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A Supplemental Leadership Development Programs Model Preparing Aspiring Leaders for Principalship

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

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the review committee have been made.

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Walden University
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Abstract

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Kathleen Setzer

MA, College of Notre Dame of Maryland, 2004

BA, College of Notre Dame of Maryland, 1997

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

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Abstract

A suburban school district in the Mid-Atlantic faces a crisis with a lack of qualified principals to lead middle schools and high schools. The purpose of this qualitative study was to gain an understanding of the perceptions of principals who participated in the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program in a suburban public school district in the Mid-Atlantic. The conceptual framework of this study was grounded in Senge's systems thinking, which looks at the components of a system and the system as a whole to determine how the interconnectedness of the components impacts the entire system. Schools have intricate components, such as the community, parents, students, teachers, and educational reforms, that are essential for the organization to function for students to achieve and the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership as a guide for principals. Semistructured interviews were held with 5 participants to gather their perceptions of the program's ability and its modules to prepare them for a principalship to implement the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership to improve student achievement. Using in vivo coding, themes emerged about their preparedness to transfer power from one principal to another, develop school norms and professionalism, creating a community of care to support students, and creating an environment where equity is a priority after participating in the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program. The participants' recommendations led to the development of a 3-day professional development. With the changes in educational reforms, ensuring that all students meet with success contributes to positive social change, and aspiring principals are trained in the skills and knowledge to promote student achievement.

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Dedication

The research on leadership is dedicated to all the leaders in my life. First, giving honor and glory to God gave me the ability to persevere through this journey while maintaining the stamina to work early in the morning and late at night writing and hold a full-time job as an administrator. To my husband, Kevin, who has prayed for me, encouraged me, and proofread my writing. Your ability to love me while I was an absentee wife is much appreciated, and now you will have homemade meals every day. To my son, Kyle, who challenged me with a simple question, "When will I be able to call you Dr. Mom?" We have been students together, and I am inspired by your dedication to excellence in your academics. Good luck with pursuing your dreams in Texas! To my son, Kolbe, you are a free spirit who inspires me to think outside of the box.

Keep working hard, chasing academic excellence. Your encouragement during this process was invaluable, and I know you will soon discover your passion in life. To my parents in heaven, Charles and Mary Hathaway, thank you for pouring into me that education is the key to success. Your sacrifice in life was not in vain, and I know you are in heaven, bragging and smiling, that all your children are doctors. To the doctors in my immediate family- Rev. Dr. Alvin C. Hathaway, Dr. Adaria Hathaway-Sogbor, Alvin C. Hathaway, JD., Dr. Sheneika Fallon-Hathaway – We did it! Moreover, to my sister-in-love, Kathleen Brice Hathaway – your prayers kept me grounded in this process, and my brother has a true queen in you. I love you much!

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The Local Problem

School districts rely on university programs to prepare aspiring leaders for roles

as principals. University programs prepare students to pass an exam to ensure they meet

national employment standards as a school principal; however, exam results do not

reflect whether a graduating student will have the necessary skills to carry out the daily

functions of a principal's position, including motivating teachers, creating a safe climate,

and improving student academic success (Backor & Gordon, 2015). Backor and Gordon

(2015) found that many principal preparation programs at the university level focus on

administrative competencies and do not emphasize teaching and learning, curriculum,

and professional development. The school leader's role is complicated when it comes to

school accountability, emphasizing school culture, and student achievement (Dunn,

2010).

Principals have the knowledge and skills after finishing their university program

to pass the certification and lead schools; however, school districts report a difference in

aspiring leaders who pass the certification exam and the skills necessary to lead a school

(Dunn, 2010). Districts often supplement university programs with individual leadership

preparation programs to teach aspiring principals the skills and abilities that guide

decision-making in the principal role (Jensen, Downing, & Clark, 2017). According to

Clayton (2014),

> It is critical that educational leadership programs provide experiences and skills
>
> that will prepare tomorrow's leaders and assist in creating a qualified pool of

applicants filled with trained professionals who know how to envision and

implement the necessary functions of a school. (p. 1)

According to the district's director of organizational development, enrollment in

public schools continues to rise; therefore, organizations must create a pathway for

principal succession to fill future vacant positions with qualified leaders. There is a

shallow pool of qualified candidates for the principalship role at the local district's middle

and high school levels. Per the director of organizational development, the suburban

school district in the Mid-Atlantic created a program for specialized training to help fill

the pool of available and qualified applicants for principalships and bridge the gap

between university preparation and the day-to-day skills to implement the Professional

Standards for Educational Leadership. The school district offers the Associate Principal

Leadership Development program to aspiring leaders identified by the district as potential

transformational leaders. The director of organizational development stated that the

Associate Principal Leadership Development Program supplements the educational

leadership program at the university level by "providing the skills necessary to run the

day to day operations of a middle or high school and meet the requirements of the Every

Student Succeeds Act." The director of organizational development for the studied school

district examined principal effectiveness through student achievement measures and

concluded that a more structured district-level program is necessary to support aspiring

principals once they finished their university coursework to gain their administrator. The

director continued by saying that newly hired principals understand the theoretical

knowledge of leading a school but need support with the skills and ability to promote positive school culture and improve student achievement.

The Associate Principal Leadership Development Program is a year-long program developed to supplement aspiring leaders' university training. The program includes monthly professional development meetings focused on developing skills in leadership, equity, planning professional learning, observations, and feedback. The program also provides training in the alignment of curriculum and instruction and on best practices and a culminating internship in a school setting for 30 days. The problem of practice addressed in this study was the lack of knowledge about the participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model at preparing aspiring leaders who are seeking a middle or high school principalship position.

Rationale

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the perceptions of principals who participated in the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model in a suburban, public school district in the mid-Atlantic regarding the ability of the program to prepare them for a middle or high school principalship. According to an assistant principal in the district, This program model offers an overview of skills necessary for the middle or high school principals to meet the requirements of the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership and expose them to the challenges they will face once they are responsible for a school. I used a qualitative approach in this study. Semistructured interviews allowed me to gather the participants' perceptions of the

Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model in a suburban public school district in the Mid-Atlantic and whether they felt that the curriculum prepared them for a principalship.

Definition of Terms

Aspiring principal: A school district employee interested in pursuing a principal position and has passed the certification test to hold a license as an administrator (Maryland State Department of Education, 2018b).

Homegrown programs: Principal preparation programs designed at the local school district level to grow the district's aspiring principal candidates for future school administrator positions within the district (Maryland State Department of Education, 2018b).

Maryland Instruction Leadership Framework: A framework that describes the eight outcomes expected of Maryland principals to provide instructional leadership for schools (Maryland State Department of Education, 2018b).

Principal: An educator who has the certification in Maryland, which includes a license endorsement as an Administrator I and II, and who has executive authority for leading a school (Maryland State Department of Education, 2018b).

