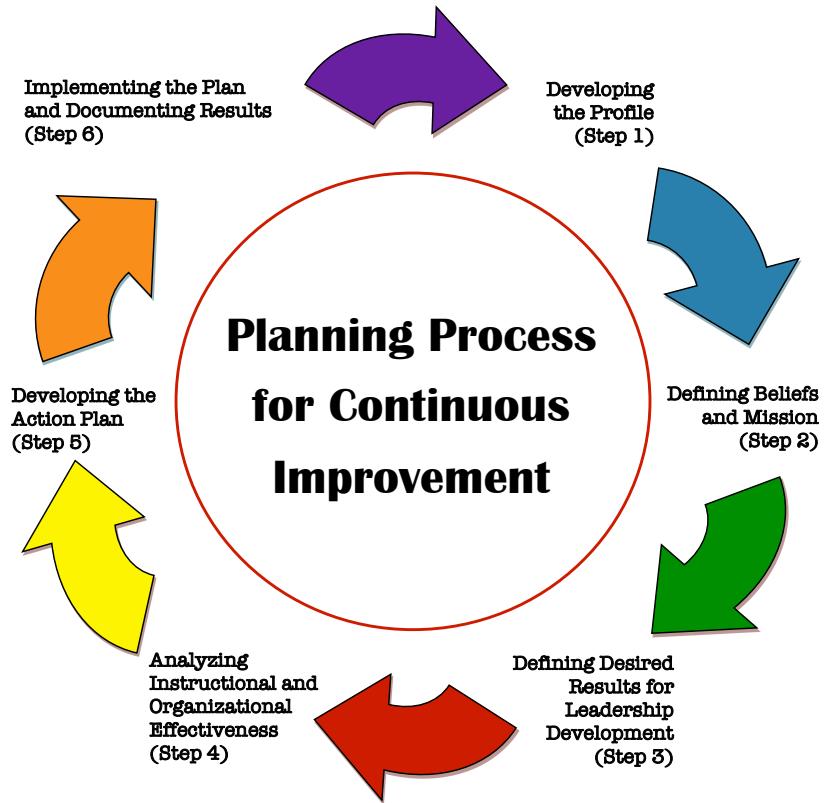
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD has undergone significant changes over the last five years. The district has grown by 38,910 students in the last decade and projects more than 10,000 over the next five years.<sup>7</sup> In 2012 alone, 24,801 first-time students entered CFISD schools, elevating its slot to the 24th largest school district in the nation and the third-largest district in Texas.<sup>8</sup> It continues to be recognized as one of the fastest-growing districts in Houston, expanding its student population by 13.6 percent from 2007-2012.<sup>9</sup> Since the Fall of 2008, there have been 66 principal vacancies filled in CFISD. Of the vacancies filled, 48 were new principals and 18 were veteran CFISD principals named to open a new school or to transition to a different level (i.e. elementary to middle school or middle school to high school).<sup>10</sup> While some may come with prior principal experience, the majority of new principals hired to campuses are novices, replacing experienced principals who retire with a wealth of knowledge and skills. The same can be generalized with other campus leaders such as associate principals, directors of instruction, and assistant principals.

The changing landscape of leadership in the district creates unique challenges in succession planning. When vacancies occur and principal positions are filled, a domino effect takes place. Newly-hired principals leave vacancies in their previous positions that are also replaced by novices. Securing organizational capacity to prepare, train, and develop leaders at high levels during preservice development, induction, and emerging stages of each job role is critical. At the same time, tapping into those who are experienced and masterful in the craft to mentor and prepare others to be successful is important to, and in line with, maintaining a culture focused on developing others. The Leadership Development Continuum model will align the financial, social, and intellectual resources of our district to best solve these leadership development challenges, and it will provide a framework for action and investment that will advance change.

## Scope of the Project

Cypress-Fairbanks ISD recognizes the importance of leadership development and succession planning at all levels. The overarching vision for the district is to cultivate leadership at every level—support staff, teachers, teacher leaders, campus administrators, and central support staff. At the same time, the Leadership Development Continuum recognizes the importance of narrowing its focus at the start to attain results that have an impact on leadership at the campus level. While we fundamentally believe that leadership is an action and not a position, the scope of the project is focused on campus-specific leadership positions including principals, associate principals, assistant principals, and directors of instruction. The next section summarizes the Continuous Improvement Process that was adopted and used throughout the planning process.

# Continuous Improvement Process



## STEP 1: DEVELOPING THE PROFILE

This phase provided a purposeful collection of the critical domains of information that tell the story of who we are, related to leadership development and principal readiness. During this phase, profile data were examined to gain a better understanding of demographic characteristics and perceptions of leaders. Examination of these data helped to identify key issues pertinent to the district needs and the training, support, and advancement of campus administrators to principalship. Along with this internal analysis, leaders engaged in a study of major educational research findings about leadership development, future trends, and multiple pathways to principalship.

## STEP 2: DEFINING BELIEFS AND MISSION

This phase assisted in articulating core beliefs related to leadership development in the district. This, in turn, helped to guide the development of a mission statement, defining a compelling purpose and direction for the district. Summaries of the research implications and future trends were reviewed and discussed by the committee, as beliefs and the mission were developed and defined. This helped in conveying “best practices” identified through research and the challenges and opportunities our principals will likely face in the future when developing other leaders, and ultimately, in educating CFISD students.

### **STEP 3: DEFINING DESIRED RESULTS FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

During this phase, the committee worked together to develop a shared vision of a well-prepared and supported campus leader in our district and to examine the implications for leadership development and its relationship to student learning. This shared vision is stated in terms of desired results for the Leadership Development Program. Beginning with a review of our beliefs and mission, as well as the latest findings of educational research and future trends, committee members engaged in critical conversations regarding our board and district goals and priority objectives for attracting, developing, and retaining quality staff reflective of, and responsive to, its student population. We also found it helpful to review essential job functions of CFISD campus administrators (principals, associate principals, directors of instruction, and assistant principals), Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, the CFISD Leadership Development Survey results, and responses from various meetings held with principals and other campus administrators. This information helped in reviewing the extent to which our district currently demonstrates achievement of the desired results and the level of priority for improvement in the development and retention of campus administrators.

