Strengthening School Leadership in Massachusetts

Understanding and addressing challenges
to ensure an effective principal for every school

Barr Foundation

ATTUNED Education Partners

AN EFFECTIVE PRINCIPAL FOR EVERY SCHOOL

The school leader is integral to school success and vital to student achievement. This is true in large and small schools, in traditional public districts and public charter organizations, in rural and urban locales. Every school and student needs an effective principal.

However, in Massachusetts, this goal is elusive. Sourcing, supporting, and retaining high-quality principals is always a challenge. And the difficulties are exacerbated in schools that have struggled to support all students. Many newly-hired principals in such schools do not bring prior experience in that role. In addition, the demographic profile of principals across our state does not reflect the demographics of our student population, which is a critical factor in a student's experience.

To better understand the factors constraining Massachusetts from having a high-quality principal in every school, Barr joined with a group of dedicated principals, school system leaders, state leaders, and funders who brought insight to these critical questions:

• What are the challenges that most affect the supply and demand for high-quality principals in this state?

• What research, lessons, and successful approaches have relevance to these challenges?

• What actions can those affected take to make meaningful change?

Attuned Education Partners ably guided our shared learning journey and, via this report, responded to the above lines of inquiry. We are publishing this material in hopes it will deepen understanding, point to fresh opportunities, and spark new dialogue among those charged with sourcing, supporting, and retaining school leaders. Our aim is to equip them to take bold action that is informed and inspired by others who have taken steps to address similar challenges in other contexts. We also hope funders discover new ways to be constructive partners in these efforts.

At the Barr Foundation, we believe that all young people can succeed in learning, work, and life. We support efforts throughout Massachusetts and beyond that are led by educators, parents, and community partners to ensure all of our young people have access to great schools that expand horizons, motivate students to dream bigger and work harder, and provide them with the rigorous and relevant learning experiences that ensure students are fully prepared for college and career.

We are appreciative of all who are committed to ensuring all young people are supported to succeed, and to overcoming obstacles that stand in the way.

Leah Hamilton
Director of Education
Barr Foundation

Download this report and a companion executive summary at bit.ly/principalpipelineblog.

Table of Contents

Introduction

This report identifies actions that research and evidence indicate are most likely to result in more effective school leaders in Massachusetts. It focuses on principals who can drive positive outcomes for students—especially the students of color and English learners that the state is currently serving least well. Actions are presented for a variety of stakeholders involved with policies and practices that affect the supply of well-prepared and successful principals.

Principals are key actors in improving outcomes for students in Massachusetts and nationally, but many barriers prevent them from maximizing their impact.

To deeply explore challenges and potential solutions for strengthening the principalship in Massachusetts, the Barr Foundation convened a working group of stakeholders including district leaders from both urban and rural districts around the state, charter management organization leaders, state education leaders, and education philanthropists. Barr engaged Attuned Education Partners to facilitate the working group and lead execution of the learning agendas developed by its members.

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

Emily Qazilbash
Chief Human Capital Officer,
Boston Public Schools

Nora Vernazza
Co-Headmaster, Boston Public Schools,
TechBoston Academy

Erin Linville
Chief of Strategy and Turnaround,
Holyoke Public Schools

Heather Peske
Senior Associate Commissioner,
Department of Elementary and
Secondary Education, Center for
Instructional Support

Matt Brunell
Co-Executive Director, Springfield
Empowerment Zone Partnership

Caleb Dolan
Executive Director, KIPP Massachusetts
Public Charter Schools

Veronica Conforme
CEO, UP Education Network

Liza Veto
Program Officer, Mass IDEAS

Karla Baehr
Co-Facilitator/Former Superintendent,
Massachusetts Association of School
Superintendents (New Superintendent
Induction Program)

Mary Walachy
Executive Director,
Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation

Barbara Sullivan
Education Director,
Strategic Grant Partners

Leah Hamilton
Director of Education,
Barr Foundation

Kate Dobin
Senior Program Officer,
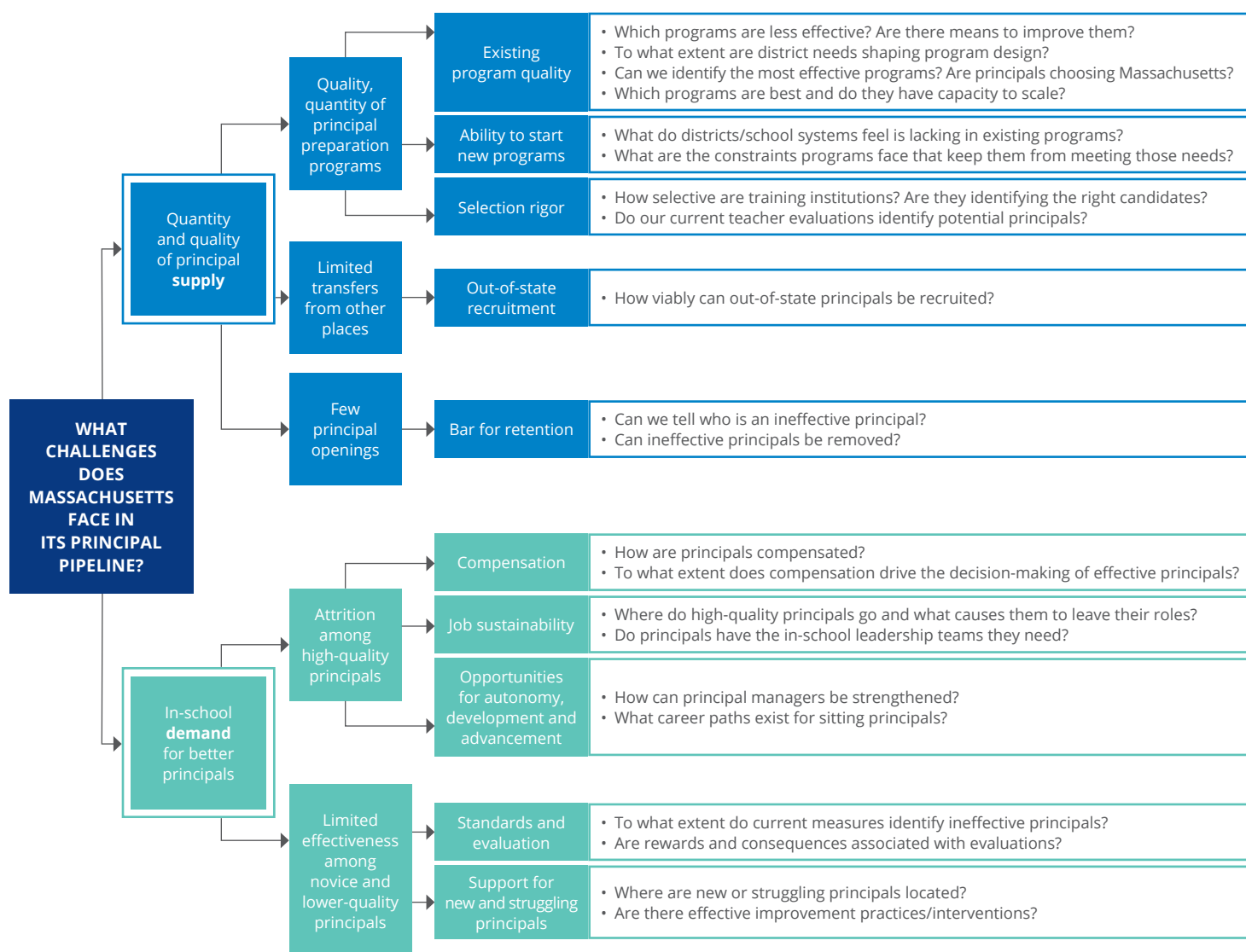Education, Barr Foundation

Jenny Curtin
Senior Program Officer,
Education, Barr Foundation

The working group examined an array of quantitative and qualitative data related to principal pipelines in Massachusetts—including state data related to principal preparation programs, hiring, retention, performance, and demographics. Data was organized using a problem-solving framework based on supply and demand. For example, efforts to strengthen principal preparation programs represent a supply-side intervention; efforts to render the principal role less overwhelming, such that retention improves, represent a demand-side intervention.

Unpacking Supply and Demand

The stakeholder working group explored key issues and questions at the heart of principal pipeline challenges.

WHAT CHALLENGES DOES MASSACHUSETTS FACE IN ITS PRINCIPAL PIPELINE?

Quantity and quality of principal supply

Quality, quantity of principal preparation programs

Existing program quality
- Which programs are less effective? Are there means to improve them?
- To what extent are district needs shaping program design?
- Can we identify the most effective programs? Are principals choosing Massachusetts?
- Which programs are best and do they have capacity to scale?

Ability to start new programs
- What do districts/school systems feel is lacking in existing programs?
- What are the constraints programs face that keep them from meeting those needs?

Selection rigor
- How selective are training institutions? Are they identifying the right candidates?
- Do our current teacher evaluations identify potential principals?

Limited transfers from other places

Out-of-state recruitment
- How viably can out-of-state principals be recruited?

Few principal openings

Bar for retention
- Can we tell who is an ineffective principal?
- Can ineffective principals be removed?

In-school demand for better principals

Attrition among high-quality principals

Compensation
- How are principals compensated?
- To what extent does compensation drive the decision-making of effective principals?

Job sustainability
- Where do high-quality principals go and what causes them to leave their roles?
- Do principals have the in-school leadership teams they need?

Opportunities for autonomy, development and advancement
- How can principal managers be strengthened?
- What career paths exist for sitting principals?

Limited effectiveness among novice and lower-quality principals

Standards and evaluation
- To what extent do current measures identify ineffective principals?
- Are rewards and consequences associated with evaluations?

Support for new and struggling principals
- Where are new or struggling principals located?
- Are there effective improvement practices/interventions?

This multifaceted view of principal pipelines aligns with recent research findings based on The Wallace Foundation's Principal Pipeline Initiative, which underscores the importance of several key elements of a principal pipeline working in concert, rather than a single lever that makes the difference.[1] The group also examined artifacts and presentations from a number of organizations that provide support and training to principals as well as leaders of school systems involved in work to strengthen the principalship. Along with data sets consulted, these resources and reference points represent a diversity of school governance types, including both district and charter schools.

Based on the initial data, research, and shared learning, the working group identified a handful of high-priority challenges, aligned these with potential solutions to strengthen school leadership in Massachusetts, and developed learning agendas related to each one. Attuned Education Partners conducted additional research into each high-priority challenge and potential solution, including literature review, stakeholder interviews, principal surveys, and principal focus groups. Although the group initially explored an extensive set of challenges, this report does not attempt to address all challenges and potential solutions related to school leadership in Massachusetts, but rather a subset prioritized by the group.

> **The working group identified a handful of high-priority challenges and aligned these with potential solutions to strengthen school leadership in Massachusetts.**

The following sections describe each high-priority challenge and potential solution, related findings from research and practice, as well as recommendations for further study and action at the funder, state, district/charter management organization, and/or principal preparation provider levels.