Significance of the Study

In this study, I explored participants' perceptions of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program to successfully determine if this model prepared them to lead a middle or high school. Participants were required to have participated and completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program to qualify for this

study. The purpose was to determine whether the program model prepared them to successfully lead middle school and high school in the local, suburban, Mid-Atlantic public school district, according to the standards defined by Professional Standards for Educational Leadership and the ability to analyze data to meet the Every School Succeeds Act requirements for school success. The study was unique because it is the only study that addressed the participants' perceptions in the Associate Principal Leadership Development program model related to preparing new principals for the rigors of leading middle schools and high schools in the district. This study's results could guide future professional development for aspiring principals, principal development programs, and university curriculum development. Williams (2015) argued that schools led by successful principals prepare students and schools to meet the Every Student Succeeds Act (Williams, 2015). Therefore, this study contributes to positive social change by ensuring that qualified principals lead middle and high schools to have the skills and knowledge to positively impact student achievement.

The requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act include a component that relates to the culture of a school (Maryland Every Student Succeeds Act Consolidated, 2018.). With the increase in student and staff diversity, future leaders need to understand the impact of leading a school and ensuring that all school community members feel included in the culture (Mitani, 2018). High-quality leadership for all schools is a social justice issue in education today. School systems face a shallow pool of candidates to fill future vacancies due to existing principals' retirement (Mitani, 2018). It is critical to develop a pool of diverse candidates sensitive to the changing populations of students

served in the school district. In this study, I determined if the Associate Principal Leadership Development program model includes modules to ensure that future leaders know the challenges and opportunities for creating an equitable school culture.

Research Questions

In this study, I explored how the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program prepares aspiring leaders with the skills to successfully lead a middle school and/or high school in a suburban, Mid-Atlantic, public school district. It is critical for districts to supplement university programs to ensure their aspiring leaders are well-versed in successfully leading a middle or high school. Researchers have agreed that districts also create programs to train aspiring leaders to transition to the school principal (Anderson, 2017). The following research questions guided this study:

RQ1: How do participants who completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model utilized by a suburban, public school district in the Mid-Atlantic perceive the ability of the program to prepare them for a middle school and/or high school principalship?

RQ2: How do participants who completed a Mid-Atlantic school district's Associate Principal Leader Development Program perceive the ability of the program curriculum topics to prepare them to improve school culture and achievement to meet the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership?

Framework

In this study, I focused on gathering participants' perceptions through semistructured interviews regarding the usefulness of the Associate Principal Leadership

Development model in preparing aspiring leaders for the principalship. The participants shared their beliefs and provided recommendations to program implementors. The conceptual framework of this study comprised the systems model and systems thinking of Senge (2006).

A learning organization is working together at its best when structures are in place for organizations to learn. There are specific tools for building learning organizations, such as shared vision, mental models, team learning, personal mastery, and systems thinking (Senge, 2006). Systems thinking in an organizational context is essential to building organizations capable of continued learning and growth (Senge, 2006). Senge (2006) stated, "systems thinking is a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge and tools that have been developed over the past fifty years to help us see how to change them effectively" (p. 7).

Business systems are interrelated and interconnected entities that must learn to focus on organizational openness to identify shortcomings in the structure (Senge, 2006). Ongoing communication and feedback are responsible for principal preparation and are also an essential component of systems thinking and change needed to ensure continued growth and learning in an organization (Senge, 2006). As more school districts assess the candidates for leadership in their organizations, their willingness to invest in developing a leadership pipeline is necessary to build successful schools. Participants in the program model must be open to communicating information to the principal preparation programs' developers with the skills and knowledge to lead a schoolhouse.

The systems theory served as the underpinning of this study in which I analyzed the Associate Principal Development Program model and its ability to produce principals ready to lead schools. Upon completing the program, aspiring principals should walk into a building on Day 1 and lead the school towards student success and achievement, according to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (National Policy Board for Educational Leadership, 2015). The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders provide principals with 10 standards for their professional role:

- Capacity to develop a mission, vision, and core values for the school;

- Application of ethics and professional norms for the school;

- Ability to demonstrate equitable and culturally responsive practices for a school;

- Ability to provide actionable feedback on curriculum, instruction, and assessment;

- Ability to review school data to develop a community of care and support for students;

- Ability to grow the professional capacity of school personnel;

- Ability to provide professional development and create a professional community for teachers and staff;

- They are engaging the family and broader communities;

- They are managing the operations of the schoolhouse;

- Ability to improve the school (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015).

A successful principal must be competent in the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders to impact student achievement. Senge's systems theory is a vehicle to operationalize the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders to facilitate a schoolhouse becoming a learning organization.

Review of the Broader Problem

Research has validated that school leadership is second to teaching among the factors that increase student achievement (Dunn, 2010). As school reforms evolve from No Child Left Behind to the Every Students Act, the success criteria for schools also change; it is school leadership and quality teachers that are the factors that influence learning and ensuring school success (Dunn, 2010). Because strong leadership is necessary to promote student achievement, effective preparation programs are necessary at the national and state level and, most importantly, at the local district level to meet the districts' specific demands (Dunn, 2010).

Leaders have the delicate task of balancing the roles and responsibilities of managing the building, instructional leadership, faculty and staff concerns, family and student concerns, and community concerns, especially in the face of the changing demands of school leadership because of the federal legislation passed in the Every Student Succeeds Act. The principalship demands are everchanging; therefore, local school districts must develop programs to prepare aspiring principals for running a school.

University programs prepare future principals around a set of competencies, such as the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders developed by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration and testing administered by the Educational Testing Service (Anderson, 2017). However, they do not prepare aspiring principals for the daily responsibilities of running a school or meeting the criteria for school success as determined by the Every Student Succeeds Act. There is a gap in the skills taught by the administrative preparation program and the principal's actual job.

This literature review includes studies about the principal's pioneering role, educational leadership standards, university leadership development programs, and Maryland principal development programs. Additionally, in this review, I determine the accountability of the school leaders to implement reforms. Leadership preparation begins during university programs, but local district leadership preparation programs hone aspiring principals' skills to lead school successfully — these guide the review of the literature.

Evolution of the Principal Role

The role of the principal developed in the early conception of the U.S. educational system was nonexistent. The teacher worked as an instructor and as a building manager of the one-room schoolhouse, working alone with a "broad administrative directive" (Rousmaniere, 2007, p. 7). As the United States moved into the Industrial Revolution era, the school system developed a more formalized education system with multiple grades in a building and a centralized office (Rousmaniere, 2007). With a centralized office making

decisions for various schools, this led to developing a formal teaching principal position

to handle the intricacies of schoolhouse issues (Rousmaniere, 2007). This individual

> was assigned to act as an overarching authority to the whole, organizing the
>
> separate courses of study, administering discipline, and supervising the operation
>
> of all the classes too, as the American school reformer Henry Barnard wrote,
>
> "secure the harmonious action and progress of each department." (Rousmaniere,
>
> 2007, p. 7)

The early principals had an informal role in the education process, shaped by the

principal's professionalization later in the U.S. education system.