### **STEP 4: ANALYZING INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

During this phase, committee members conducted a more in-depth analysis of research specific to the desired results identified by the committee. Committee members were challenged to determine the extent of alignment of organizational practices and conditions with the beliefs, mission, and goals for leadership development. Additionally, input from campus leaders across the district was solicited to ensure alignment between the desired results the committee had identified and priorities of current and aspiring leaders. In turn, this guaranteed that targeted action plans were meeting the needs identified by stakeholders as reflected in the profile.

### **STEP 5: DEVELOPING THE ACTION PLAN**

This phase provided a process for determining the following: targeted area goals for leadership development improvement; the design of data-driven and research-based school improvement initiatives to achieve the goals; the estimation of the timeline and resources required for implementing the strategies; and the identification of those with leadership responsibilities for implementing the plan. This part of the planning process also helped to establish the means for documenting the effectiveness of the leadership improvement plan in achieving the targeted goals for improvement.

### **STEP 6: IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN AND DOCUMENTING RESULTS**

This phase assists the district in: monitoring the implementation of the leadership development improvement plan; collecting evidence of the achievement of the target goals for improvement; and sustaining the commitment to continuous improvement.

# Leadership Development Framework



## CFISD Leadership Development Programs

**Teacher Leadership Academy (TLA)**—The Teacher Leadership Academy is a 30-hour professional development program specifically designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of beginning teacher leaders leading teams of adults. The academy consists of four days of training, is delivered by existing master teacher leaders, and provides job-embedded activities, coaching, and support networks to increase the transfer and implementation of learned competencies.

**Team Leader/Department Chair Conference**—This annual conference provides existing secondary-level department chairs and content team leaders training in collaborative structures aimed to extend and refine leadership skills that will help them to successfully lead teams of teachers in data analysis, instructional team planning, differentiated instruction, and focused instructional improvement.

**University & College Cohort/Partnership**—The district has several university and college partnerships established for teachers and administrators interested in pursuing advanced degrees in educational administration, counseling, curriculum and instruction, diagnostician, business, and executive leadership. These cohorts aim to build internal leadership capacity and provide more accessible higher education opportunities by providing courses that are located at district facilities.

**Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships (RRR) Leadership Conference**—This conference provides school and district leaders an opportunity to learn the characteristics and leadership qualities of high-performing schools from leading experts in the field of education. Sustained with federal funding, contributions from the Cy-Fair Educational Foundation, and proceeds generated from surrounding district registration fees, this leadership conference extends participation from neighboring districts and does not require additional district funds to be used. Topics include research-based practices, leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, technology, and effective school reform.

**Administrative Leadership Training (ALT)**—This program is designed to train a select group of secondary administrators on various campus leadership issues and curriculum-based topics. The ALT team is comprised of high school associate principals, designated high school and middle school assistant principals, and a representative from each special programs campus. Currently, administrators are selected to participate in a two-year rotation.

**Leadership Academy**—The Leadership Academy is a year-long professional development program for existing administrators who are interested in pursuing a principalship in the district. The program is designed to refine and extend the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to lead successful schools. This program advances principal leadership skills and builds a network of support for administrators interested in advancement and assuming a principalship.

**Summer School Principal Internship**—Each summer, summer school principal assignments are provided to campus-based administrators who are interested in becoming principals. This program provides practical experience for campus administrators and allows them to assume responsibilities associated with the principalship including recruitment, hiring, and placement of staff, master scheduling, organizational management, instructional leadership, supervision, professional development, and parent/community relations.

**Rookie Principal/Mentoring Program**—Newly-hired principals to the district are assigned a successful, experienced principal mentor to promote reflective practice and guidance as principals navigate through their complex daily decisions and school improvement efforts. Additionally, monthly collaborative network meetings are held to provide time for new principals and their mentors to come together with district leaders to discuss important information and reflect on their learning and the implications it has for their leadership and practice.

**Coaching Program**—A collaborative process that engages the principal (coachee) in a one-to-one relationship with a coach (source of expert support around a wide-range of challenges) designed to support the principal's professional and personal development allowing the principal to set new goals and improve results.

**Round Tables**—Principals meet on a monthly basis to collectively analyze campus achievement measures, reflect on leadership practices and school improvement efforts, share best practices, and develop strategies to improve teacher performance and student achievement.

**Cluster Meetings**—Throughout the year, campus principals come together in small collaborative groups to engage in collegial conversations and to process information with other peers about day-to-day decisions for school improvement. It provides a formal network for principals to solicit, share, and receive ideas from one another. Additionally, it is often through this structure that principals are able to provide input and feedback to central support staff for decision-making.

**General Leadership Training (GLT)**—Twice each semester, leaders gather for a day of professional development specifically designed to build leadership capacity, increase knowledge and skills that are grounded in research-based practices focused on teaching and learning, and plan ways to extend the learning to campus staff. Topics include research-based practices, culturally responsive leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, technology, differentiated instruction, and learning-focused conversations.

**District Leadership Training (DLT)**—Each month, campus principals and district leaders are provided professional development opportunities to build their competencies in organizational leadership. Focused on data, people, and processes, this professional development builds understanding about current issues the district faces including legislative, legal, and financial issues. Additionally, this time is used to build systems thinking about student achievement and to build a common vision for learning.