State of the Principalship

The importance of strong principals in driving student achievement is well established. Studies have found that principals have the second-highest in-school effect on student learning, after teachers.[2] In particular, principals play a pivotal role in attracting and retaining effective teachers, especially in high-poverty schools.[3] Principals can also have a "multiplier effect" on good teaching in their schools, leading to cascading benefits for students.[4] Experience in the principalship is associated with positive effects in student achievement, especially in the first few years of a principal's time in role.[5] This is unsurprising given the complexities and challenges of the principal role, which are compounded in struggling schools. It is difficult to overstate the critical role of the principal in setting up students, especially historically underserved students, for success.

As a group, principals in Massachusetts are national outliers in several ways. First, they are relatively inexperienced as compared to the principal workforce in other states. In 2017, 56 percent of all Massachusetts principal hires were in their first year as a principal, which represents a slight decline from the three years prior.[6] Not only do Massachusetts school leaders lack experience at the principal level, but they also have limited experience at the assistant principal level relative to principals in other states.[7] One possible contributing factor to low levels of assistant principal experience in Massachusetts is the relative preponderance of small districts and small schools. Experience at the assistant principal level prior to becoming a principal is more common in large urban districts, of which Massachusetts has relatively few. However, even in Massachusetts districts of over 10,000 students, fewer than one-third of principals have previous experience as assistant principals.[8] This is significant given evidence that previous experience as an assistant principal is correlated with stronger performance as a principal.[9] In fact, 20 percent of principals in Massachusetts lack not only school administration experience but teaching experience in the state, a very high proportion relative to that in other states.[10] This 20 percent may include individuals who have taught in other states or in private school in Massachusetts, but it nevertheless suggests that many individuals are leading Massachusetts schools without previous deep experience of those schools.

Massachusetts principals lack experience in school administration.

More than half of
Massachusetts principal hires are filled by first-year principals

Fewer than one in three
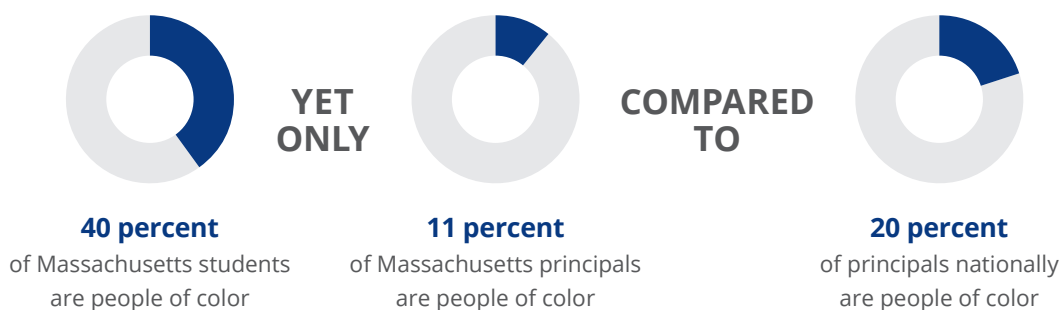Massachusetts principals have previous experience as assistant principals

Massachusetts principals collectively lack experience in the principal's seat, but most acutely so in schools facing some of the most significant challenges. According to a recent study, high-poverty schools are most likely to have novice principals than schools with lower level of poverty, and the same is the case for schools with high Hispanic enrollment versus schools with lower Hispanic enrollment. While placing the least experienced school leaders in schools with the most underserved student populations is not a phenomenon unique to Massachusetts, this trend is more pronounced in Massachusetts than in many other states.[11] In addition, novice principals in Massachusetts are more likely to be hired at the secondary level than at the elementary level.[12] The relative inexperience of the Massachusetts principal workforce suggests an especially strong need for effective supports and enabling conditions for principles, both pre-service and once in role.

> **Massachusetts principals collectively lack experience in the principal's seat, but most acutely so in schools facing some of the most significant challenges.**

Massachusetts principals are also national outliers in terms of their relative lack of diversity. While 40 percent of students in Massachusetts are people of color,[13] only 11 percent of principals in Massachusetts are people of color.[14] This is even lower than the national average of 20 percent principals of color,[15] although higher than the 8 percent of Massachusetts teachers who are people of color.[16]

Massachusetts principal diversity does not reflect student demographics, and is behind national averages.

40 percent
of Massachusetts students
are people of color

YET ONLY

11 percent
of Massachusetts principals
are people of color

COMPARED TO

20 percent
of principals nationally
are people of color

Data represents 2017–2018 academic school year

Thus, Massachusetts principals are both relatively less experienced, especially in the most historically underserved schools, and relatively less racially diverse than their national peers despite serving racially diverse students and families.

Priority Challenges and Solutions

While there are myriad challenges to strengthening the principalship, both nationally and in Massachusetts, four specific challenges—two related to principal supply, and two related to principal demand—especially resonate with Massachusetts stakeholders and are also underscored by local and national evidence.

The table below outlines each challenge prioritized by the working group convened by the Barr Foundation and investigated via examination of research and evidence. The sections that follow offer evidence related to each challenge, potential solutions to each challenge, and recommendations for action and further study in Massachusetts.

PRIORITY
CHALLENGES

| PREPARATION | **Principal preparation programs** are limited in demonstrated efficacy and lack alignment to school system needs. |

| COACHING | **Principal supervisors** have limited capacity to support and develop principals as instructional leaders. |

| SCOPE | **The principal role,** as configured in many school systems, is too complex for a single person to do well in a sustainable manner. |

| REPRESENTATION | **The racial diversity of principals** does not reflect the racial diversity of the students served. |

Principal preparation programs are limited in demonstrated efficacy and lack alignment to school system needs.

Understanding the challenges

Nationally, the majority of principal preparation programs through which many candidates obtain licensure operate without clear evidence of their efficacy in preparing principals to lead schools that support all students to achieve at high levels. In many cases, none of the relevant stakeholders—principal candidates, preparation program leaders, district leaders who hire the program's graduates, state agencies that accredit the programs—know what impact the program has on its graduates and on students in its graduates' schools. In a recent review of evidence for school leadership interventions under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), only New Leaders was identified among national principal preparation providers as having evidence of student impact that meets ESSA's Tier 2 evidence standards.[17]

Additionally, states do not yet fully realize their potential to support continuous improvement of principal preparation programs. Most states do not require principal preparation programs to collect or submit the following evidence in order to receive program approval: graduates earning principal licensure, graduates securing jobs in school administration, graduates retaining jobs, graduates' job performance, and graduates raising student achievement.[18] Per joint analysis of the University Council for Educational Administration and New Leaders, "despite [their] central role in authorizing principal preparation programs, states lack strong models for assessing the quality of programs to promote improvement."[19]

> **Despite their central role in authorizing principal preparation programs, states lack strong models for assessing the quality of programs to promote improvement.**

These national trends are largely reflected in the principal preparation program landscape in Massachusetts. Principal preparation programs in the state generally do not collect or publish student impact data for their graduates. The Massachusetts Department for Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) collects data on some principal preparation program graduate outcomes, such as the percentage of program graduates employed as principals, principal performance evaluation ratings for program graduates, and passing rates on the Performance Assessment for Leadership needed for administrative licensure.[20] Some preparation programs publish other relevant data, such as the percentage of graduates who are people of color. For example, program materials for the Lynch Leadership Academy at Boston College note that 30 percent of graduates are people of color, 33 percent of principals in Boston Public Schools are program alumni, and program alumni have a 93 percent retention rate in their roles. Harvard

Graduate School of Education program materials include the data point that program alumni passing rates exceed state averages on all Performance Assessment for Leadership subtests. However, the state does not link for accountability purposes, and Massachusetts programs do not publish, evidence of student impact along the lines of the "New Leaders effect" identified in a recent RAND study.[21] Massachusetts principal standards provided by DESE refer to student learning as a consideration within the instructional standard, but no criteria or performance descriptors are provided.[22]

It bears noting that Massachusetts offers considerable flexibility in licensure pathways relative to other states. Principal candidates in Massachusetts can gain licensure not only through formal preparation programs, but also through administrative internships and panel reviews. According to analysis by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 47 percent of the 346 novice principals hired from 2013–14 to 2016–17 completed preparation programs.

In addition to a lack of principal preparation program student impact data, the national landscape includes gaps in alignment between district needs and university-based principal preparation program components. This disconnect prompted The Wallace Foundation to fund the University-Based Principal Preparation Initiative (UPPI) in 2016.[23] Massachusetts has instituted the [Performance Assessment for Leaders (PAL)](#) grounded in a set of performance-based tasks intended to closely reflect the authentic work of school leaders, as a licensure requirement, prompting local programs to align their features to its demands. Despite this important step, Massachusetts stakeholders participating in a variety of interviews, focus groups, and surveys cite misalignment between university-based principal preparation programs and the reality of leading in schools. In a survey administered by the Barr Foundation and Attuned Education Partners to a group of 20 Massachusetts stakeholders including district leaders, charter management organization leaders, principal preparation program leaders, and state leaders in August 2018, only 10 percent of respondents agreed with the statement, "Principal preparation programs and school districts are aligned in their beliefs about what makes a quality principal," and no respondents agreed with the statement, "The quality of principal preparation programs is generally strong."[24] In a focus group conducted with Massachusetts principals in March 2019, one veteran principal stated that his preparation program was at the "30,000-foot level, not on the ground level," a sentiment that was echoed by multiple principals. A novice principal who completed his preparation program in another state noted that each district has its own "intricacies" and reflected that absent district-specific context in his preparation program, he needed to do a great deal of learning on the job.[25] The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Induction and Mentoring Statewide Report surveyed district leaders on their perceptions of first-year principal readiness in each of the state performance standards in 2017–18. On average, reports of readiness in the various domains ranged from 52 percent to 70 percent for lower-performing principals, and from 63 percent to 84 percent for higher-performing principals, suggesting that even strong first-year principals are not consistently prepared for the demands of the role.[26]

> **Reports of readiness suggest that even strong first-year principals are not consistently prepared for the demands of the role.**

Exploring potential solutions

High-quality principal preparation programs. Given the relative inexperience of the Massachusetts principal workforce, principal preparation programs are a potentially critical lever in strengthening principal performance and ultimately student outcomes in the highest-needs schools. Research suggests that graduates of high-quality principal preparation programs may perform better in high-needs schools and are more likely to become principals.[27] In addition, evidence suggests that a principal preparation program can in fact contribute to student achievement in measurable ways; New Leaders provides one example. Preparation programs, state departments of education, school systems, and funders all have roles to play in ensuring that principals, and thus the students in schools they lead, are set up for success from the outset through strong preparation.

CASE IN POINT

See Case Studies in the appendix for the rest of this story and others.

Aspiring Principals by New Leaders

The Aspiring Principals program for principal preparation includes three phases: selective recruitment and admission; principal training and endorsement, including a one-year residency; and support for early career principals. Participants engage in intensive, cohort-based coursework as well as on-the-job learning during their year-long residencies. Performance-based assessments and feedback are integrated throughout the residency year, and data is used to drive coaching conversations both during residency and once the Aspiring Principal assumes the principalship. Both district stakeholders and alumni interviewed cite instructional leadership, specifically data-driven instruction, as a program strength. A 2019 RAND study found positive impacts on student achievement for K–8 schools led by New Leaders alumni as compared to similar schools. These schools saw better outcomes in mathematics, English language arts, and student attendance.