In the 20th century, the principal's role shifted from the teacher to the manager.

During this time, distinguishing between administrative tasks and supervisory

responsibility professionalized the principal's role (Rousmaniere, 2007). This shift gave

the principal responsibilities for hiring and firing staff, assigning extra duties, and

recommending staff for promotion (Rousmaniere, 2007). The principal became a leader

responsible for subordinates in an expanding educational bureaucracy. Formalized

programs in educational leadership developed, and shortly after that, advanced studies in

educational leadership were required by all states (Rousmaniere, 2007). These programs

provided training in school finance, law, building management, and curriculum

(Rousmaniere, 2007). With the role of the principalship developing in the early formation

of the U.S. educational system, individuals who sought this role needed a combination of

teaching experience and administrative experience (Rousmaniere, 2007). The principal's

role remained stable until the U.S. Department of Education published the report, A

Nation at Risk. (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). In *A Nation at Risk*, the U.S. Department of Education determined that the educational system was failing to educate students, and the natural scapegoat for this failure was the principal (Anderson, 2017). The No Child Left Behind Act for education was created as a direct result of *A Nation at Risk* report and changed the principal's role in the modern education system (Anderson, 2017).

Under the guise of the No Child Left Behind Act, principals changed from the role of the building manager and supervisor to that of an instructional leader (Anderson, 2017). The principal became the instructional leader by adding additional tasks, such as improving school culture, data analysis, and implementing a multicultural curriculum. With a focus on closing the gaps between subgroups, principals were responsible for creating school cultures that value differences; therefore, adding another skill set to the role, which was multicultural leadership to close the academic gaps (Anderson, 2017). Principals needed to redesign their schools, incorporate research-based curricula, and ensure teachers' training in research-based strategies that could meet all students' needs, including their special education population (Anderson, 2017). As a direct result of the changes in educational leaders' role, national standards ensured national leadership skills and competencies (Anderson, 2017).

Principal Standards

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2015) developed the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership to enhance the nation's schools and prepare future school leaders. These standards provided a guide for educational leaders'

professional practice and how leaders are prepared, hired, developed, supervised, and evaluated. The standards emphasize student learning and the foundational principals that each child is well-educated and prepared for the 21st century (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015). The standards also recognize that central to education is the human relationships created and emphasize academic rigor and student excellence (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015). According to the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2015), the 10 interdependent domains that are integral to student success include:

- Mission, vision, and core values;

- Ethics and professional norms;

- Equity and cultural responsiveness;

- Curriculum, instruction, and assessment;

- Community of care and support for students;

- Professional capacity of school personnel;

- Professional community for teachers and staff;

- Meaningful engagement of families and community;

- Operations and management; and

- School improvement.

Each principal in Maryland must pass a test to demonstrate these 10 listed competencies via the School Leadership and Licensure Assessment administered by the Educational Testing Service (Maryland State Department of Education, 2018a). These competencies

demonstrate that an administrator is steeped in the theories necessary to implement the domains in a schoolhouse setting.

University Programs

The effectiveness of university leadership development programs is a subject of the current debate about leadership preparedness. Many programs prepare applicants for state certification examinations and build capacity for managing a building: however, according to Backor and Gordon (2015), "most universities still require little study in curriculum and instruction courses rarely address the skills needed to lead successful school" (p. 107). Some university programs excelled at redesigning their school leadership courses' curriculum, but many lack high-quality programs that focus on preparing aspiring principals who can lead student achievement (Backor & Gordon, 2015).

Johnson's (2016) study of university principal preparation programs concluded that many leadership programs prepared them for their roles as principals in school leadership and school law but lacked data analysis, human resources, and school budget preparation. The study participants felt that job-embedded learning experiences have been more meaningful than university preparation (Johnson, 2016). While many university programs play a significant role in developing aspiring leaders, many participants felt they needed additional training in local school districts' alignments and individual leaders and community stakeholders' needs. With a deficiency in skills development at the university level, local jurisdictions develop programs aligned to

university goals to create well-rounded principals with the skills to impact student achievement.

Homegrown Principal Development Programs

The State of Maryland also provides school leader development through the Maryland State Department of Education through the Promising Principals Institute. This state developed this institute as a partnership between the governor's office and the Maryland State Department of Education. Selected participants throughout the state of Maryland receive invitations to participate in this institute. Promising Principals Institute participants are assistant principals, central office staff, and teacher leaders who have earned their Administrator II endorsement and have been recommended by their superintendent or Chief Executive Officer (Maryland State Department of Education, 2018b). The Promising Principals Institute brings together aspiring school leaders from across the state for training. Participants attend a 3-day session in the summer followed up by monthly 1-day sessions for a year (Maryland State Department of Education, 2018b). The outcomes for the Maryland Promising Principal's Institute include the following:

- exploring the coaching leadership relationship,
- educational leadership,
- change management (turbulence theory),
- community advisory councils,
- assessing school culture,
- leading through an equity lens,

- data literacy and data-informed decision making,

- interview preparation,

- teacher evaluation practices, and

- every student succeeds act star ratings (Maryland State Department of
  Education, 2018b).

Some of the larger school districts have followed the state of Maryland's lead. These

school districts have created homegrown aspiring leader school programs to create

leadership succession planning specific to their districts. These districts include

Baltimore County, Prince George's County, and Baltimore City.

Baltimore County Public Schools. Baltimore County has a two-part program for

Principal Development. Part I is the Aspiring Leaders course for tenured candidates with

a master's degree and an Administrator I endorsement and a recommendation from their

current principal. Participants in this program receive professional development on

learning to lead in the district. This program prepares aspiring leaders for the role of

assistant principal. Baltimore County Public Schools does not offer aspiring principals to

support programs to apply for open positions; they only ask that participants have their

Administrator II certification. Another program developed to fast track talented aspiring

principals with additional training through the Associate Principal Leadership

Development Program. Participants must complete the Baltimore County Public Schools

Aspiring Leaders program, have their Administration II certification, and receive a

recommendation for their principal and executive director.

The Associate Principal Leadership Development Program is a 1-year program

with eight day-long sessions throughout the year (Baltimore County Public Schools,

n.d.). Topics covered include student achievement, instructional leadership, organization

leadership, professional and ethical behaviors, equity, reflection, and school progress

plans (Baltimore County Public Schools, n.d.). Students in the program also participate in

a month-long internship with a current principal that provides support and guidance. The

participant must shadow his or her mentor for 2 weeks keeping a journal of the

shadowing experience. When the job shadow experience is over, the participant is handed

over the mentor's keys to lead their school for 2 weeks (Baltimore County Public

Schools, n.d.). Once the participant completes the program, they can apply for the

principal's pool by completing 2 assessment days. The day 1 assessment includes job

embossed tasks such as teacher observation feedback, analyzing data, making

recommendations, and addressing an employee discipline issue. After the successful

completion of day 1, the candidate is invited back for Day 2, the interview panel. If a

candidate passes day 1 and day 2 of the assessment, they enter the principal pool and are

eligible to apply for openings within the Baltimore County School System (Baltimore

County Public Schools, n.d.).