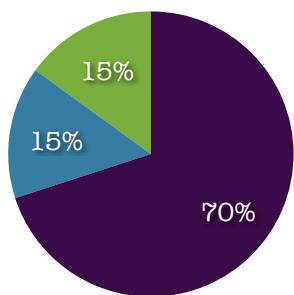
# WHAT WE DISCOVERED

## District Leadership Profile

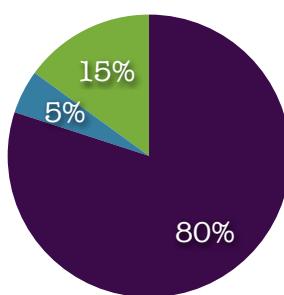
Ethnicity<sup>11</sup>

- White
- African American
- Hispanic
- Asian
- American Indian

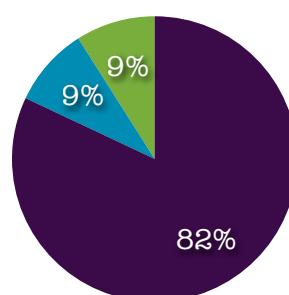
ES Principals



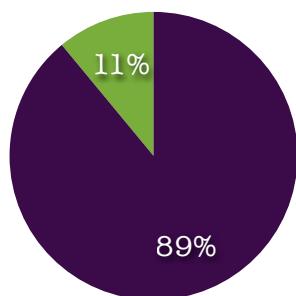
MS Principals



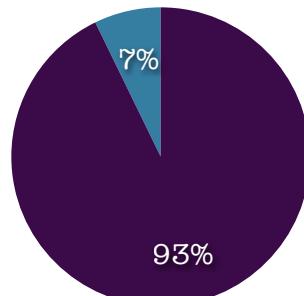
HS Principals



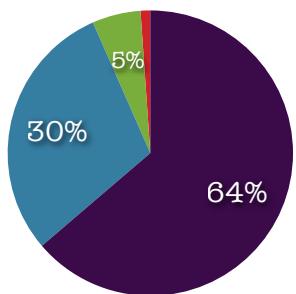
Associate Principals



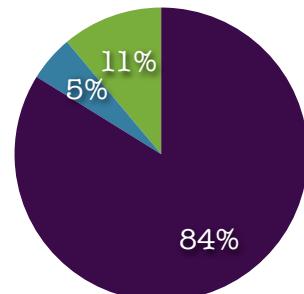
Directors of Instruction



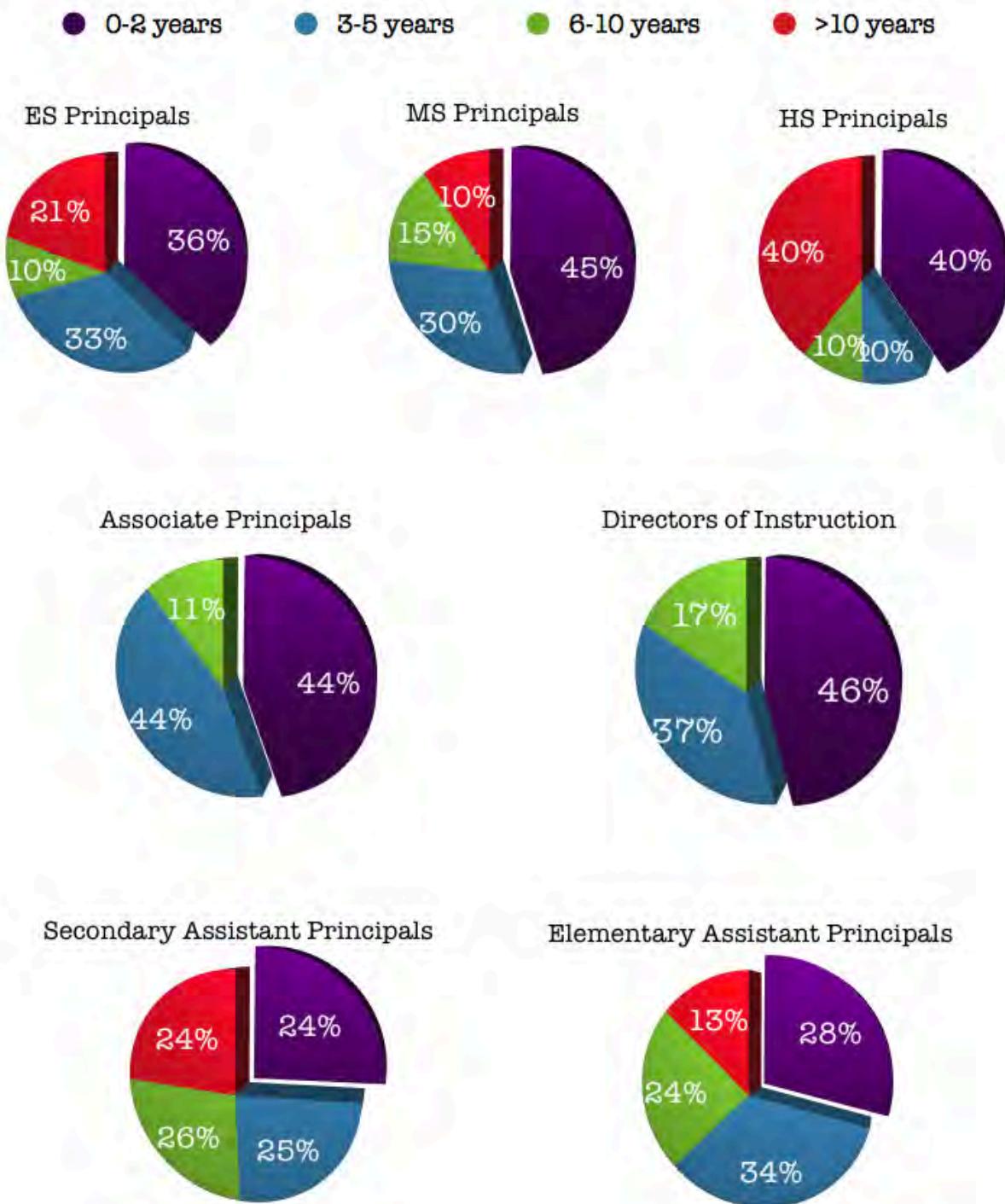
Secondary Assistant Principals



Elementary Assistant Principals