Preparation program improvements driven by the state. While principal preparation program leaders can draw inspiration from programs such as Aspiring Principals, the state education agency can also act as a driver for program improvement. Per the State Evaluation of Principal Preparation Programs Toolkit, states can play a significant role in improving principal preparation programs through effective program evaluation and oversight.[28] States can leverage resources to assess readiness for implementing effective principal preparation program evaluation, and they can access resources for design and implementation.

In their Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plans, states have proposed a range of strategies to strengthen school leadership, including principal preparation. For example, New York will incorporate student achievement data into its principal licensure criteria. Delaware will strengthen evaluation of its principal preparation programs, incorporating student achievement data as one measure of program quality in its state scorecard.[29] Illinois is undertaking multi-year efforts, predating ESSA, to hold principal preparation programs to new expectations, including deeper collaboration with districts.[30] Massachusetts is also engaged in multi-year efforts to strengthen principal preparation programs, for example through asking programs to redesign based on new standards and reapply for program approval between 2012 and 2014, as well as through implementation of the PAL, though Massachusetts does not yet incorporate student achievement data into its evaluation of preparation programs.

Tools assembled by UCEA and New Leaders for states seeking to enhance such efforts[31] include:

- State readiness diagnostic rubric;
- Program indicators, rubric, and report;
- Handbook for in-depth review process;
- Handbook for targeted review process.

University-based preparation program redesigns. The majority of principals in Massachusetts participate in university-based principal preparation programs. The Wallace Foundation's University-Based Principal Preparation Initiative (UPPI) is currently in its second year, and more lessons will doubtless emerge as the initiative progresses. However, a report from the RAND Corporation on the first year of the initiative identified the following key features in principal preparation program redesign in each of the seven ecosystems involved in the initiative, including neighboring Connecticut:

- Collaboration among four entities in the ecosystem: the university, local districts, an exemplary preparation program for the model the university is seeking to implement, and the state department of education;
- Co-development of graduate aims and logic model;
- Bolstered field experiences.[32]

These features closely parallel insights shared by a university-based principal preparation program director in an ecosystem that was part of The Wallace Foundation's earlier Principal Pipeline Initiative (PPI). The program leader emphasizes the co-developed nature of the program in support of specific district improvement efforts. She describes "shared understanding of leader standards" as a critical condition for success and characterizes effective programs as ones in which "the program is a coherent whole rather than a collection of courses" and "the internships are connected to the coursework."[33] Relatedly, leaders at the Relay Graduate School of Education emphasize the importance of preparation program providers defining their theory of action, identifying the specific data that they will use to test their theory of action, and following through to transparently share what they are learning about the strengths and limitations of their theories. A recent WestEd study of Relay's National Principals Academy Fellowship provides an example.[34]

> Leaders emphasize the importance of preparation program providers defining and testing their theory of action.

Salem State University presents an example of a Massachusetts university-based principal preparation program redesign that includes many of the features identified by The Wallace Foundation and others as high-impact. In particular, Salem State is bolstering its field experiences as well as setting up district-based cohorts for principal preparation candidates, their program instructors, and their fieldwork supervisors in order to more closely align candidate experiences with specific district needs.[35]

Building principal supervisor capacity in instructional leadership is explored in greater detail in the *Coaching* section on page 17. However, it is worth noting here that principal preparation programs—including those of New Leaders, Relay Graduate School of Education, the Ritchie Program in Denver, as well as Massachusetts providers such as the Lynch Leadership Academy and Salem State University—increasingly acknowledge and emphasize the importance of aligned instructional leadership training across roles, including teacher leaders, assistant principals, principals, and principal supervisors. There is an emerging hypothesis that principal preparation program improvements are both necessary and most likely to be effective when situated within a continuum of instructional leadership capacity-building experiences across roles. More information about distributed leadership roles can be found in the *Scope* section on page 22.

> **Principal preparation programs increasingly acknowledge and emphasize the importance of aligned instructional leadership training across roles, including teacher leaders, assistant principals, principals, and principal supervisors.**

In sum, the evidence suggests:

- Preparation program design features are likely to drive impact;
- Potential actions across stakeholder groups can support implementation of these design features.

Recommendations for action and further study

Stakeholders	Proposed actions
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	• Engage in self-assessment and identify next steps for improvement. • Take next steps based on readiness assessment findings (for example, incorporating student achievement data into program performance evaluation framework and ensuring this data is readily available to stakeholders—e.g., school system leaders, potential principal candidates seeking program information, etc.). • Provide reports to principal preparation programs on student outcomes at schools led by their graduates, including identifying any legal and/or infrastructure barriers to mitigate to make data available and digestible. • Resource to support above actions: State Evaluation of Principal Preparation Programs (SEP3) Toolkit from UCEA/New Leaders.
School system leaders	• Seek opportunities to partner with principal preparation programs in order to engage in redesign aligned to school system needs. For smaller school systems, consider opportunities to align with other systems in the region on the features of strong principal preparation most needed in local programs. • Seek program outcome data, including on student impact, from potential preparation partners, and use to inform recruitment and hiring. • Consider whether the cost of principal residencies can be covered centrally and not associated with a specific school's budget, such that residents can be placed with mentor principals who are truly best positioned to grow them. • Consider opportunities to add assistant principal roles under effective principals in order to strengthen the principal pipeline and create more experienced candidates for future principal roles. • Consider distributed leadership strategies to strengthen overall quality of school-level leadership and grow the principal pipeline while addressing sustainability of principal role. (See the *Scope* section on page 22 for more information.)
Principal preparation program leaders	• For university-based principal preparation programs, seek opportunities to partner with districts (or groups of districts) in order to engage in redesign aligned to district needs. Resource for this work: The Wallace Foundation's UPPI. • Engage in self-assessment and identify next steps for improvement (for example, defining theories of action and how they are tested; measuring and transparently sharing program outcomes, including student impact). Resource for this work: Principal Preparation Program Self-Evaluation from New Leaders.

Stakeholders	Proposed actions

Funders	• Support districts (or groups of districts) and principal preparation programs to develop partnerships that include features present in high-quality programs with evidence of impact, including:
	  – Selective recruitment and admissions;
	  – Coursework and residency anchored in research-validated performance standards, assessment, and feedback;
	  – Coaching and support once in role.
	• Fund residencies within high-quality principal preparation programs.
	• Fund local principal preparation program redesign pilots. Resource for this work: The Wallace Foundation's UPPI.
	• Fund an initial effort to measure and transparently share preparation program outcomes, including student impact analysis (for example, by ensuring DESE has sufficient resources to conduct in-depth program reviews at an appropriate frequency).

COACHING

Principal supervisors have limited capacity to support and develop principals as instructional leaders.

Understanding the challenges

Like principals, principal supervisors face a number of challenges in providing the instructional leadership that can profoundly impact schools and their students. In many school systems, principal supervisors are responsible for very large caseloads of principals (20 or more), such that their impact at any one school is limited. Often in these scenarios, the principal supervisor's role is configured to focus on ensuring compliance with central office mandates, more so than coaching or instructional leadership. Given these realities, many principal supervisors do not themselves have deep capacity in instructional leadership or in fostering it in others. Nationally, mismatch between the existing predominant model for principal supervision and principal development needs prompted The Wallace Foundation to fund the Principal Supervisors Initiative (PSI) in 2014.[36]

> The principal supervisor's role is often configured to focus on ensuring compliance with central office mandates, more so than coaching or instructional leadership.

In Massachusetts, stakeholders frequently cite limited support from principal supervisors as a challenge. For example, according to the 2017 Views of Instruction, State Standards, Teaching, and Assessment (VISTA) Survey of Principals, 57 percent of principals rated feedback from superintendents or other district administrators—typically provided in an evaluative context—as valuable or very valuable to them; however, 43 percent of principals stated that feedback provided by superintendents or other district administrators was only somewhat valuable, not valuable, or that they did not receive feedback.[37] In particular, given the preponderance of small districts in Massachusetts, principals are often supervised directly by superintendents, who have a plethora of responsibilities in addition to developing principals as instructional leaders. While many superintendents nevertheless manage to prioritize principal coaching and instructional leadership development, the challenges in doing so are real. A superintendent who supervises principals stated, "We try to coach, but our schedules as superintendents are so overtaxed that we guiltily cancel some coaching sessions due to emergencies in other buildings. I would love the luxury of time to coach new leadership. That is the 'pay it forward' I live for, but time is the value that is precious, and there is never enough time as a superintendent."[38] On the other hand, several Massachusetts principals in Boston Public Schools indicated that they had a number of different supervisors in different parts of the organization rather than one consistent touchpoint for support.[39]

A principal in a school under state turnaround status with experience in several Massachusetts districts noted that his supervisor's visits are primarily focused on accountability, rather than capacity-building. He stated, "I think the downside is that it's mostly around compliance and less about solutions... In order to get out of turnaround, we have to raise our test scores and decrease chronic absenteeism and all of those fun things. I'm not sure just reminding us all the time is really the best approach." Similarly, another principal expressed frustration with the compliance-focused nature of his supervisor's visits and expressed a desire to receive more support in instructional leadership. He stated, "I think as principals, we have to work really hard to take ourselves out of a building manager role and put ourselves in a school leader, educational leader role. I honestly have very little interest in managing the building. I have a lot of interest in situations where I can really make an impact on teaching and learning. I would want my supervisor to dial in much more to my growth as an educational leader" rather than focusing on management items, such as copy paper.[40]

Another principal in a large district described an array of directives, but limited support. He stated, "[My preparation program] was realistic about the level of support and guidance that you get, which is very small. Realistically, in [this district], you need to be prepared to lead relatively independently." The principal added, "You have to be willing to manage up or not necessarily do what you're being asked to do in order to be successful."[41] Along similar lines, a stakeholder noted, "Many districts and [charter management organizations] struggle to find principal supervisors who have the capacity to develop and coach principals in the gaps in skill and experience they encounter in these very complex roles." Another expressed, "The district's principal managers were terrible in the past few years. They were totally MIA and met with principals once or twice a year to go through checklists. They each were supposed to oversee almost 20 principals—that's untenable."[42] It is evident that a gap exists between the current state and desired state for principal supervisors and their support of principals in Massachusetts.

> **It is evident that a gap exists between the current state and desired state for principal supervisors and their support of principals in Massachusetts.**

Exploring potential solutions

Evidence-based focus areas and standards for supervisors. There is growing recognition across the country of the potential impact of strengthening principal supervisors. For example, principal coaching, support for novice principals, and improving principal supervisor practice in supporting and developing principals are the top three focus areas in states participating in Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) action groups.[43] These focus areas align with findings from The Wallace Foundation's Principal Pipeline Initiative, which indicate that "when large districts made efforts to improve the principal pipeline, novice principals valued mentoring and principal supervision highest among the available supports."[44] To support efforts to bolster principal supervisors' instructional leadership capacity, CCSSO has created model principal supervisor standards, believed to be the first such standards available nationally.[45]

> There is growing recognition across the country of the potential impact of strengthening principal supervisors.