   Baltimore City Public Schools. Baltimore City Public Schools developed a

Principal training program with a partnership with New Leaders program. Baltimore City

Public Schools developed a school leadership framework for principal preparation and

succession. The partnership between Baltimore City Public Schools and New Leaders

provides the Aspiring Principals program and the Emerging Leaders program for district

staff. The Growing Great Leaders initiative is a third preservice preparation option run by

Baltimore City Public Schools and created in partnership with Noyce Foundation, New

Leaders, Education Resource Strategies, and The New Teacher Project (Gates et al.,

2019). The Baltimore City Public School program creates a talent pool of potential

school-based administrators by identifying potential school leaders who are already

working within Baltimore City and providing them with experiences and development

opportunities that build the skills needed to become effective principals (Gates et al.,

2019). Pre-selected participants receive leadership training during the summer and

receive one-on-one coaching from the principals at their schools throughout the school

year. Like the Baltimore County Schools' process for principalship, Baltimore City

Schools has potential candidates to assess skills with job-related tasks and an interview.

Once admitted into the principal pool, applicants can apply for open positions within the

district.

      Prince George's County Public Schools. Prince George's County Public School,

located in Maryland, utilizes a Principal preparation program that is homegrown. Their

program ensures that prospective leaders have the skills and strengths to improve

students' college and career readiness (Gates et al., 2019). Prince George's County

Public Schools align their goals to the professional standards for educational leadership

and are as follows:

- Set high expectations for achievement.

- Set standards to ensure schoolwide instructional and achievement goals are
  met.

- Monitor effective instructional practices.

- Build a shared vision, foster-shared goals, and communicate high-performance standards.

- Demonstrate a commitment to excellence, equity, and innovation.

- Demonstrate strong internal leadership in the areas of personnel and resource management.

- Demonstrate knowledge and effective use of technology and data analysis.

- Demonstrate strong external leadership in the areas of community engagement, communication, and advocacy. (Gates et al., 2019; Prince George's County Public Schools, n.d.)

To ensure that these values are integral in their training program, Prince George's County Public Schools enlisted the Wallace Foundation (Gates et al., 2019). As prospective leaders matriculate through the program, Prince George's County Public Schools continue their work with the Wallace Foundation through the selection process.

Prince George's County Public Schools utilizes a selection process that includes job-simulation exercises that assess instructional leadership and an interview. Upon successfully completing these tasks, selected candidates enter the principal's pool and are eligible to submit applications for district openings.

In Maryland, a few districts have programs that target aspiring leaders to become principals. Larger districts such as Baltimore County Public Schools, Baltimore City Public Schools, and Prince George's County Public Schools have invested time and resources for succession planning by targeting aspiring leaders for the role of principal. It

is critical to pour resources into district succession planning for principals; limited

research is available about these programs' perceived success by participants.

Requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act

As the requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress, defined by No Child Left

Behind, wind down and the dawn of a new education requirement developed the Every

Student Succeeds Act. The implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act place

upon high school administrators some additional leadership tasks such as the following:

- students are on-track to graduate while in grade nine,

- high school graduation rate for four and five-year cohorts,

- student academic achievement on the math and English language arts
  assessments,

- English language proficiency for English language learners,

- access to a well-rounded curriculum,

- chronic absenteeism,

- school surveys, and

- completion of a well-rounded curriculum (Maryland State Department of
  Education, 2018a).

These criteria present unique opportunities for principals to garner support from

their team by setting schoolwide goals by providing a clear vision for the school progress

plan. These criteria also present a challenge for principals to develop strategies to change

school culture by ensuring the right teachers are in place to motivate freshman, a diverse

selection of courses to ensure access and completion of a well-rounded curriculum, an

opportunity to work with school counseling to ensure student placement in the

appropriate classes and to work with parents on school culture and absenteeism

(Maryland State Department of Education, 2018a). In meeting these requirements, school

districts must have specialized training to ensure that principals are ready day one to meet

the Every Student Succeeds Act's expectation.

While high school principals must use specific requirements of the Every Student

Succeeds Act. Middle school principals have another set of criteria to ensure student

achievement and positive school culture. The middle school requirements for the Every

Student Succeeds Act includes the following criteria:

- academic achievement in English language arts and math,

- student growth in English language arts and math scores,

- credit for a well-rounded curriculum,

- English language learners progressing in language proficiency,

- absenteeism,

- school survey data, and

- access to a well-rounded curriculum (Maryland State Department of
  Education, 2018a).

While middle school accountability is like high school accountability, middle school

principals are responsible for ensuring that students are proficient in English and Math,

but students who are not proficient must progress towards proficiency.

Principals and their schools are ranked based upon their schools scores in the

Every Student Succeeds Act requirement. Principals must be aware of the points awarded

for each section and must analyze their data to recommend improvements for the school. The mid-Atlantic local school district developed the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program to ensure they have a pipeline of qualified individuals ready on day 1 to lead a school through this latest educational initiative. Since principals at different levels must meet specific requirements, that necessitates specialized leadership programs to ensure that principals can lead schools to meet school leadership demands. Not only must school districts train principals in leadership, but they must also ensure that aspiring leaders have the curriculum modules to analyze data and prepare them to improve school culture and achievement to meet the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Implications

In this study, data was collected and analyzed to determine the perceptions of aspiring principals who participated in the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program of a suburban mid-Atlantic school district to determine if the program model prepared them to lead a school day one. Principals must make decisions to improve student achievement, become instructional leaders, manage an organization, exhibit professional and ethical behaviors, lead equity, and develop school progress plans to enhance the culture and student achievement and meet the demands of the Every Student Succeeds Act while building a cohesive team. This research's goals were to examine gaps identified in the data collection and the current research to provide aspiring principals with the skills, knowledge, and support they feel to lead a school to success. The suburban mid-Atlantic school district has adopted the Every Student Succeeds Act to

determine a school's success, the Professional Standards for Education Leadership for principal certification, and Kouzes and Posner's theory for transformational leadership for their training modules. This research examined the perceptions of principals who have completed the leadership development program model in a suburban mid-Atlantic school district to determine if the training modules develop skills to lead a school successfully. The subsequent sections of this qualitative study research design include interview data from the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program participants of a suburban mid-Atlantic school district to determine if aspiring leaders benefitted from their program model participation. The proposed modules will address the gaps between the research and the proposed study results based on the structured interview results.

Considering the literature review, it is apparent that school leadership preparation is essential in developing future principals. There is substantial research on school leadership preparation. However, no research exists about the impact of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model of a suburban school district in the mid-Atlantic. The development of this model of leading student achievement, leading instruction, leading the organization, exhibiting professional and ethical behaviors, leading equity, analyzing data, and developing school progress plans may help prepare aspiring leaders to transition to a principal's role with fewer challenges.