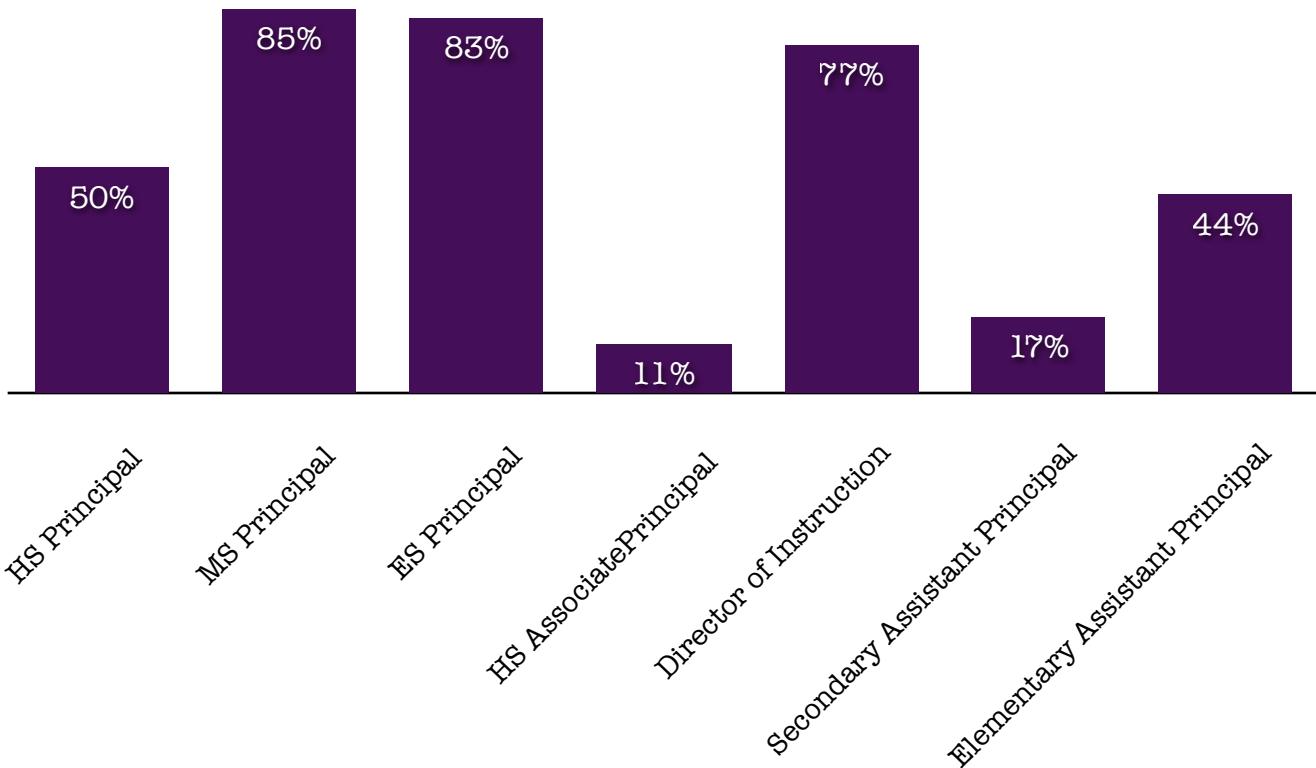


## Years of Experience in Current Job Role<sup>12</sup>



## Leadership Development Survey Results<sup>13</sup>

Were assigned a formal mentor during the first year of their role

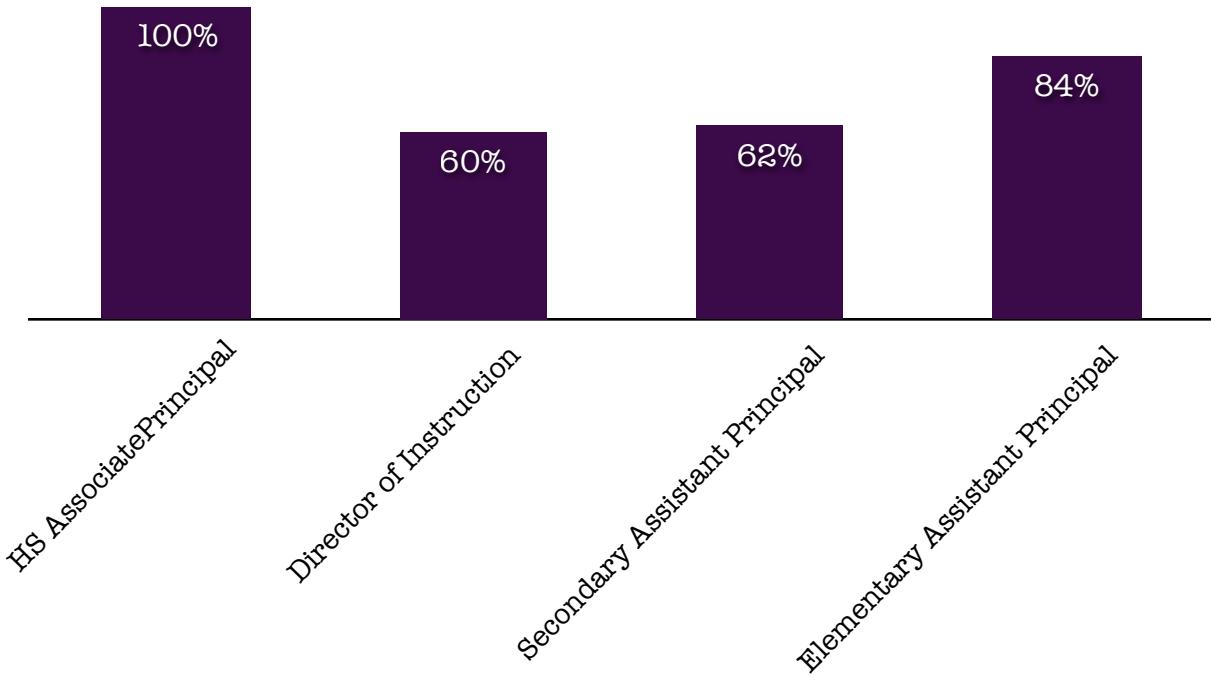


"As a new principal, I feel extremely fortunate to have a principal mentor [Dr. Carrie Marz]. I have comfort in knowing that my mentor is available to help me with any task or question, no matter how big it might be. She frequently calls to check-in with me and find out how I'm doing. She is always thinking ahead for both of us and providing me with support when I need it."