Effective supervisor role redesign. The recently concluded Principal Supervisor Initiative (PSI) of The Wallace Foundation involved six school districts and is being studied to examine impact of the initiative on principal performance and provide performance comparisons between participating districts and comparable, non-participating districts. While this activity promises additional learning, an initial report offers potential paths forward in strategies[46] it identifies as effective in the redesign of the principal supervisor role:

- Restructure the principal supervisor job description to focus on instructional leadership, aligned with principal supervisor model standards developed by CCSSO.
- Reduce the number of principals supervised by each principal supervisor and group principals strategically into networks. The report noted that the average "span of control" for participating principal supervisors decreased from 17 principals to 12 principals during the course of the initiative, such that the principal supervisors could more deeply engage with each school leader.
- Develop or access systematic training programs to hone principal supervisors' skills. The report noted that this training was most successful when accessed through an external provider with specific expertise and experience in this area.
- Engage in principal supervisor succession planning.
- Redistribute non-instructional responsibilities away from principal supervisors to other central office roles and make aligned central office shifts accordingly. The report noted that this could be a particularly difficult process for districts to navigate.

A district leader in a participating district noted benefits at both the principal supervisor and principal preparation levels. She stated, "As our instructional superintendent model, through our work with Wallace, has gotten stronger over time, their ability to develop at a cluster-specific level has gotten more strategic and intentional. So, the instructional superintendents can identify the assistant principals who are the next set of leaders." The district leader went on to note that the increased instructional leadership capacity at the principal supervisor level "allows us to be more intentional about what development we are offering at the cluster level" or through the district's leadership development team, resulting in stronger pipelines to the principalship as well as enhanced instructional leadership support for existing principals.[47]

It is worth noting that The Wallace Foundation PSI took place in large districts. In Massachusetts, there are many small districts in which principals are supervised by a superintendent or assistant superintendent. These districts may face significant barriers in redesigning the principal supervisor role along the lines described above. In such instances, it may be useful to explore whether another individual—such as a principal coach, potentially shared across multiple districts—can provide dedicated instructional leadership support to a limited number of principals. Massachusetts DESE is also working with principal and superintendent advisory groups in order to strengthen the state's superintendent rubric by more clearly describing supervisory and support functions of the superintendent as well as to provide resources for robust, instructionally focused school visits.

Instructional leadership training alignment across roles. As efforts to strengthen principal supervisors continue, both national and local providers increasingly emphasize the importance of instructional leadership development opportunities that are aligned across roles—such as teacher leaders/instructional leadership team members, assistant principals, principals, and principal supervisors—to a school system's ability to achieve maximum impact. For example, New Leaders now provides instructional leadership development opportunities for each of these roles in addition to its signature Aspiring Principals program. In addition, New Leaders emphasizes the critical nature of developing principal supervisors as instructional leaders as opposed to drivers of compliance.[48] Along similar lines, Relay Graduate School of Education offers the National Principal Supervisors Academy and Instructional Leadership Professional Development for non-principal instructional leaders in schools and school systems as well as its signature National Principals Academy. These programs are anchored in common tools such as Relay's Principal Manager Sequence of Action Steps, Goals and Drivers, and guides to Leading Weekly Data Meetings, Leading Observation Feedback, and Leading Instructional Leadership Team Meetings.[49]

> Aligning instructional leadership development across roles is crucial to a school system's ability to achieve maximum impact.

In Massachusetts, similar efforts are underway among local providers such as Lynch Leadership Academy and Salem State University. These providers now offer aligned instructional leadership development experiences for teacher leaders, principals, and principal supervisors. For example, Salem State's principal preparation program is now two years in duration; the first year develops teacher leadership, and the second focuses explicitly on principal preparation, including field experiences. Salem State also facilitates professional learning communities for sitting principals and superintendents in an effort to strengthen connections across the levels of leadership.[50] In addition, DESE is working with a consultant to develop resources for principal supervisors. These include updates to the Superintendent evaluation rubric, associated quick reference guides for School Committees that emphasize the role these administrators play in supervising and supporting principals, model observation protocols for principal supervisors to use, and a guide to evaluating principals. All are aligned with CCSSO's model resources.

Recommendations for action and further study

Stakeholders	Proposed actions
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	• Compile, curate, and publicize to stakeholders publicly available resources (e.g., organizational charts, job descriptions, etc.) to support standards implementation and instructional leadership development aligned across roles, including superintendents/principal supervisors. • Consider opportunities to provide supports to districts to engage in redesign of the superintendent/principal supervisor role aligned with key findings from national research (for example, by creating a grant opportunity). Resources for this work: The Wallace Foundation PSI, *Principal Supervisor Selection and Development: A Toolkit for Strengthening the Pipeline* and *Principal Supervisor Network Redesign: A Toolkit for Building Stronger Systems* from New Leaders. • Consider opportunities to provide additional supports to smaller districts that currently rely on superintendents to provide principal coaching (for example, by creating a grant opportunity for multiple districts to pilot sharing a principal coach).
School system leaders	• As applicable, pilot changes to the superintendent/principal supervisor role aligned with key findings from national research (e.g., ensure sufficient time and capacity for dedicated instructional leadership development; adjust principal supervisor selection criteria to reflect reconfigured demands of the role). Resources for this work: The Wallace Foundation PSI, *Principal Supervisor Selection and Development: A Toolkit for Strengthening the Pipeline* and *Principal Supervisor Network Redesign: A Toolkit for Building Stronger Systems* from New Leaders. • Seek high-quality partnerships that provide aligned training in instructional leadership for superintendents/principal supervisors, principals, and teacher leaders.
Principal preparation program leaders	• Develop and offer aligned training in instructional leadership for superintendents/principal supervisors, principals, and teacher leaders.
Funders	• Fund local principal supervisor redesign efforts that align with national research and include rigorous impact analysis. Resources for this work: The Wallace Foundation PSI, *Principal Supervisor Selection and Development: A Toolkit for Strengthening the Pipeline* and *Principal Supervisor Network Redesign: A Toolkit for Building Stronger Systems* from New Leaders. • Fund preparation program/district partnerships that include high-quality, aligned training for superintendents, principal supervisors, principals, and teacher leaders, as well as rigorous impact analysis. Example providers of aligned training: Relay Graduate School of Education and New Leaders. • Fund resource allocation assessments to determine ways that current staff or resources might be redeployed to better support principals through their supervisors.

The principal role, as configured in many school systems, is too complex for a single person to do well in a sustainable manner.

Understanding the challenges

The job of a principal is incredibly complex and challenging. In many school systems, principals manage multi-million-dollar budgets, hire and manage large staffs, navigate complex political landscapes, interface with families and community members, assume responsibility for the safety and thriving of hundreds or even thousands of young people, are the "faces" of highly visible public institutions, establish and maintain school culture, and manage significant operations—in addition to leading the teaching and learning functions at the heart of a successful school. National research indicates that in the 21st century, the principal role as historically configured may simply be too large for a single person.[51]

National concerns about the myriad responsibilities attached to the principal role as predominantly configured and the resulting challenge in devoting sufficient time to instructional leadership prompted The Wallace Foundation to fund the School Administration Manager (SAM) Project in 2008–9.[52] Arguably, the role of the principal has grown only more demanding since then with the advent of more rigorous standards for college and career readiness, and aligned assessment and accountability structures.

> "The emotional and physical drain of taking on leadership roles in communities of high need demands no work-life balance, making it sometimes impossible to stay in the job for long."

In Massachusetts, stakeholders consistently cite the numerous responsibilities of the principal as posing challenges in terms of both sustainability and effectiveness in instructional leadership. One stakeholder stated, "The demands of the job are too big for any one person, particularly in a high-needs school. Burnout is a very real challenge." Another expressed, "The role of the principal has expanded and yet we add to their plates—we want them to be instructional leaders and yet rules and regulations require excessive compliance work while also managing buildings. The emotional and physical drain of taking on leadership roles in communities of high need demands no work-life balance, making it sometimes impossible to stay in the job for long."[53]

These comments are powerful when considered alongside the context that most principal hires in Massachusetts are novice principals, and that novice principals are concentrated in high-poverty schools serving large populations of students of color. Research indicates that novice principals are less likely than their more experienced peers to positively impact student outcomes,[54] yet novice principals are disproportionately responsible for serving the most historically marginalized students. A Massachusetts novice principal interviewed expressed gratitude for the supports available to him as the leader of a turnaround school, but stated that he was "still working on getting away from the management of the building" and wished he could spend more time on instructional leadership and developing relationships with students.[55] Along similar lines, multiple principals expressed that the extensive scope of principal responsibilities posed barriers to sustainability and effectiveness. One principal stated, "Principals wear far too many hats and have too much responsibility. It's almost a 24-hour job. Additional support for operational and instructional improvement would be helpful."[56] DESE's analysis of principal retention rates based on efficacy indicates that 85 percent of principals rated "exemplary" or "proficient" were retained in their schools in 2016–17, while 55 percent of principals rated "needs improvement" or "unsatisfactory" were retained.[57]

Exploring potential solutions

Distributed leadership models. It does not have to be this way. National research as well as a variety of national and local models point to potential solutions in narrowing and focusing the principal role through distributed leadership approaches, such that the principalship, while nevertheless challenging, is better set up for success and schools are better positioned to serve students well. Research indicates that schools that leverage distributed leadership structures may have greater impact on student achievement than schools in which the principal is the lone decision-maker.[58] In addition, distributed leadership models can support leader retention by narrowing the responsibilities of the principal and rendering the job less overwhelming. Distributed leadership models can also support teacher retention and career pathways into school leadership.[59]

National and local models suggest two high-level theories of action related to distributed leadership and narrowing the role of the principal. One model takes operations largely off of the plate of the principal so that the principal can focus deeply on instructional leadership, and operations can get the dedicated, expert attention needed to contribute substantially to school success. The second model distributes instructional leadership responsibilities across a wider range of individuals so the principal functions as a leader of other instructional leaders rather than personally handling most or all of instructional leadership functions at the school. These two models are not mutually exclusive; many school systems blend elements of both. This report examines several specific examples of both of these high-level approaches in action.

> National and local models suggest two high-level theories of action related to distributed leadership and narrowing the role of the principal.

CASES IN POINT

See Case Studies in the appendix for the rest of these stories and others.

Uncommon Schools

At high-performing Northeastern charter management organization Uncommon Schools, each school operates under a dual leadership model. The principal owns instruction and school culture and reports to an assistant superintendent. The director of operations (DOO) owns school systems, operations, and finances and reports to an associate chief operating officer. The two leaders each have their own supervisor and their own portfolio of direct reports (deans and instructional leaders for the principal; operations team members for the DOO). The model allows the principal to specialize deeply in instruction and culture and allows a trained expert to lead school operations, such that operations are executed with excellence and student and adult learning time are maximized. Whereas principals in many systems lament that they want to be in classrooms but cannot because their time is consumed with meetings, principals at Uncommon Schools rarely if ever attend non-instructional meetings. An additional benefit of the existence of the DOO role is that it opens up different talent pipelines for the organization than those used to source principals and thus supports ongoing efforts to increase diversity in leadership.