Summary

The literature was robust regarding the evolution and implementation of principal development programs. As the principal's role expanded from managing the schoolhouse to leading educational initiatives, school districts needed to train principals for this shift.

National Standards grew out of the necessity to evaluate and standardized the effectiveness of a principal's impact on student achievement. When school districts wanted systematic leadership preparation changes, it forced universities to respond and modify their programs according to the changing standards. While the university programs taught the theoretical approach to leadership, there was still a void for district-specific leadership training. In response, several school districts implemented programs to supplement the university program for educational leadership. Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Prince George's County developed programs to prepare their aspiring leaders for the principalship. Since many of these districts have a shallow pool of available candidates, homegrown programs must fill the gaps between the university programs and the districts' specialized needs. These homegrown programs are necessary to create a pipeline for qualified principals to fill vacancies in the suburban school district in the Mid-Atlantic. The study examined the participants' perceptions of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program to determine if the program and program modules prepare them for middle and high school principalships.

With the shortage of school leaders, many school districts are developing district-based leadership preparation programs (Anderson, 2017). The purpose of the qualitative research design was to investigate the perceptions of participants who completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program in a Mid-Atlantic suburban school district to determine if participants acquired the skills to lead a middle school or high school. The study focused on the participants' perceptions of how the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program of a mid-Atlantic suburban school district influenced a

potential leader's readiness for the position. The research methodology and design were

explored in the next section and guided me to collect additional information and data.

Section 2: The Methodology

Research Design and Approach

It is not known if and/or how the Associate Principal Leadership Development program model of a suburban school district in the mid-Atlantic equips potential leaders with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead a school. Many school systems across the country are struggling to hire and retain principals with the skills and behaviors to lead schools in the era of the Every Student Succeeds Act (Mitani, 2018). This gap in practice about the effectiveness of district-led professional development programs warranted a look at the influence of the Associate Principal Leadership Development program model of a Mid-Atlantic suburban school district on the development of prospective principals.

This chapter provides information on the methodology, research design, district population, and sample selection of this study. This chapter also discusses the data collection, management, and analysis procedures used in the research study. This chapter will also focus on the ethical considerations and limitations as they relate to the study. Finally, the chapter summary contains a restatement of the chapter's critical points and a transition to the next chapter on the research data and results.

Research Design

For this study, I selected a qualitative approach to understand how the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program in a suburban school district in the mid-Atlantic prepares program participants for the principalship. This methodology enabled thorough analysis of the participants' perceptions of the skills and behaviors gained

through the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program necessary to transition into a principalship.

After reviewing the research methodologies to determine which would provide the best structure to answer the research questions, I selected the qualitative method. The difference between qualitative and quantitative research is between their focus on non-numeric and numeric data, respectively (Anderson, 2017). Qualitative research provided the basis for understanding how and why the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program may impact an aspiring principal's performance; therefore, the data collected regarding the participants' perceptions of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program lent itself to the qualitative methodology.

Rationale for Research Design

I used a qualitative approach to examine aspiring principals' perceptions to lead middle and high schools after participating in the local Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model. The qualitative approach allowed me to gather data from the principals who participated in and completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model. I developed interview questions focused on the impact of the leadership development program, skills acquired from participation in the program, skills necessary to analyze data and transform a school to meet success as defined by the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership, and skills needed but not covered in the program and improvements that could be made to the program to provide a richer experience.

The qualitative research methodology provides an opportunity to build meaning from participants' responses related to their Associate Principal Leadership Development Program preparation experiences. The qualitative research methodology allows the flexibility to understand how and why the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program influences aspiring leaders' readiness to lead a school and improve data. The qualitative research methodology process allows the researcher to gather data and observe the phenomenon in a real-world setting (Creswell, 2012).

Researchers use the qualitative approach to interpret data and understand the phenomena, which would be challenging to examine through quantitative analysis (Johnson, 2016). Quantitative analysis uses numeric data. For example, Shaked and Schechter (2018) utilized the qualitative approach to "gather rich textual utterances of preservice principals, aiming to capture their perceptions regarding the possible applications of systems thinking in school leadership" (p. 267). Shaked and Schechter stated that their study "explores the perceptions of preservice principals who were enrolled in a training program that explicitly imparted the concepts of systems thinking as a part of principal preparation" (p. 260). Shaked and Schechter collected data via reflective journals, interviews, and focus groups, concluding that participants "considered two characteristics of *Holistic School Leadership* as applicable in school leadership *leading wholes and adopting a multidimensional view*" (p. 269). Participants in this research concluded that a course in systems thinking might help prepare principals to lead complex organizations (Shaked & Schechter, 2018). The current study results could

impact the coursework selected by university programs to prepare future leaders for principalships.

Another example of qualitative research is a study completed by Johnson (2016). The author chose to administer an online survey to administrators in Florida and Georgia. From the results, the administrators perceived that they were adequately prepared for their role as a principal and assistant principal by the university and felt that district professional development forwarded their development as a professional. A significant number of participants felt they had a negative experience with their university program, especially in finance and budgeting, data analysis, and human resources (Johnson, 2016). Johnson concluded that the results are inconsistent concerning university programs' effectiveness in preparing candidates for principalship and assistant principalships.

In these cited studies, researchers used a qualitative approach to evaluate the perceptions of their participants. In the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program's current study, I used non-numeric data to answer the research questions. Furthermore, my goal was to understand the participants' perceptions of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program, so I selected a qualitative method to answer the research questions.

Setting

A suburban school district in the Mid-Atlantic United States was the setting for this study. I conducted all the interviews on the telephone or via Microsoft Teams due to the pandemic.

Participants

Utilizing the group of participants for this study provided me with an opportunity to collect data from a diverse population of school leaders in the suburban school district in the Mid-Atlantic United States. I collected data for this study from five middle and high school principals in the suburban school district in the Mid-Atlantic who had participated in the Associate Principal Leadership Development program.

The tenure of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program was 3 years. During these 3 years, there were 50 participants in the program. Of the 50 participants, only seven were appointed to a principalship position within the Mid-Atlantic school district. The prospective leaders who participated in the 3-year cohort included 25 from elementary school and 25 from secondary school. Of the 25 secondary school participants, only seven were appointed to a principalship at the time of the study. Five of those 7 secondary school principals who were appointed to a principalship agreed to participate in the study, equaling 71% of the participants who completed the program and were appointed to a secondary school principalship. The selected participants responded to questions to gather their perceptions of their preparedness level to lead a school after participating in the program model and modules. While this group was a smaller size, the semistructured interview format allowed for more in-depth inquiry into the research questions.

I developed semistructured interview questions to collect data related to the following areas:

- Participants' perceptions of the overall program to prepare them for the role of principalship.

- Participants' perceptions of the program topics to prepare them to analyze data according to the Every Student Succeeds Act.