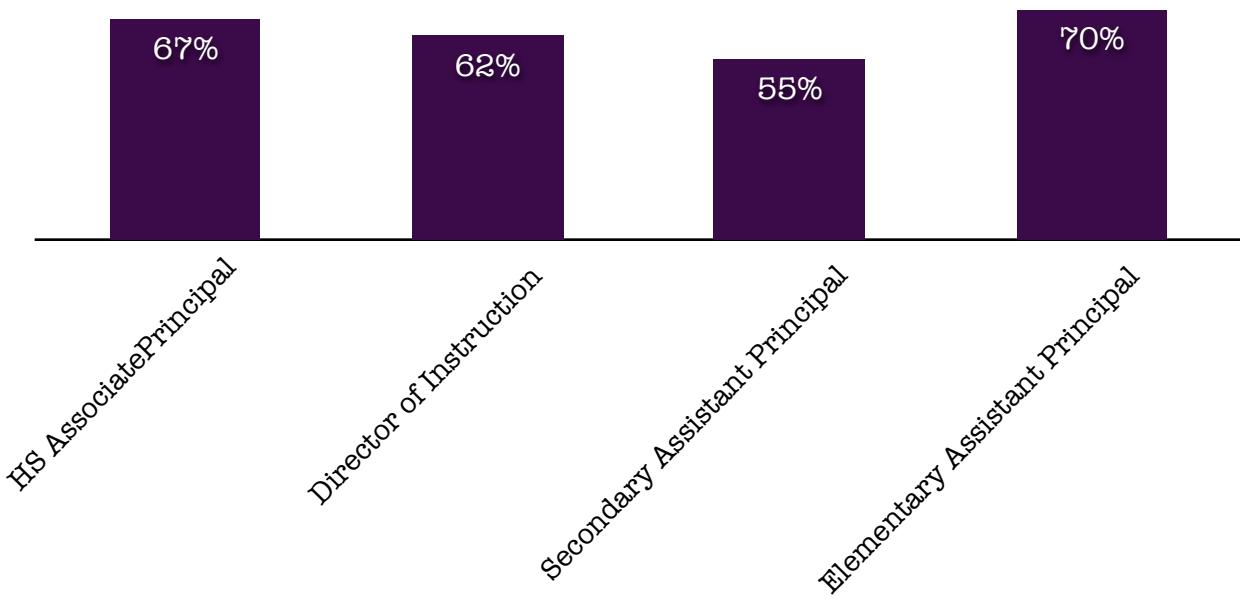
**Cathy Jacobs**  
Principal, Matzke Elementary



**Have aspirations to be a principal**

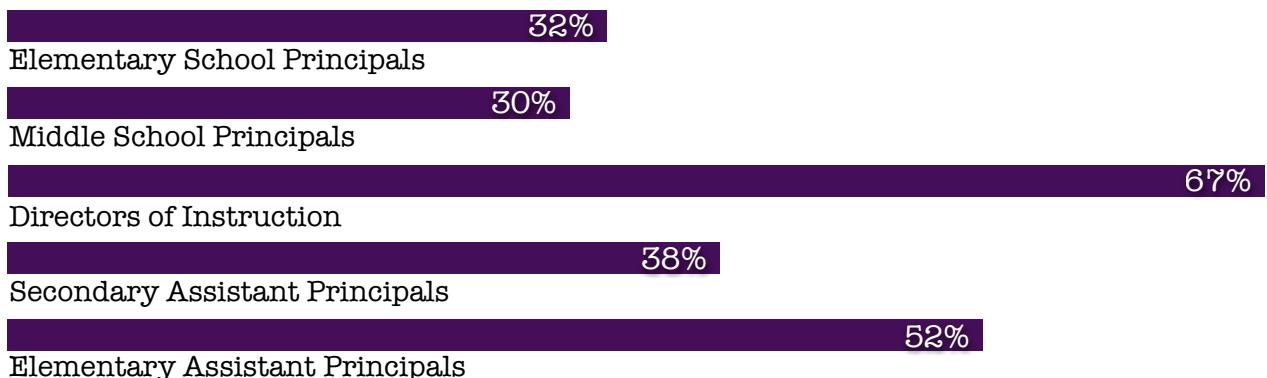


**Have a clear understanding about what it takes to become a principal**

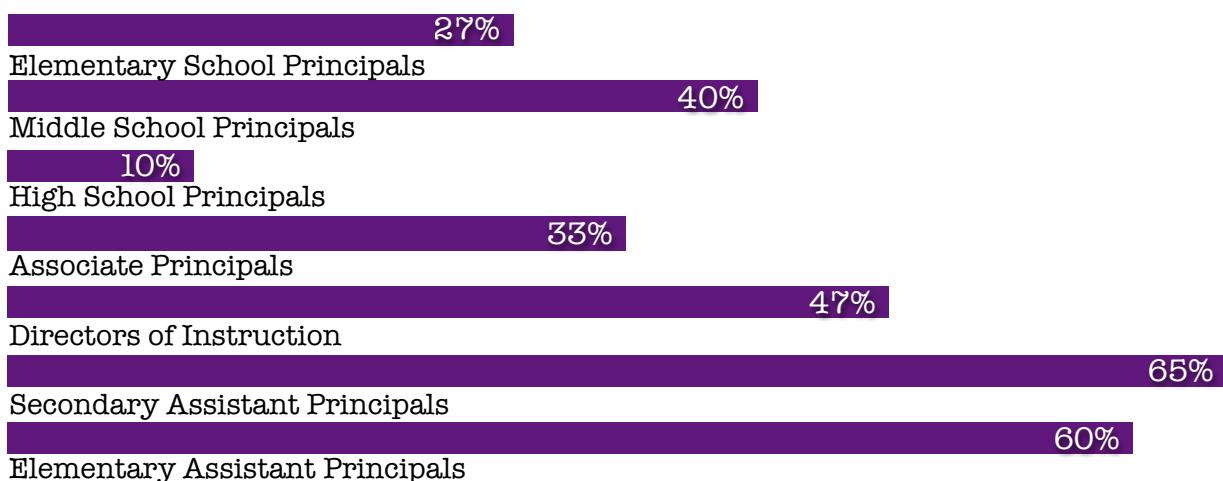


## Response Comparisons of Top Areas Identified by Campus Administrators as “Not Prepared” or “Minimally Prepared”<sup>14</sup>