District of Columbia Public Schools

In D.C. Public Schools, the school-based director of strategy and logistics (DSL) role originated as a pilot in nine schools as part of an effort to strengthen teacher and principal performance. District leaders had learned that the principals did not have time for instructional leadership to improve teacher performance because of their numerous operational responsibilities. The pilot was born of a desire to experiment with taking these operational functions off of principals' plates and freeing them up to focus on instructional leadership, leveraging lessons learned from charter and other school systems. DSL candidates are screened and placed into a pool by a central office operations team; participating school leaders can then hire out of the pool. They receive training on the essential functions of their roles from the central operations team. Today the DSL role is perceived as not only freeing up principals to deepen their instructional leadership, but also allowing the district to hold them more accountable for doing so. Expanding past the pilot period, the position is now part of 65 of DCPS's 115 schools.

Denver Public Schools

In Denver Public Schools, the distributed leadership model spreads instructional leadership across a dedicated team that includes the principal. Originally conceived as a talent strategy, the district launched its Teacher Leadership and Collaboration program to create teacher leadership roles that include both classroom teaching and instructional leadership functions, such as teacher coaching and evaluation, leading data teams, providing professional development, etc., most typically through half-time release from classroom teaching. The aim was to both retain the best teachers and to provide them with an opportunity to "lead without leaving the classroom." The program also intended to allow principals to function more as "leaders of leaders," than primary drivers of instructional improvement in their schools. Over time, the strategy has shifted emphasis from talent to instructional improvement. Perception data indicates that teachers overwhelmingly believe that both their instructional practice and their students' achievement has improved as a result of support from teacher leaders.

In sum, the evidence suggests:

- Potential for powerful impact in implementing distributed leadership approaches.
- Two high-level models for distributed leadership (not mutually exclusive).
- Success factors associated with implementation of each model.

Recommendations for action and further study

Stakeholders	Proposed actions
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	• Compile and share information about distributed leadership roles (e.g., organizational charts, job descriptions) and how schools, districts, and networks in Massachusetts have funded these positions and addressed them in collective bargaining agreements. • Support and promote efforts by school systems to pilot and analyze impact of approaches to distributed leadership that can help make schools more effective and leadership more sustainable, while also increasing the principal pool. • Consider opportunities to support effective implementation of distributed leadership roles through licensure incentives (e.g., endorsements, micro-credentialing, badges, teacher leader licenses, etc.).
School system leaders	• Prioritize rigorous impact analysis of existing distributed leadership approaches and consider opportunities to scale the most effective. • Share case studies of distributed leadership models with school leaders and seek input on what efforts they may want to pilot based on school data and context, providing the necessary support for them to do so. • Leverage publicly available resources such as those from Achievement First for systems seeking to implement or enhance a school-based director of operations role. • Leverage publicly available resources such as those from Denver Public Schools and DESE for systems seeking to implement or enhance teacher leadership and/or instructional leadership teams.
Principal preparation program leaders	• Develop and/or refine program offerings, as appropriate, to support aligned instructional leadership training across role types (e.g., teacher leaders, principals, and principal supervisors) in order to support effective distributed leadership models in districts.
Funders	• Fund studies, including rigorous impact analyses, of existing distributed leadership models (e.g., dual leadership models involving a director of operations, teacher leadership, etc.) and develop case studies in order to learn more about the highest leverage approaches in a variety of school system contexts. • Fund high-quality partnerships that include support for implementation of distributed leadership models aligned to instructional leadership training (national examples include Relay Graduate School of Education and New Leaders).

REPRESENTATION

The racial diversity of principals does not reflect the racial diversity of the students served.

Understanding the challenges

According to a 2016 U.S. Department of Education report on the state of racial diversity in the educator workforce, nationally 49 percent of students are people of color, but only 20 percent of principals are people of color.[60] In Massachusetts, while 40 percent of students are people of color,[61] only 11 percent of principals are people of color.[62] The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education publishes data on the diversity of the staff of principal preparation programs, but does not publish data on the racial demographics of each program's graduates. Principal preparation programs in Massachusetts generally do not publish this data either.

Stakeholders in Massachusetts consistently cite lack of diversity among principals as a critical challenge in better serving students. A group of Massachusetts leaders convened by the Barr Foundation identified lack of diversity in the principal candidate pool as a priority challenge in the state.[63] One stakeholder stated, "there is deep bias within school districts that continues to overlook principal candidates of color." Massachusetts principals surveyed and interviewed noted that this challenge extends to the teacher level; in fact, the principalship is more representative of students served in terms of racial diversity than the teacher workforce in the state. One principal stated, "We have to do a much better job of recruiting young people of color into the teaching profession," a sentiment echoed across many responses.[64] Another principal reflected on the cyclical nature of the problem, noting that a lack of teachers and leaders of color can contribute to negative school experiences for students of color, which in turn can deter them from entering the teaching profession and becoming school leaders.[65]

> **Stakeholders in Massachusetts consistently cite lack of diversity among principals as a critical challenge in better serving students.**

Exploring potential solutions

The positive impact of teachers of color is well established. Teachers of color are associated with numerous positive outcomes for students of color, including improved academic achievement, higher high school graduation rates, and increases in aspirations to engage in higher education.[66] Principals of color are also associated with positive impacts for students of color. Principals of color are associated with increased identification of black students for gifted and talented programs, where they are historically underrepresented,[67] as well as with decreased suspensions.[68] Principals of color also have positive impact on recruitment and retention of teachers of color.[69]

Addressing teacher diversity as an entry point to principal diversity. Nationally, data and research indicate that the underrepresentation of principals of color is largely a function of the underrepresentation of teachers of color. According to analysis conducted by the Brookings Institution, teachers of color actually become principals at a higher "per capita" rate than white teachers, and people of color advance to leadership in K–12 education at higher rates than they do in comparable fields.[70] This is reflected in the U.S. Department of Education's 2016 report that indicated 18 percent of teachers are people of color, while 20 percent of principals are people of color.[71] There is an opportunity to leverage these findings in recruiting teacher candidates of color, as teaching may be a more attractive career choice if it is considered in the context of career advancement.[72]

In addition, there is an opportunity to attack the challenge of principal diversity through sourcing diverse teacher preparation pipelines. For example, Teach For America increased the percentage of corps members of color from 29 percent to 51 percent from 2007 to 2016 by making adjustments to its recruitment and selection model to broaden its criteria for the types of experiences that were considered evidence of leadership potential.[73] In Massachusetts, one example of a district initiative intended to result in a teacher workforce more reflective of the students served is the High School to Teacher Program instituted in Boston Public Schools. The program aims to identify "city students in high school who would make great teachers. The program then provides the students with mentors, gives them college prep courses, half their tuition and, if they are successful, teaching jobs. Eighty-seven percent of the participants are black or Latino."[74]

> There is an opportunity to attack the challenge of principal diversity through sourcing diverse teacher preparation pipelines.

State efforts are underway in Massachusetts in order to strengthen teacher diversity. For example, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education offers a grant opportunity for Level 4 or 5 districts to apply for funds to address teacher diversity. In addition, DESE has created a fellowship of current teachers of color to support recruiting efforts in the state.

Building on principal preparation programs that beat the odds. While the national representation of people of color in the principalship largely reflects the representation of people of color among the educator workforce, some principal preparation programs do better than others in terms of enrolling and graduating leaders of color. Nationally, some principal preparation programs have beaten the odds in enrolling and graduating leaders of color at rates that substantially exceed the national average. These programs offer potential lessons for other principal preparation programs seeking to increase their racial diversity. Examples of such programs include:

- New Leaders: 64 percent of Aspiring Principals program graduates are people of color. Similar to Teach For America, New Leaders largely attributes the racial diversity of its program graduates to its selection model. The New Leaders selection model focuses heavily on identifying candidates who have the mindset that all students can achieve at high levels. In recruiting and selecting, New Leaders prioritizes evidence of this mindset over measures such as GPA or having attended a highly selective college. In an interview with *The Hechinger Report,* New Leaders Chief Executive Officer Jean Desravines stated, "Leaders who come from the same communities and who share the background of our students tend to be particularly steadfast in believing that [the students] can achieve at a high level."[75]
- Relay Graduate School of Education: 60 percent of students in masters-level programs are people of color.[76]
- New York City Leadership Academy: 60 percent of participants are people of color.[77]

In Massachusetts, one example of a positive outlier in terms of racial diversity is the Lynch Leadership Academy, which has graduated 30 percent people of color. In fact, 33 percent of Boston Public Schools principals are Lynch graduates,[78] and 57 percent of the district's principals are people of color). While Lynch graduates do not yet fully represent the racial diversity of the students served in Massachusetts schools, the program's graduates substantially exceed the state average of 11 percent principals who are people of color.

Recommendations for action and further study

Stakeholders	Proposed actions
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	• Collect and publish demographic data on graduates of both teacher and principal preparation programs in Massachusetts. • Engage stakeholders of color and others—including leaders, teachers, students, families, and department staff—in conversations around why this challenge exists in Massachusetts and what efforts may be most impactful in addressing it. • Continue to fund efforts to build diverse educator pipelines.
School system leaders	• Seek partnerships with teacher and principal preparation organizations whose diversity makes them positive outliers relative to state averages. • Compare teacher and principal selection processes to those used by organizations that recruit high percentages of people of color, such as New Leaders and Teach For America, and consider adjustments as appropriate. • Engage stakeholders of color and others—including leaders, teachers, students, families, and central staff—in conversations around why this challenge exists in the school system and what efforts may be most impactful in addressing it.
Teacher and principal preparation program leaders	• In recruiting candidates of color, include messaging on strong possibilities for advancement into school leadership as well as the positive impacts of teachers and leaders of color on students of color. • Publish data on the racial demographics of program graduates. • Compare teacher and principal preparation program selection processes to those used by organizations that recruit high percentages of people of color, such as focusing on mindsets related to student achievement, and consider adjustments as appropriate. Examples of this work: Selection models used by New Leaders and Teach For America.

Funders	• Fund studies to more concretely identify the source of the underrepresentation of people of color in the principalship in Massachusetts. This may include testing whether the national findings of the Brookings Institution hold true in Massachusetts to answer:
	  – To what extent is the underrepresentation of principals of color a function of the underrepresentation of teachers of color?
	  – Do teachers of color have greater likelihood of advancing to leadership in K–12 education than in other, comparable fields and, if so, to what extent?
	• Engage stakeholders of color and others—including leaders, teachers, students, families, and central staff—in conversations around why this challenge exists in the school system and what efforts may be most impactful in addressing it.
	• Fund principal preparation programs that recruit, develop, and graduate candidates of color in percentages reflective of the racial diversity of the state.
	• Fund pilot programs and rigorous impact analysis of innovative approaches to diversifying the educator and leader workforce, including efforts to engage local high school and college students.
	• Fund statewide efforts to recruit a more diverse workforce, including campaign/marketing efforts and strategic initiatives designed to build pipelines.