- Participants' perceptions of the program topics to prepare them to follow the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership.

I gained access to the participants through the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program database. This database houses the data of past program participants, and the website of the suburban school district in the Mid-Atlantic was used to define who current principals in the school district were. For recruitment, I reached out to the participants via e-mail with information about the research study and an informed consent form.

Once the subjects agreed to participate, I scheduled and held interviews with them. During the interviews, I paid attention to their responses, and the participants felt comfortable to relax and share honest feedback about their perceptions of the program. To protect the participants' identities, I used pseudonyms when referring to the participants in the study, reviewed the informed consent form with each participant before their interview began, and stored the participants' contact information separately from the secure data.

Data Collection

I gathered data for this study by conducting in-depth, semistructured, telephone interviews with the participants. A copy of the interview questions and protocol can be

found in Appendix B. The interviews were open-ended inquiries to collect the perceptions of the participants.

I created the interview questions based on the uniqueness of the Associate Principal Leadership Development program and the Mid-Atlantic school district's problems. In alignment with the research problem, the interviews were designed to encourage participants to freely provide their experiences as they verbalized their perceptions regarding how they perceived the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program's ability to prepare them for a principalship. In this study, I conducted semistructured telephone interviews with the five participants that lasted approximately 20–40 minutes each. The interviews were held after workday hours while participants were in the privacy of their homes. The interviews could not be held face-to-face because of the state's social distancing requirements due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the interviews, the materials included a participant folder, a pen, a copy of the interview protocol and interview questions, and a digital recorder.

Data Analysis

In a qualitative study, data analysis is the process of inductive reasoning, thinking, and theorizing that enable researchers to analyze and code the data (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2016). Creswell (2012) explained, "Qualitative research is an inquiry approach useful for exploring and understanding a central phenomenon" (p. 626). The qualitative researcher may refine their data to gain a deeper understanding of the data during the analysis. The researcher must analyze the data to identify themes and concepts, coding and refining to understand the data (Taylor et al., 2016).

A system of organization is critical to qualitative research. As I listened to the participants' interviews and transcribed the participants' responses, I wrote comments that contributed to the interview's details. The analysis was organized and prepared into phrases and narratives. The summary of the interviews was stored on the laptop and assigned a letter and a number. The paper copies of the interview protocols, transcripts were kept in a locked file cabinet in the home office.

Upon reviewing the interview transcripts, I identified themes in the margins to understand the information's meaning. Once the themes were identified using in vivo coding, I made a list of similar codes and repetitive codes. The process allowed me to develop categories for the data collected and develop patterns. This open coding allowed me to explore the data's accuracy and provide a working list of categories from the participant's information. The themes that emerged from the coding were: (a) the program prepared me to implement, and (b) the program did not prepare me. The detailed findings are presented in a qualitative narrative and summarized the results of the data analysis. Incorporated in the findings is a dialogue of the participants and their quotes from the interviews, which demonstrated their perspectives of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program. The significant results were summarized, and I used my judgment to communicate the participant's reflections on the data's broader meaning.

Following the process after approval from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (04-14-20-0740496), the research for the project study was approved through the approval process at the school district located in the Mid-Atlantic. This study's data were collected for 4-weeks. During that time, I interviewed five secondary

principals who completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program. The interview protocol was used for all five interviews and transcribed, analyzed, and coded for common themes. To protect the participants' identities, they were assigned a pseudonym to replace their data collection names. Codes were used to replace actual names, and contact information was stored and protected separately from the data. The data will be kept for 5 years as required by the university.

Data Analysis Results

Responses from the participants were divided into two areas during the coding process. Questions 1-9 obtained the participants' responses about the Associate Principal Development Program's ability to prepare them to incorporate the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership into their role as school principals. The second was Question 10 that provided participants the opportunity to state if they felt the program prepared them for a principalship.

The five participants consisted of secondary school principals who completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program in a suburban mid-Atlantic school district. All the participants were women who were in their first to the fifth year of principalship. At the start of the interview, the participants were asked to share how long they were a principal and which cohort of the Associate Principal Leadership Development did they complete. Participant 1 was a member of the 2016 Cohort, Participants 2 and 3 were members of the 2017 Cohort, and participants 4 and 5 were members of the 2018 Cohort. A sample transcript of Participant 1 is in Appendix C. Based on the responses' analysis, some minor differences in the content delivery will be

noted in the responses to Questions 1 – 9. From the interviews, it was clear that

modifications were made to the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program

curricular modules to respond to education reforms and district goals. No discrepant

cases needed to be addressed as all interviews contributed to the study's results and

conclusion. However, some discrepant responses were provided based upon the cohort

year and the educational reforms. The data analysis included printing the participants'

transcripts and sending the transcripts to the participants to ensure that the responses were

accurate.

      The following table describes the codes, categories, and themes identified in my

analysis. The two main themes that emerged from the data analysis were confidence in

skills and needed more training to implement.

Table 1

Codes, Categories, and Themes Used in Data Analysis

Codes	Categories	Themes
- Mission statement and values - Operations and management - Professional development for staff - Instructional leadership - Building capacity of school personnel - Ethics and professional norms	Most prepared	Prepared me to implement Most Beneficial
- Transfer of power - Transition planning - Equity and cultural responsiveness - Community of care - School improvement and the Every Student Succeed Act	Least beneficial	Not prepared to implement Need more training

One follow-up question was posed about operationalizing the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership in the schoolhouse. All the participants had a plan to employ the precepts of the standards in their schoolhouse. Three participants shared their process for operationalizing the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership. Participants stated that did the following once appointed to their principalship:

- Reviewed the data about the school.

- Spoke to the key stakeholders such as the leadership team, student leaders, clerical staff, and building services staff.

- Analyzed the data.

- Developed their vision for the school and their improvement plan.

- Shared with the leadership team for feedback and collaboration to improve the plan.

- Planned for professional development for the staff was developed that aligns with the organizational goals.

Once the details were finalized, the implementation plan for school improvement was shared with the community and faculty. This process of thinking described by the participants is what Senge stated in his systems theory, and the tools described for building learning organizations such as shared vision, mental models, team learning, personal mastery, and systems thinking was evident in their process for building their school organizations (Senge, 2006).

Data Analysis - RQ1

RQ1: How do participants who completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model utilized by a suburban public-school district in the mid-Atlantic perceive the program's ability to prepare them for a middle school and high school principalship?

Participants answered question 10 about their perceptions of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program's overall ability to prepare them for a principalship. Each participant felt that the program was beneficial to their preparation for a principalship with workshops that included scenarios, strategies, and assessment preparation. All the participants stated that the internship portion of the program was

most beneficial. A response from Participant 4 said, "the program did a moderate job of preparing me for Day 1, but more information should be given about the transfer of power between one principal to another." This theme was not present in the other participants who felt that the program modules were beneficial for their principalship preparation when paired with an internship for practical experience. Follow up questions were posed to the study participants who agreed that more training was necessary for the first thirty days and transferring power from one principal to another. Two themes emerged from the responses that the participants desired more training on the transfer of power and planning for the first thirty days of leadership.