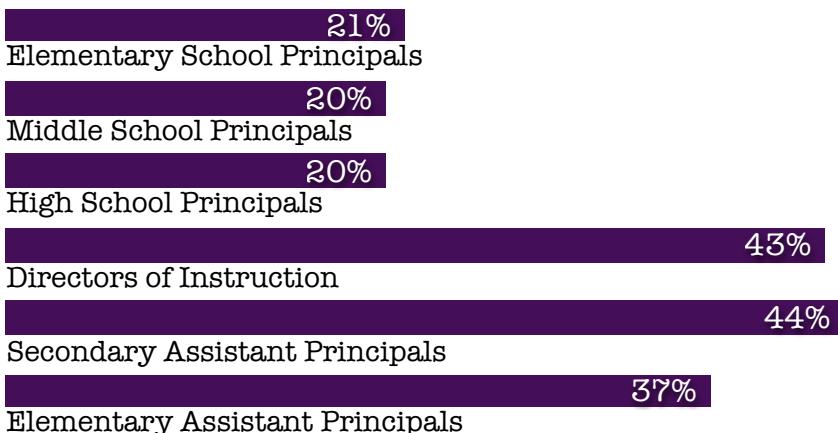
1. Direct and manage extracurricular and intramural programs including activity funds



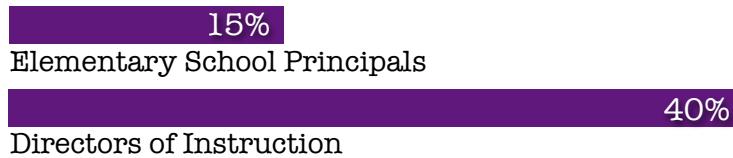
2. Develop campus budgets based upon documented program needs, estimated enrollment, personnel, and other fiscal needs including keeping programs within budget limits, maintaining fiscal control, and accurately reporting fiscal information



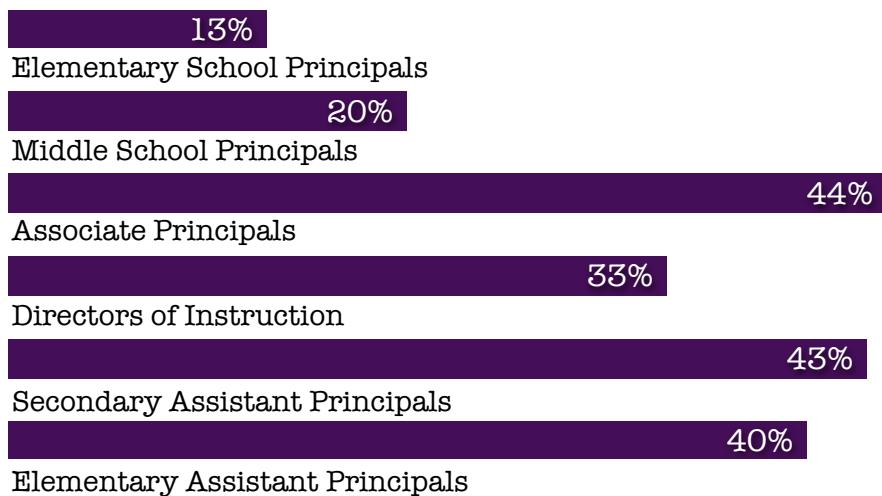
3. Compile, maintain, and file all physical and computerized reports, records, and other documents required including accurate and timely reports of maximum attendance to requisition textbooks



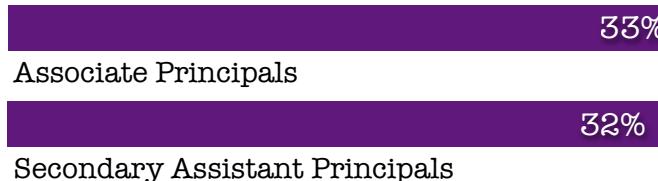
4. Manage use of school facilities and supervise maintenance of facilities to ensure clean, orderly, and safe campus



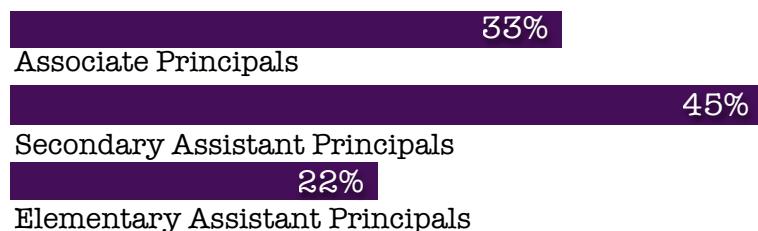
5. Make recommendations to superintendent on termination, suspension, or non-renewal of employees assigned to campus



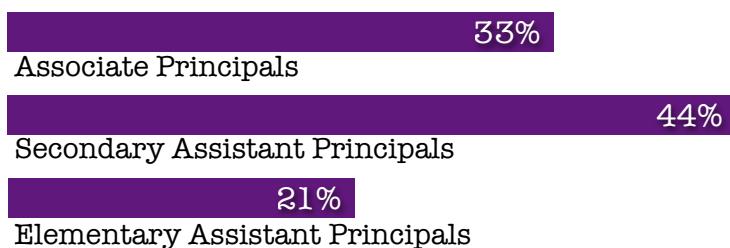
6. Provide instructional resources and materials to support teaching staff in accomplishing instructional goals



7. Develop and set annual campus performance objectives for each of the Academic Excellence Indicators using the campus planning process and site-based decision-making committee



8. Develop, maintain, and use information systems and records necessary to show campus progress on performance objectives addressing each Academic Excellence Indicator



9. Use appropriate and effective techniques to encourage community and parent involvement



10. Work with faculty and students to develop a student discipline management system that results in positive behavior and enhances the school climate



Along with priority areas previously identified, secondary assistant principals also indicated the following priority areas with the percentage indicated as “not prepared” or “minimally prepared”:

- Monitor instructional processes to ensure that program activities are related to program outcomes and use findings to take corrective action (32%);
- Identify, analyze, and apply research findings (e.g. effective school correlates) to promote school improvement (32%);
- Regularly consult the campus-level committee about planning, operation, supervision, and evaluation of campus education program. Include students and community representative when appropriate (31%);
- Assign and promote campus personnel (31%);
- Monitor managerial processes to ensure that program activities are related to program outcomes and use findings to take corrective action (25%);
- Work with campus-level planning and decision-making committees to plan professional development activities (23%);
- Direct planning activities and implement programs with staff to ensure attainment of school’s mission (22%).