Conclusion

Principals play a critical role in providing high-quality learning experiences for all students, Unfortunately, principals in Massachusetts, like and in some cases more so than their national peers, face a number of barriers to fully realizing their potential impact. These barriers include, but are not limited to, lack of alignment between many preparation programs and the demands of the job; the potentially overwhelming nature of the principalship as it is traditionally configured; lack of capacity among principal supervisors; and lack of racial diversity in the principalship relative to the students served.

This report attempts to summarize several promising research- and evidence-based solutions to mitigate these barriers. Using solutions from across the country and in the state as a guide, Massachusetts stakeholders such as school systems, principal preparation programs, the state education agency, and funders can take aligned and coherent action to strengthen preparation programs, reconfigure principal roles, provide supportive supervision for principals, and ensure that school leaders reflect the diversity of students throughout the Commonwealth. Taking action to strengthen school leadership is an essential lever in improving outcomes for all students, especially those who have been underserved historically.

Appendix: Case Studies

The case studies included in this appendix illustrate potential solutions in action.

Preparing Principals with Rigor, Feedback, and On-the-Job Learning
Aspiring Principals by New Leaders

Collaborating to Distribute Instructional and Operational Responsibilities
Uncommon Schools

Introducing a Strategy and Logistics Role to Improve Performance and Accountability
District of Columbia Public Schools

Combining Instructional Leadership with Classroom Teaching
Denver Public Schools

Implementing Executive-Level Operations Support
Achievement First

Attracting Strong Teacher Leaders to High-Needs Schools
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Clarifying Roles for Co-Equal School Leaders
TechBoston Academy, Boston Public Schools

New Leaders

Preparing Principals with Rigor, Feedback, and On-the-Job Learning

A 2019 RAND study found positive impacts on student achievement for K–8 schools[79] led by New Leaders alumni as compared to similar schools. These schools saw better outcomes in mathematics, English language arts, and student attendance. Moreover, the study found that the impact in each of these areas had nearly doubled in size since a previous RAND study published in 2014 in the wake of program enhancements put in place in 2012.[80] While the study notes that evidence of causal impact should be interpreted with caution, study findings as well as stakeholder interviews point to several key features of the New Leaders program that potentially hold lessons for strengthening principal preparation in Massachusetts.

At a high level, the Aspiring Principals program for principal preparation includes three phases: selective recruitment and admission; principal training and endorsement, including a one-year residency; and support for early career principals. In Massachusetts, among recent completers of the state's 24 approved principal preparation programs, only three percent are employed as principals, suggesting that it may be possible to increase selectivity in local program admissions while still producing a sufficient number of graduates to meet demand.[81]

> *The Aspiring Principals program for principal preparation includes three phases: selective recruitment and admission; principal training and endorsement, including a one-year residency; and support for early career principals.*

The arc of the New Leaders program is anchored in the Transformational Leadership Framework, a research-validated set of standards.[82] These features align with recent findings from The Wallace Foundation's Principal Pipeline Initiative (PPI), which studied the impact of implementation of principal pipeline components, including leader standards, preservice preparation opportunities, selective hiring and placement, and on-the-job induction, evaluation, and support, in six large urban districts.[83] It bears noting here that the selection model is heavily focused on applicant mindset, and that the program is free for participants, who are salaried during their residency year such that cost is not a barrier for these mission-aligned candidates.[84] In addition, an Aspiring Principals alumna who now leads principal

preparation and development in a large urban district noted that in her district, the cost of the residency was covered centrally and not associated with a specific school's budget, such that residents could be placed with mentor principals who were truly best positioned to support their development, rather than with whoever had a vacancy as is often the case in residency programs.[85]

> *Both district stakeholders and alumni interviewed cite instructional leadership, specifically data-driven instruction, as a program strength.*

Aspiring Principals engage in intensive, cohort-based coursework as well as on-the-job learning during their year-long residencies. Performance-based assessments and feedback are integrated throughout the residency year, and data is used to drive coaching conversations both during residency and once the Aspiring Principal assumes the principalship. Both district stakeholders and alumni interviewed cite instructional leadership, specifically data-driven instruction, as a program strength. A district leader noted, "When I think about those principals who were instructional leaders even before the Common Core requirements, they were New Leaders [alumni]."[86] A district leader who is also a graduate of the program noted, "My biggest lever was data-driven instruction, and I think most people would say that." The leader also highlighted the opportunity to practice as a critical program feature that differentiated Aspiring Principals from a previous instructional leadership program in which she had participated. She continued to engage in practice even after the residency ended, for example, role-playing with her New Leaders coach once she became a principal.[87]

This program feature was further developed in 2012 when Aspiring Principals was revised to include supervision of four teachers. Residents set specific goals relative to helping those teachers improve student achievement. In addition, the program was codified to incorporate a series of standard assignments, as well as practice and feedback, on 15 specific leadership actions.[88]

New Leaders staff indicate that a critical condition for program success is district leadership that sees principals as key to school improvement and gives them sufficient autonomy to make change.[89]

Uncommon
Schools

Collaborating to Distribute Instructional and Operational Responsibilities

At high-performing Northeastern charter management organization Uncommon Schools, each school operates under a dual leadership model. The principal owns instruction and school culture and reports to an assistant superintendent. The director of operations (DOO) owns school systems, operations, and finances and reports to an associate chief operating officer. The two leaders each have their own supervisor and their own portfolio of direct reports (deans and instructional leaders for the principal; operations team members for the DOO).

The ways the principal and the DOO interact are dependent to some extent on the specific individuals in the roles, but extensive collaboration based on a strong relationship between the two is important for success. The DOO is often responsible for creating, documenting, implementing, and managing systems informed by the principal's vision. For example, the DOO is in charge of systems for school culture elements such as arrival, homework, lunch, transitions from class to class, and dismissal, informed by the principal's vision for school culture. The DOO is also responsible for operations such as financial management, enrollment, student onboarding, ordering supplies, invoicing, reimbursements, purchasing, and budgeting, informed by the principal's vision for the academic program elements. The DOO also typically owns assessment systems, data systems, field trips, facilities, and substitute coverage.

An Uncommon Schools leader describes the dual leadership model of principal and DOO as "fundamental to the secret sauce and the DNA of the organization." Whereas principals in many systems lament that they want to be in classrooms but cannot because their time is consumed with meetings, principals at Uncommon Schools rarely if ever attend non-instructional meetings. The model allows the principal to specialize deeply in instruction and culture and allows a trained expert to lead school operations, such that operations are

> *The model allows the principal to specialize deeply in instruction and culture and allows a trained expert to lead school operations, such that operations are executed with excellence and student and adult learning time are maximized.*

executed with excellence and student and adult learning time are maximized. Both principals and DOOs engage in role-specific fellowships prior to assuming their roles. Because this model is so thoroughly integrated into the organizational culture at Uncommon Schools, job descriptions for both roles are typically well understood by all parties. However, leaders cautioned that instituting this model in a system that had previously operated under a more traditional conception of the principal role would require significant change management.

An additional benefit of the existence of the DOO role is that it opens up different talent pipelines for the organization than those used to source principals and thus supports ongoing efforts to increase diversity in leadership. DOOs may be former classroom teachers, network operations team leaders, private sector leaders, MPP or MBA graduates, etc. While there are some common elements in the performance evaluations of principals and DOOs—for example, metrics on staff and student culture—the distinct job descriptions, training, and talent pipelines reflect the organization's belief that excellence in instructional and operational leadership are distinct skillsets best held by separate leaders.[90] In Massachusetts, UP Education Network schools use this type of instructional/operational co-leadership.

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Introducing a Strategy and Logistics Role to Improve Performance and Accountability

In D.C. Public Schools, the school-based director of strategy and logistics (DSL) role originated as a pilot in nine schools in 2014. At the time, DCPS was involved in intense efforts to strengthen teacher and principal performance, and district leaders heard from many principals that the principals did not have time to engage in instructional leadership activities intended to improve teacher performance because of their numerous operational responsibilities. The pilot was born of a desire to experiment with taking these operational functions off of principals' plates and freeing them up to focus on instructional leadership, leveraging lessons learned from charter and other school systems.

The pilot rapidly expanded from nine schools in year one to approximately 40 schools in year two and then 60 schools in year three. In years four and five, the role of DSL has held steady in approximately 65 of DCPS's 115 schools. DCPS Deputy Chief of Operations Doug Hollis summed up the purpose of the program: "When school leaders and teachers do operations, students learn less." The DSL role is perceived as not only freeing up principals to deepen their instructional leadership, in line with the broader strategy in DCPS, but also allowing the district to hold them more accountable for doing so. A principal who has a strong DSL and nevertheless fails to drive instructional improvements at his or her school is in a different position than one who can plausibly claim that he or she is hampered from leading instruction because of operational demands.[91] A New America study found that both teachers and principals have positive perceptions about the impact of the DSL role at their schools.[92]

> *The pilot was born of a desire to experiment with taking these operational functions off of principals' plates and freeing them up to focus on instructional leadership.*

DSL candidates are screened and placed into a pool by a central office operations team; participating school leaders can then hire out of the pool. This process acts as a counter to principals who may not have deep understanding of the DSL role and the essential qualities needed to perform the role well, such that they may be inclined to select someone who already works in their school but does not necessarily have the right skillset

to function effectively as a chief operations officer— for example, a dean of students who is very strong in interpersonal relationships but may not have the technical expertise or detail-orientation to run operations.

DSLs receive training on the essential functions of their roles from the central operations team both during the summer and periodically as a cohort during the school year, with topics aligned to their natural place in the school year (e.g., enrollment is covered at the beginning of the school year). DSLs also receive onsite support and coaching in their schools. Central training and support, along with central screening and creation of the candidate pool, are viewed as a critical levers in ensuring that DSLs are positioned for success in their schools. In addition, the fact that DSLs exist as a cohort means that they can and do leverage each other for problem-solving and thought partnership across the district.

The DSL role in DCPS is an option that principals can choose or not choose, rather than a central and non-negotiable part of the model. A principal can choose to allocate funds for a DSL during budget development, and the DSL reports to the principal rather than to a central office leader. This results in principals who are generally very bought in both to the existence of the DSL role and to their specific DSL, but also poses challenges for some schools in terms of finding the necessary funds in their school budgets. DCPS operations leaders actively recruited principals to participate in the program in its early years and helped them analyze their budgets in order to find the funding needed for the role. Often, this came from the front office; for example, the school might replace two lower-level office staff members with a DSL. In other cases, a school might replace an assistant principal position with a DSL.

Central operations staff not only support with recruitment, selection, training, and budget development for DSLs, but also provide principals with resources and "cheat sheets" to support them in evaluating their DSLs as principals often lack deep knowledge of the specifics of the role. The central operations team has also created and provides aligned support for other school-based operational roles such as coordinators.