Transferring power from one principal to another and creating a 30-day plan is district-specific for a new principal appointee. When I asked the participants about the best methodology for training about the transfer of power and a thirty-day plan, they concluded that a subsequent professional development following appointment would make the transition between principals seamless to the school community.

Data Analysis - RQ2

RQ2: How do participants, who completed a mid-Atlantic school district's Associate Principal Leader Development Program, perceive the program's curriculum topics' ability to prepare them to improve school culture and achievement utilizing the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership?

The responses to Questions 1-9 were aligned to the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership. These standards are utilized to evaluate the effectiveness of a principal in their job. Principals felt that the program curriculum was beneficial and

prepared them to utilize most of the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership. All the participants felt confident in implementing the following Professional Standards for Educational Leadership for mission, vision and core values, ethics and professional norms, curriculum, instruction and assessment, professional capacity of school personnel, the professional community for teachers and staff, operations and management. Many of these standards were incorporated in the monthly session modules, but as you moved from the 2016 Cohort to the 2018 Cohort, the process for data analysis was changed from the No Child Left Behind Act to the Every Student Succeeds Act. All the participants felt they were prepared by the program to analyze data and school improvement with the educational reforms used during their participation in the program. The 2016 cohort participants wanted more information about the specific components of the Every Student Succeeds Act calculation to create plans to improve student achievement, while participants in the 2017 and 2018 cohorts were comfortable analyzing the components of the Every Student Succeeds Act to improve student achievement.

When looking at the other components of the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership, 100% of the participants felt that the program should have spent more training time on developing school norms and professionalism, instructional coaching, creating a community of care to support students, creating an environment where equity is a priority. When the researcher asked follow-up questions about the best vehicle to provide the additional training, 100% of the participants felt that specialized professional development upon appointment to the principal's role would solve the gaps they perceived were in the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program. The

participants felt that additional professional development was necessary after the appointment and agreed that a 3-day self-paced or face-to-face session would suffice as they planned the transfer into the principal's new role.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to explore and investigate the perceptions of principals who complete the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program of a Mid-Atlantic suburban school district to address the needs of new leaders in the district. This study's participants conclude that they perceived the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program's experience as beneficial to expanding their knowledge, skills, and understanding of the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership for a principalship. I obtained a deep understanding of the principal's perceptions of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program's ability to prepare aspiring principals for leadership. There were five participants in this doctoral project study responsible for leading secondary schools in the Mid-Atlantic suburban school district. After analyzing the data, I concluded that participants benefitted from their experience in the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program but needed more training in the transition of power, developing school norms and professionalism, instructional coaching, creating a community of care to support students, and creating an environment where equity is a priority. The doctoral project study results guided me to develop a 3-day in-house professional development workshop focused on closing the gaps between the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program modules and the critical skills needed to transition seamlessly from aspiring leader to the principalship

based upon their perceptions after participating in the program and being appointed to the

principalship.

The doctoral project study can affect positive social change because principals

will be equipped to create a cohesive school environment where students achieve, and

schools can become 5 star according to the Every Student Succeeds standards. Principals

will be equipped to lead instructional coaching, build a community to support student

success, and ensure that diversity is prioritized in school decisions.

In Section 3, I provide the purpose and benefits of the Supplemental Professional

Development Workshop Project. The details are presented in Appendix A. Section 4

includes my reflections and conclusions as to the project's researcher and creator.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The purpose of this doctoral study was to explore and investigate the perceptions of principals who completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development program and are now principals in a Mid-Atlantic suburban school district and their needs as they take the helm on secondary schools. I collected data from one-on-one interviews with five participants who completed the program and are principals.

Some of the findings suggest that an in-house professional development on the transition of power, developing school norms and professionalism, instructional coaching, and creating a community of care to support students and creating an environment where equity is a priority will provide aspiring principals the skills and knowledge necessary to lead a school on Day 1. In-house professional development allows the adult learner to utilize their prior experience combined with their new learning to create valuable experiences that will lead to knowledge and skill acquisition. Therefore, I developed a 3-day, in-house professional development workshop for all principals who receive appointments after participating in the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program based upon the needs they expressed in their interviews.

According to Guskey (2002), professional development should be based on the best possible research data. I found that participants indicated that the structure, time, being self-paced, workshop course offerings, scheduling, and location are critical for effective professional development. The Mid-Atlantic suburban school district has

several platforms available to accommodate continuous professional development delivery, such as face-to-face and online.

Rationale

Upon completing the semistructured interviews with principals, I identified the need for professional development that discussed the transition of power, developing school norms and professionalism, instructional coaching, and creating a community of care to support students and create an environment where equity is a priority. Principals indicated that the professional development was adequate in many areas of the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership but lacked information on operationalizing the above criteria, linked to Standards 2, 3, and 4, in the schoolhouse.

The professional development project allowed me to address the concerns that principals expressed in their interviews. I selected the professional development model that allows leaders to engage in learning and leave with a sample product that can be implemented in any schoolhouse. The training uses time efficiently and implements purposeful and intentional training for the intended audience. The professional development project also allows for time to create a network of collegial relationships for feedback and support. The professional development establishes a connection between each participant and the material, emphasizing growing principals as instructional leaders in many facets of operationalizing the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership in the schoolhouse.

Review of Literature

The Mid-Atlantic school district has 30 middle schools and 27 high schools, with 50% of the sitting principals eligible for retirement in the next 10 years. Districts must be innovative in developing professional development to grow aspiring leaders ready to fill these positions. The lack of prepared principals in the school district pipeline mirrors the national shortage of principals to fill soon-to-be-open positions. In the review of the literature, I found that some districts are developing programs to meet the proposed vacancies, such as the Prince George's Public School System, Baltimore City Public School System, and Baltimore County Public School System. Many of these districts provide in-service professional development programs to meet the needs of filling the pipeline with principals trained in the theory and the district's specific needs.

A professional development project was the most appropriate approach for this study because it aligns with the exemplary program's delivery method. Professional development is defined as "a well-connected set of learning opportunities that were informed by a coherent view of teaching and learning, grounded in both theory and practice" (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007). There are five aspects to a school leadership development program:

1. Structure leadership development programs to reflect the broader vision for schools.

2. Tie leadership development to problems from practice that are actionable.

3. Train leaders to manage professional learning organizations.

4. Design school leadership programs to build skills for a dynamic work

environment.

5. Make leadership development continue throughout a leaders' career (Jensen,

Downing & Clark, 2017).

In-house professional development programs allow districts to customize learning to

reflect the vision of the district and the school, provide leaders with an action plan, train

principals not only to manage an organization but to grow leaders, lead professional

development within the school, and ensure that they receive ongoing professional

development and growth to meet the changing reforms in education.