## A Collaborative Approach:

The commitment to continuous improvement must be shared by all those who have a stake in the success of our leaders. The CFISD community must work together to build strong, connected systems that develop leadership at all levels. A focus on building systems is critical, due to the fact that no one department or individual can successfully address the multiple and diverse needs of current and aspiring leaders. Collaboration between schools, departments, higher education, and policy makers that interact with these aspiring and current leaders on a daily basis is essential to ensure that current and aspiring campus leaders are being connected to professional development and workplace opportunities, as well as formal and informal networks of support. Cypress-Fairbanks ISD is embarking on such an initiative.

## Organizational Analysis & Limitations of the Data

Considering the information gathered, there are several themes that emerged. While the information obtained helped to provide important information related to leadership demographics and perceptions, there are limitations in the data obtained and data tracking systems. The leadership demographic data collected were based on survey data. As a result of this data digging process, more routine ways of tracking and reporting information related to leadership demographics and perceptions are being explored.

Although there are limitations in the data, because there was such a high return rate, the information obtained was used to guide the committee toward priorities for action. Below are salient themes that emerged.

First, there is a trend in the underrepresentation of leaders of color in each of the job roles compared to the student population. Based on the committee's organizational analysis, this may be a function of multiple factors working simultaneously, which include the following: a lack of formal and informal networks of support including mentoring; traditional "one-size-fits-all" professional development that does not take into account the varying needs and aspirations of administrators; and the need for targeted efforts to "tap" and cultivate leaders of color during preservice, induction, emerging, and leadership stages of their career.

Second, the landscape of experienced campus administrators has shifted drastically over the last several years. The cycle of experienced campus administrators retiring and being replaced by novices illustrates the increasing need to ensure systematic ways to transition, develop, and support new campus leaders in each of the job roles while providing ongoing opportunities to expand their leadership.

Third, many campus leaders aspire to become principals, yet do not know what it takes to become a principal. This points to the need to ensure more is done in the way of communicating the competencies needed in the principalship and establishing learning plans to assist leaders in their aspirations.

Fourth, there were notable differences in perceptions of preparedness between secondary assistant principals and other campus administrators. From the survey data, the top areas for priority were reported; however, assistant principals indicated many more areas rated as "not prepared" or "minimally prepared" compared to other campus administrators. Based on response, additional differentiated professional development is needed to increase assistant principals' curricular and instructional leadership for school improvement.

Finally, mentoring is an important component of succession planning and leadership development. While there are many pockets of excellence in this area, it is not a pervasive structure that is systemically implemented for each job role along the pipeline to principalship. This theme emerged as a result of the organizational analysis and was identified as an area of need.



"Being a member of Secondary Curriculum Council has helped tremendously in my role as Director of Instruction by providing valuable time to collaborate with colleagues and share best practices for approaching the many responsibilities of the job. The timely updates shared by the Instructional Support Center staff at these meetings also provide valuable information that helps guide me as I provide support to the instructional staff on my campus."

**Donna Lester**  
**Director of Instruction, Jersey Village High School**



# GOALS FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

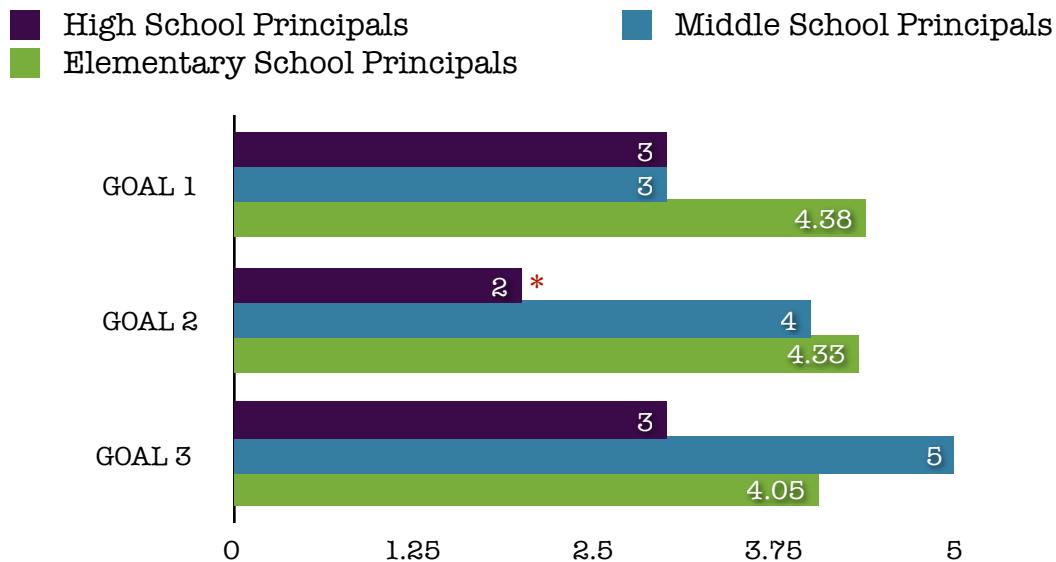
## Identified Goals

**GOAL 1:** Develop a framework that outlines competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) required for success as a principal including measurements of readiness and potential roles and experiences that support the competencies.

**GOAL 2:** Develop districtwide focused and intensive induction for all new administrators, as well as ongoing leadership training that will provide experiences to prepare candidates before, during, and after placement for all campuses.

**GOAL 3:** Develop a formalized mentorship program for associate principals, directors of instruction, and assistant principals.