**DENVER
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS**

Discover a World of Opportunity™

Combining Instructional Leadership with Classroom Teaching

Where other distributed leadership models largely take operations off the plate of the principal, in Denver Public Schools, the distributed leadership model predominantly focuses on spreading instructional leadership across a dedicated team that includes the principal.

Denver's Teacher Leadership and Collaboration program originated as a talent strategy. The district supported the creation of teacher leadership roles that include both classroom teaching and instructional leadership functions, such as teacher coaching and evaluation, leading data teams, providing professional development, etc., most typically through half-time release from classroom teaching. This strategy was intended as a way to both retain the best teachers and to provide them with an opportunity to "lead without leaving the classroom." It was also intended to allow principals to function more as CEOs, or "leaders of leaders," rather than as the primary drivers of instructional improvement in their schools. DPS had been engaged in a period of focus on improving teacher performance, including implementation of a revamped, more intense teacher evaluation system, when Teacher Leadership and Collaboration was conceived. The theory was that spreading the work of instructional leadership across a team would make the role of the principal more sustainable and less overwhelming.

> *This strategy was intended as a way to both retain the best teachers and to provide them with an opportunity to "lead without leaving the classroom." It was also intended to allow principals to function more as CEOs, or "leaders of leaders," rather than as the primary drivers of instructional improvement in their schools.*

Teacher leaders are hired at the school level and report to principals (or other school leaders such as assistant principals). There are certain central criteria that must be met in order for a teacher to be formally hired as a teacher leader and receive the stipend associated with the role; for example, teacher leadership roles that include release time must evaluate a minimum number of teachers as part

of their workloads. Teacher leaders also participate in a modest amount of centrally provided training. However, the primary responsibility for shaping the work and developing the instructional leadership capacity of teacher leaders resides at the school level.

The program originated as a grant-funded pilot in 14 schools. Teacher Leadership and Collaboration has scaled rapidly in DPS since its initial launch in 2013–14, and formal teacher leadership roles now exist in nearly all DPS schools, supported by a 2016 Denver mill levy override of $9.8M annually invested in teacher leadership. Over time, the strategy has shifted its emphasis from talent to instructional improvement, with the hypothesis that more observers and coaches result in more frequent touchpoints and support for teachers who will in turn improve their practice more quickly and thus positively impact student achievement.[93]

While it is difficult to isolate the impact of teacher leadership on student achievement given the program's rapid scaling and current near-universality in DPS, perception data indicates that teachers overwhelmingly believe that they have improved in their practice and that student achievement has improved as a result of the support they receive from teacher leaders.[94] Examples of teacher leadership roles and teams in Massachusetts can be found in the Lawrence Public Schools and in the Springfield Empowerment Zone.

Achievement **First**

Implementing Executive-Level Operations Support

Achievement First is a high-performing charter management organization in the Northeast. Achievement First has both a principal and an operational leader, such that the principal can focus deeply on instruction and culture. The director of school operations (DSO) has a portfolio of responsibilities related to budget and finance, school operations, and school administration, and also leads a team of direct reports on the school operations team.

> *DSO candidates are now recruited from a variety of talent pipelines, including the military, community organizing, the private sector, and other network teams, resulting in an increasingly diverse group of leaders.*

At Achievement First, the DSO reports to the principal but also has a "dotted line" relationship to a regional director of operations (RDO) who typically supervises a caseload of four to eight DSOs. Over the course of Achievement First's 20-year history, the DSO role has evolved and elevated. At an earlier period in the organization's history, the role was more junior; however, it became apparent that exceptional talent as well as deep training were required in order to function as the effective chief operating officer of a school, which is a multi-million dollar organization. DSO candidates are now recruited from a variety of talent pipelines, including the military, community organizing, the private sector, and other network teams, resulting in an increasingly diverse group of leaders. Critical qualities for the role include management expertise, detail orientation, results focus, and strong customer service. Like principals, DSO candidates complete a fellowship and role-specific training in order to prepare to assume their roles.

Achievement First leaders note the need for strong collaboration between not only the principal and the DSO, but also the principal's supervisor and the RDO. The DSO has a weekly check-in with the principal as well as with the RDO and generally leans on the RDO for coaching and problem-solving around role-specific challenges. The principal ultimately selects his or her DSO through a rigorous matching process, which generally results in strong matches

and a high degree of principal investment in working with the DSO. At the network level, Achievement First extensively documents effective practices so that both principals and DSOs can draw upon a rich array of playbooks in order to execute their roles with excellence.

Achievement First operates schools in several states, each with varying levels of per-pupil funding. In lower-funded states, the network nevertheless prioritizes the existence of the DSO role. Some approaches to securing necessary funds include enrolling additional scholars and/or engaging in additional fundraising.

Achievement First shares opens source resources widely, including many operations-oriented resources.[95]

Attracting Strong Teacher Leaders to High-Needs Schools

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' Success by Design initiative creates teacher leadership roles that both provide career pathways and increased compensation for the most effective teachers and spread the work of instructional leadership across a wide array of individuals at the school. Teacher leadership roles exist along a continuum of instructional leadership responsibilities and aligned salary increases.

Teacher leadership roles are funded out of school budgets. Education Resource Strategies and Public Impact worked with Charlotte-Mecklenburg to design and implement Success by Design, including supporting schools as they considered budget trade-offs in order to fund teacher leadership roles. Charlotte-Mecklenburg uses a weighted funding formula whereby schools that serve large proportions of historically underserved students receive additional per-pupil funds. Thus, many of the highest-needs schools found themselves disproportionately able to create teacher leadership roles. Because of the prestige and additional compensation associated with teacher leadership, the roles were largely sought after and competitive. Thus, high-needs schools that may have historically struggled with recruiting top talent found themselves in a position to attract some of the district's strongest educators and leverage them as instructional leaders, in theory lightening the principal load on both counts.

> *Charlotte-Mecklenburg uses a weighted funding formula whereby schools that serve large proportions of historically underserved students receive additional per-pupil funds. Thus, many of the highest-needs schools found themselves disproportionately able to create teacher leadership roles.*

Contributing conditions for success include central screening and managing of the teacher leader pool in order to ensure that educators moving into teacher leadership roles have the necessary skills to be effective, as well as rigorous evaluation of their performance. Barriers to success include lack of resources (for example, schools with lower enrollment or fewer high-needs students may struggle to find the funds in their budgets) as well as lack of flexibility (for example, schools are able to institute teacher leadership roles only when they have a vacancy and cannot necessarily repurpose an existing role on their staffs).[96]

> *Contributing conditions for success include central screening and managing of the teacher leader pool in order to ensure that educators moving into teacher leadership roles have the necessary skills to be effective, as well as rigorous evaluation of their performance.*

Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Success by Design initiative is part of a broader "Opportunity Culture" project across multiple districts nationwide. A Brookings/AIR study found sizeable gains in student achievement for teachers who were supported by teacher leaders ("multi-classroom leaders") through the project.[97]

TECHBOSTON ACADEMY

Clarifying Roles for Co-Equal School Leaders

TechBoston Academy is a 6–12 pilot school in Boston Public Schools. The school is led by co-headmasters Nora Vernazza and Keith Love. The co-headmastership emerged during a leadership transition at the school. When the previous headmaster assumed a district leadership role, both Vernazza and Love were serving as assistant principals at the school. Vernazza was focused on academics, and Love was focused on operations and culture. Ultimately, it was decided to name them as co-headmasters rather than to identify a single successor for the previous headmaster.

Vernazza described the initial implementation of the co-headmastership as extremely challenging due to a lack of clarity about which leader would hold which functions and decisions. To solve the problems they were encountering, the co-headmasters worked through a process to clearly identify all of the workstreams at the school and map each one to an individual based on his or her strengths. The co-headmasters documented this division of labor and clearly communicated it to the school staff so that people knew whom to ask about what.

> *The co-headmasters worked through a process to clearly identify all of the workstreams at the school and map each one to an individual based on his or her strengths. The co-headmasters documented this division of labor and clearly communicated it to the school staff so that people knew whom to ask about what.*

The co-headmastership allows both leaders to lead from their areas of strength in academics and culture/operations respectively. In addition, Vernazza believes that the existence of two headmasters has had positive effects on distributed leadership and staff member voice at the school overall. Because the two leaders are co-equals, they frequently invite in other voices to provide perspectives on issues that the two of them may see differently in order to reach a final decision about how to proceed. A final benefit is that the co-headmastership affords each leader a measure of flexibility that he or she may not have had as the sole leader of the school. Vernazza emphasized that as a mother of young children, this flexibility is extremely valuable to her in terms of making school leadership sustainable.

At the same time, Vernazza underscores that getting the co-headmastership right requires a great deal of upfront and ongoing work, and that district systems are generally not designed for co-leadership. For example, a district communication may be relevant for both leaders, but only one of them will receive it because a form may have allowed the entry of only one name as the point of contact at the school. Vernazza serves as an informal mentor to other co-headmasters in Boston Public Schools, of which there are currently two pairs.[98]

Endnotes

1   Susan M. Gates et al., *Principal Pipelines: A Feasible, Affordable, and Effective Way for Districts to Improve Schools*, Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2019, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2666.html.

2   Kenneth Leithwood, Karen Seashore Lewis, Stephen Anderson, and Kyla Wahlstrom, *How Leadership Influences Student Learning,* University of Minnesota Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, University of Toronto Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and The Wallace Foundation, 2004, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/How-Leadership-Influences-Student-Learning.pdf.

3   Jason Grissom, "Can Good Principals Keep Teachers in Disadvantaged Schools? Linking Principal Effectiveness to Teacher Satisfaction and Turnover in Hard-to-Staff Environments," *Teachers College Record* 113, no. 11, 2011: 2552–2585, http://www.tcrecord.org.

4   Paul Manna, *Developing Excellent School Principals to Advance Teaching and Learning: Considerations for State Policy,* The Wallace Foundation, 2015, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Developing-Excellent-School-Principals.pdf.

5   Damon Clark, Paco Martorell, and Jonah Rockoff, "School Principals and School Performance," (working paper no. 38, National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research, December 2009), https://caldercenter.org/sites/default/files/Working-Paper-38_FINAL.pdf.

6   Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education analysis, 2018.

7   Wes Austin et al, "Paths to the Principalship and Value Added: A Cross-State Comparison of Elementary and Middle School Principals," (working paper no. 213 – 0119 – 1, National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research, January 2019), https://caldercenter.org/sites/default/files/CALDER%20WP%20213-0119-1.pdf.

8   Ibid.

9   Clark et al., *School Principals and School Performance,* 2009.

10 Austin et al., *Paths to the Principalship and Value Added,* 2019.

11 Ibid.

12 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Percentage of First-Year Principals Hired by School Level, 2013–16.

13 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Enrollment by District/Grade/Race, School Year 2017–2018, Enrollment Data as of October 2, 2017.

14 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2017–18 Principals by Demographics; National averages from Taie, S., and Goldring, R. (2017), Characteristics of Public Elementary and Secondary School Principals in the United States: Results From the 2015–16 National Teacher and Principal Survey First Look (NCES 2017–070), U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

15 U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, *The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce*, Washington, D.C., 2016, https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/highered/racial-diversity/state-racial-diversity-workforce.pdf.

16 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2018–9 Race, Ethnicity, and Gender Staffing Report.

17 Rebecca Herman et al., *School Leadership Interventions Under the Every Student Succeeds Act: Evidence Review,* RAND Corporation, 2017, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/School-Leadership-Interventions-ESSA-Evidence-Review.pdf.

18 Michelle Young and Pamela Tucker, University Council for Educational Administration, and Gina Ikemoto and Matthew Kelemen, New Leaders, *State Evaluation of Principal Preparation Programs Toolkit,* 2016, http://www.sepkit.org/.

19 Ibid.

20 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2014–15 and 2015–16 Program Completers Report, http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/state_report/#Educator%20Preparation.

21 Susan Gates et al., *Preparing School Leaders for Success: Evaluation of New Leaders' Aspiring Principals Program,* 2012–2017, RAND Corporation, 2019, https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR2812.html.

22 Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation, School Level Administrator Rubric, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, August 2018, http://www.doe.mass.edu/edeval/model/PartIII_AppxB.pdf.

23 Elaine Lin Wang et al., *Launching a Redesign of University Principal Preparation Programs: Partners Collaborate for Change,* RAND Corporation, 2018, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/launching-redesign-university-principal-preparation-programs.aspx.

24 Barr Foundation survey of 20 stakeholders, August 2018.

25 Attuned Education Partners principal focus groups, March 2019.

26 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Statewide Induction and Mentoring Report, 2017–18.

27 Linda Darling-Hammond et al., *Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World: Lessons from Exemplary Leadership Development Programs,* Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Stanford Educational Leadership Institute, 2007, https://www.wallacefoundation.org knowledge-center/Documents/Preparing-School-Leaders.pdf.

28 University Council for Educational Administration and New Leaders, *State Evaluation of Principal Preparation Programs Toolkit,* 2016.

29 New Leaders, *Prioritizing Leadership: An Analysis of State ESSA Plans,* 2018, https://newleaders.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2018.NL_.ESSA-State-Plan-Policy-Brief-FINAL.pdf.

30 UCEA and New Leaders, *Improving State Evaluation of Principal Preparation Programs,* 2016, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/principal-preparation-programs-improving-state-evaluation-of-principal-preparation-programs.aspx.

31 UCEA and New Leaders, *State Evaluation of Principal Preparation Programs Toolkit,* 2016.

32 Wang et al., *Launching a Redesign of University Principal Preparation Programs,* 2018.

33 Attuned Education Partners interview with Dr. Susan Korach, Department Chair and Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Denver's Morgridge College of Education, March 2019. Dr. Korach co-created the Ritchie Program for School Leaders with Denver Public Schools with the support of The Wallace Foundation.

34 Alberto Heredia and Jonathan Nakamoto, *An evaluation of Relay Graduate School of Education's National Principals Academy Fellowship,* San Francisco, CA: WestEd, 2019.

35 Salem State University presentation to the Barr Foundation working group, November 2018.

36 Ellen Goldring et al., *A New Role Emerges for Principal Supervisors: Evidence from Six Districts in the Principal Supervisor Initiative,* Vanderbilt University/Peabody College and Mathematica Policy Research, 2018, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/a-new-role-emerges-for-principal-supervisors.aspx.

37 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Principals' Perceptions of Feedback from Superintendents/District Administrators vs. Colleagues/Peers/Mentors or Coaches, 2017 VISTA Survey. The 2016–2017 VISTA surveys were administered to all superintendents and principals in Massachusetts. One hundred and ninety-three or 57 percent of superintendents provided feedback, and 937 or 52 percent of principals participated in the survey.

38 Barr Foundation survey of 20 stakeholders in Massachusetts, August 2018.

39 Attuned Education Partners focus groups with Massachusetts principals, March 2019.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Attuned Education Partners stakeholder organization interviews, October 2018.

43 Derek Riley and Julie Meredith, *State Efforts to Strengthen School Leadership: Insights from CCSSO Action Groups,* Policy Study Associates, Inc., 2017, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/state-efforts-to-strengthen-school-leadership.aspx.

44 Brenda Turnbull et al., *Building a Stronger Principalship, Volume 5: The Principal Pipeline Initiative in Action*, Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2016, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/building-a-stronger-principalship-vol-5-the-principal-pipeline-initiative-in-action.aspx.

45 Council of Chief State School Officers, *Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards,* Washington, DC: CCSSO, 2015, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Model-Principal-Supervisor-Professional-Standards-2015.pdf.

46 Goldring et al., *A New Role Emerges for Principal Supervisors*, 2018.

47 Attuned Education Partners district leader interview, March 2019.

48 New Leaders presentation to Barr Foundation working group, January 2019.

49 Relay Graduate School of Education presentation to Barr Foundation working group, January 2019.

50 Salem State University presentation to Barr Foundation working group, November 2018.

51 Ellen Eckman, "Co-principals: Characteristics of Dual Leadership Teams," *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 5, no. 2, (Taylor and Francis, 2006), https://epublications.marquette.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1074&context=edu_fac.

52 Brenda Turnbull et al., *The School Administration Manager Project,* Policy Studies Associates, Inc., 2011, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/the-school-administration-manager-project.aspx.

53 Attuned Education Partners interviews of Massachusetts stakeholders, August 2018.

54 Clark et al., *School Principals and School Performance,* 2009.

55 Attuned Education Partners Massachusetts principal focus group, March 2019.

56 Attuned Education Partners survey of Massachusetts principals, March 2019.

57 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Retention Rates Based on Efficacy, 2016–17.

58 Karen Seashore Louis et al., *Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning,* Learning from Leadership Project, University of Minnesota, 2010, https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Investigating-the-Links-to-Improved-Student-Learning.pdf.

59 Chris Bierly et al., *Transforming Schools: How Distributed Leadership Can Create More High-Performing Schools,* Bain & Company, 2016, https://www.bain.com/insights/transforming-schools.

60 United States Department of Education, *The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce,* 2016.

61 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Enrollment by District/Grade/Race, School Year 2017–2018, Enrollment Data as of October 2, 2017.

62 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2017–18 Principals by Demographics; National averages from Taie, S., and Goldring, R. (2017), Characteristics of Public Elementary and Secondary School Principals in the United States: Results From the 2015–16 National Teacher and Principal Survey First Look (NCES 2017–070), U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

63 Barr Foundation survey of 20 Massachusetts stakeholders, August 2018.

64 Attuned Education Partners Massachusetts principal focus groups, March 2019.

65 Ibid.

66 Desiree Carver-Thomas, *Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color,* Learning Policy Institute, 2018, https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/diversifying-teaching-profession-report.

67 Jason A. Grissom, Luis A. Rodriguez, and Emily C. Kern, "Teacher and Principal Diversity and the Representation of Students of Color in Gifted Programs: Evidence from National Data," *The Elementary School Journal* 117, no. 3 (March 2017): 396–422, https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/690274.

68 Meghan Green, *Public School Principals of Color: An Exploration of Trends and Predictors of Representation, and Influence on School Level Outcomes,* University of Maryland, 2017, https://drum.lib.umd.edu/handle/1903/20781.

69 Jason Grissom and Lael Kaiser, "A supervisor like me: Race, representation, and the satisfaction and turnover decisions of public sector employees," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 30, no. 3 (Summer 2011), https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/pam.20579.

70 Michael Hanson and Diana Quintero, "School leadership: An untapped opportunity to draw young people of color into teaching," *Teacher Diversity in America,* Brown Center on Education Policy, Brookings Institution, 2018, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/brown-center-chalkboard/2018/11/26/school-leadership-an-untapped-opportunity-to-draw-young-people-of-color-into-teaching.

71 United States Department of Education, The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce, 2016.

72 Hanson and Quintero, "School leadership," 2018.

73 Lillian Mongeau, "How to Hire More Black Principals," *The Hechinger Report,* 2017, https://hechingerreport.org/hire-black-principals.

74 United States Department of Education, The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce, 2016.

75 Ibid.

76 Relay Graduate School of Education, https://relay.edu/about-us/impact.

77 New York City Leadership Academy, 2018, https://www.nycleadershipacademy.org.

78 Lynch Leadership Academy, Boston College, https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/carroll-school/sites/lynch-leadership-academy.html.

79 High school impacts were not included in the study.

80 Gates et al., *Preparing School Leaders for Success,* 2019.

81 Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2014–15 and 2015–16 Program Completers Report, Public Employment Year 2016–17.

82 Ibid.

83 Gates et al., *Principal Pipelines,* 2019.

84 Ibid.

85 Attuned Education Partners interview, March 2019.

86 Gates et al., *Preparing School Leaders for Success,* 2019.

87 Attuned Education Partners interview, March 2019.

88 Gates et al., *Preparing School Leaders for Success,* 2019.

89 Ibid.

90 Attuned Education Partners, interview with Michael Blake, Managing Director of Operations, New York State, Uncommon Schools, March 2019.

91 Attuned Education Partners interview with Doug Hollis, Deputy Chief of Operations, D.C. Public Schools, March 2019.

92 Melissa Tooley, *From Frenzied to Focused: How School Staffing Models Can Support Principals as Instructional Leaders,* New America, 2017, https://www.newamerica.org/education-policy/policy-papers/frenzied-focused.

93 Attuned Education Partners interview with Taryn Rawson, Director of Teacher Leadership and Career Pathways, Denver Public Schools, April 2019.

94 Melanie Asmar, "Teachers Coaching Teachers–Denver Public Schools Wants Tax Money to Expand Program," Chalkbeat, October 2018, http://teacherleader.dpsk12.org/teachers-coaching-teachers-denver-public-schools-wants-tax-money-to-expand-program.

95 Attuned Education Partners, interview with Laina Vlasnik Yip, Director, Charter Network Accelerator Program, Achievement First, March 2019.

96 Attuned Education Partners interview with Rob Daigneau, Education Resource Strategies, March 2019.

97 Sharon Kebschull Barrett, "Brookings-AIR Study Finds Large Academic Gains in Opportunity Culture," Public Impact, 2018, https://publicimpact.com/brookings-air-study-finds-large-academic-gains-in-opportunity-culture.

98 Attuned Education partners interview with Nora Vernazza, co-headmaster, TechBoston Academy, Boston Public Schools, April 2019.

Barr Foundation

Based in Boston, the Barr Foundation focuses regionally, and selectively engages nationally, working in partnership with nonprofits, foundations, the public sector, and civic and business leaders to elevate the arts and creative expression, advance solutions for climate change, and expand educational opportunity. Barr is one of the largest private foundations in New England with assets of more than $1.7 billion and a 2018 grantmaking budget of $85 million.

barrfoundation.org

Attuned Education Partners

Attuned's team of practitioners builds the capacity of PK–12 organizations to prioritize, tailor, and implement a diverse set of practices that drive educational equity and excellence. The organization's approach blends rigor and empathy, planning and implementation, district and charter expertise, and aspirations of quality and scale.

attunedpartners.com