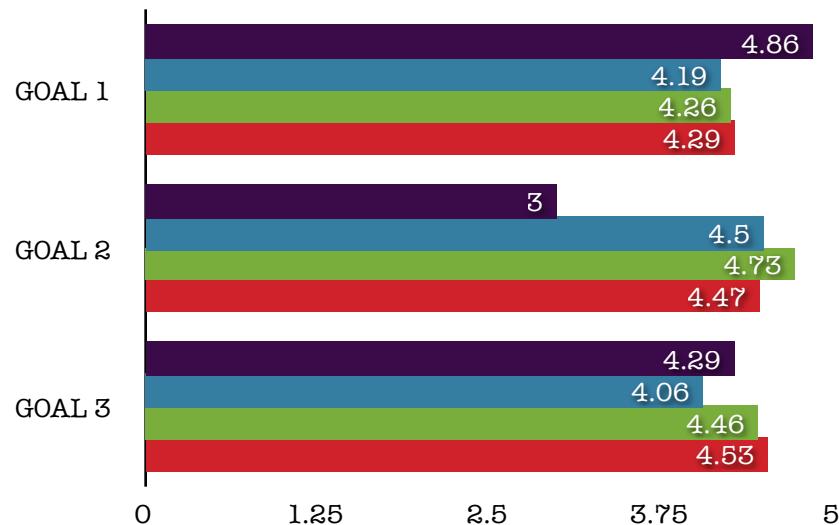
## Priority Ratings of Principals by Identified Goals



\* High School Principals' low rating of Goal #2 was due to the initial language of Goal #2 reflecting "bootcamp." Principals agreed that "intensive bootcamp", reflecting an event, should be changed to "intensive induction", reflecting an ongoing process. Considering this opinion, Goal #2 was changed to reflect "induction."

## Priority Ratings of Other Campus Administrators by Identified Goals

■ Associate Principals      ■ Directors of Instruction  
■ Secondary Assistant Principals      ■ Elementary Assistant Principals



# Action Steps

**GOAL 1:** Develop a framework that outlines competencies (knowledge, skills, and abilities) required for success as a principal including measurements of readiness and potential roles and experiences that support the competencies.

- Convene a committee of various stakeholder representatives to examine national and state principal competencies to adopt local standards.
- Determine the metrics for principal readiness aligned with standards.
- Align all documents and processes associated with hiring principals to the adopted principal competency standards.
- Align other supporting documents to reflect competencies (i.e. Portrait of a CFISD Administrator, essential job functions for job description, and administrator evaluations).

**GOAL 2:** Develop districtwide focused and intensive induction for all new administrators, as well as ongoing leadership training that will provide experiences to prepare candidates before, during, and after placement for all campuses.

- Assess current learning opportunities for potential, newly appointed, and emerging leaders.
- Adjust existing learning opportunities to address identified needs.
- Determine needs for additional learning opportunities.
- Create additional learning opportunities to address identified needs.

**GOAL 3:** Develop a formalized mentorship program for associate principals, directors of instruction, and assistant principals.

- Provide campus leadership opportunities for aspiring principals.
- Establish mentoring criteria and develop comprehensive mentor training for selected mentors of beginning administrators in each of the job roles.
- Provide job-shadowing opportunities and campus visits between mentors and mentees.
- Provide monthly meetings, led by veteran campus leaders, specifically for new administrators in each of the job roles to provide “just in time” training and information in high-need areas.
- Develop “tool kits” to assist mentors and mentees in their learning-focused relationships.

## Additional Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Develop a continuum of job-embedded activities/experiences that leaders can select from to help prepare future leaders.

**Recommendation 2:** Increase collaboration with colleges/universities and other organizations to provide continuous professional development.

**Recommendation 3:** Actively recruit and train diverse leadership candidates whose skills and abilities reflect the profile of a CFISD Administrator.

**Recommendation 4:** Develop a process for administrators to use a competency framework as part of the goal-setting and evaluation process.

**Recommendation 5:** Equip leaders to better serve digital-aged students.

## SUSTAINABILITY

An important aspect in the work of the committee was the attention given to monitoring implementation of the action plan and ensuring long-term sustainability of the efforts and services. The committee recognizes there are several dimensions of project sustainability including relevancy, acceptability, resources, environmental sustainability, implementation and monitoring strategy, and post-implementation maintenance. To assist in ensuring high levels of implementation and monitoring, plans were developed with benchmarks for assessing progress in achieving results, as well as implementation fidelity. Additionally, implementation teams for each of the action plans have been established to oversee and facilitate implementation. Each of these teams will be led by a member of the School Administration and Leadership Development team and a campus leader. This will establish close collaboration and articulation between central office leaders and school administrators throughout the process. Finally, a committee-of-the-whole for Leadership Development will be established long-term to monitor progress toward attaining desired results, troubleshoot problems as they arise, and guide future efforts for improvement.

## CONCLUSION

The focus on leadership development in CFISD is one of paramount importance—so significant, that in many ways, the future of staffing district schools with the best leaders depends on it. The Leadership Development Committee has researched what is needed to make change happen in CFISD, and what is working across the district, state, and nation to address leadership development reform issues. We have the model, the tools, and the necessary leadership to move forward and mobilize around this work. This is truly community work, and every one of us has an actionable role to play in deciding the future of CFISD. How we act on the framework is the challenge—please join us and become part of the solution.

*“To each there comes in their lifetime a special moment when they are figuratively tapped on the shoulder and offered the chance to do a very special thing, unique to them and fitted to their talents. What a tragedy if that moment finds them unprepared or unqualified for that which could have been their finest hour.”*

Winston Churchill



"I love meeting with my cluster colleagues. We always collaborate on current issues. We depend on each other to make important decisions and plans for best practices. We all have a great relationship and respect for one another. We learn from each other's experiences as well."

**Dr. Cheryl Henry**  
**Principal, Campbell Middle School**



# Portrait of a Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Administrator

The Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Administrator is the instructional leader and the key to supporting the environment and learning opportunities for students and teachers, as they work to acquire the characteristics as described in the Portrait of a Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Graduate and the Portrait of a Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Teacher. The CFISD administrator is a(n):

## Creative Visionary

who is passionately focused on effecting change and has the ability to merge facts and data with intuition, imagination, and innovation in an effort to realize the possibilities rather than be content with the probabilities.

## Effective Communicator

who is open-minded and perceptive to the needs and expectations of the school and community, and who, through the art of collaboration and creative problem solving, brings cohesiveness to the organization.

## Dedicated Professional

who creates a supportive environment by modeling and expecting accountability and responsibility; who exemplifies ethics; who accepts and values the differences of others; and who has a sense of human wisdom, courage, and compassion.

## Lifelong Learner

who continually and eagerly self-educates, monitors and adjusts, evaluates change, and seeks and utilizes resources to effectively influence renewal and rebirth.

## Inspiring Catalyst

who motivates and empowers others to become leaders and risk-takers, and who encourages and acknowledges the expertise and successes of others through high expectations.

# PARTNERS

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