In the adult learning theory, transformative learning provides the desired effect for

connecting adults to new learning (Kelly, 2017). Building upon the existing knowledge or

inputting new knowledge, the learner can transform to develop a different perspective of

an experience (Kelly, 2017). Professional development combined with transformative

learning is a vehicle that many principals are familiar with from their teaching experience

and use that same methodology to impart knowledge to their faculty and staff. When

implementing this theory, a leader should be mindful of communication, competencies,

collaboration, adaptability, and critical thinking when designing professional

development (Kumar, 2004). Keeping these competencies at the forefront of professional

development design will allow individuals to emerge from the experience committed to

self-development and enthusiastic about implementing an organization's goals.

The best way to create a pool of candidates is to nurture the talent within the

district. While many districts have homegrown professional development programs for

candidates interested in principalships, more development is needed for potential candidates to maintain interest in their leadership journey. The principals who participated in this study benefitted from the experience; however, once in the principalship position, the participants felt they needed more experience with some elements, such as transferring power, creating a community of care, developing professional norms, data analysis, instructional leadership, and equity. I included these topics in the 3-day leadership professional development to provide newly appointed principals with an additional opportunity to build a cohort with new colleagues for dialogue around and the practice of leadership skills necessary on Day 1.

For this literature review, I used the following search terms and phrases: *principal pipeline, professional standards for educational leadership, principal development,* and *aspiring principals.* The literature search was completed using educational databases accessed through the Walden University Library and local websites. I did not find enough current research (published in the last 5 years) to thoroughly delve into the subject matter during my educational databases search. Therefore, my references include several sources that were published over 5 years ago. The literature reviewed provided scholarly information that promoted the necessity for a principal pipeline and the professional development workshop sessions as the project for this study to increase aspiring leaders' knowledge.

Project Description

The professional development project is a virtual 3-day workshop for a leader after being appointed to a principalship position in the Mid-Atlantic suburban school

district. The newly appointed principals will spend time reviewing how to transfer power between principals, develop school norms and professionalism, conduct instructional coaching, create a community of care to support students, and establish an environment where equity is a priority. The sessions will take place during principal workdays between June and August, depending upon the appointment. The sessions will provide principals with an opportunity to practice on case studies with colleagues; develop a 90-day plan, school progress plan development, and equity plan, and receive aligned instructional professional development in addition to time for reflection and sharing. The detailed description of the Professional Development Workshop Project learning objectives and materials are in Appendix A.

Sessions will be held weekly beginning in June. Day 1 will be the 2nd week in June, and Day 2 will be the 3rd week in June, and Day 3 will be the 4th week in June. These sessions will be repeated in July and August as principals are appointed to open positions. These sessions will be recorded so that appointments that happen later in the school year can participate in the sessions to assist with their principalship transition. Time is provided for principals to network and collaborate to build collegial relationships to support them in their new roles.

The resources required to implement the professional development will be available at the district. The study results indicated that the principals desired information on transferring power between principals, developing school norms and professionalism, conducting instructional coaching, creating a community of care to support students, and creating an environment where equity is a priority. They wanted to participate in

professional development face-to-face or virtually and have sessions recorded to refer to the discussions during planning for the school year.

Potential resources included the Office of Organizational Effectiveness, the district leadership curriculum, and other principals sharing their transition stories. Advertising of the professional development will be sent to the district through e-mail and placed on the district website where professional development courses are offered. All workshop sessions will take place on Microsoft Teams since the school is currently in a virtual school environment. As the primary facilitator, I will place an electronic copy of all the materials on our Schoology website as a course. Live sessions will be recorded and placed on the Schoology website for future reference. There is no cost for the 3-day workshop sessions.

I will be the workshop facilitator responsible for planning, creating, communicating, and implementing the professional development to support newly appointed principals. Workshop topics include transferring power, developing school norms and professionalism, conducting instructional coaching, creating a community of care for students, and creating a culture where equity is a priority. Active participation will be expected, and case study discussions will facilitate collaboration and conversations between colleagues. Participants will also have time for reflection and sharing what they have learned. The department of Organizational Effectiveness will be invited to participate, and they can use the materials to train future leaders.

Project Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan will be a formative evaluation (see Appendix A) at the end of

each day of the professional development session and a summative evaluation to gather

feedback about how the principals' perceived the professional development. The

formative evaluation will allow me to adjust the presentation in real time and guide future

professional development. I will send the summative evaluation to the participants via e-

mail to measure their overall learning experience and gather suggestions for

improvements and other information for a successful first year as a principal.

Project Implications

The key stakeholders will be the principals, the Office of Organizational

Effectiveness, students, and the community. I will be responsible for evaluating the

professional development process and will make changes based on the formative

assessment data collected each day. The data will be organized and presented to the

principals and the Office of Organizational Effectiveness. The principals will be essential

because the success of professional development will depend on their honest feedback.

The principals will provide feedback on the effectiveness of professional development

and whether they implemented the strategies presented to guide their leadership work in

the schoolhouse. The Office of Organizational Effectiveness will be responsible for

future implementations of professional development and supporting new administrators

during their first year of transition to the new role. The students will benefit from a

school environment that focuses on their success and achievement with a consistent

message throughout the year and measurable goals that all can achieve. Students will be

empowered to understand their role in achieving the school's goal to improve student performance. The community will be a stakeholder in that students will be prepared for high school and a transition to the world of work or college, ultimately becoming productive citizens in the community.

The professional development workshop will promote positive social change because the principals will feel prepared to lead a school and implement a plan to promote student achievement according to the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership during the 3-day session. They will see the benefits of developing a 90-day plan, a school progress plan based upon an analysis of the data, and an equity plan schoolwide to include the community. Principals will use Senge's theory as the underpinning for decision-making to advance student achievement.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

I conducted the research and created a project that was important to academia and me. As a newly appointed principal in a secondary school, I understand the difficulties during the first-year transition. I was coached in several critical areas before meeting with my faculty and staff. My experiences inspired me to develop a project that could be applied after an appointment to ease the transition to this pivotal role. The work helped me understand the value of professional development, especially self-paced development, which can be reviewed. The importance of seeking principals' perceptions and evaluation feedback regarding professional development will guide future professional development effectiveness.

In Section 4, I discuss the research and workshop development process. This section includes discussing the project's strengths and limitations, recommendations for alternative approaches, scholarship, project development, social impact, and leadership. I also reflect upon my self-growth and doctoral work on a systemic level that might offer future research opportunities and consideration of principal professional development.

Project Strengths and Limitations

This professional development project is intended to help school administrators increase their knowledge and skills regarding the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership's operationalization in a schoolhouse. The first strength of this project s is addressing the professional needs of newly appointed principals who work with teachers and communities to increase student achievement. In this professional development workshop, principals will learn how to operationalize the Professional Standards for

Educational Leadership components and analyze data to increase student achievement. The data collected in this study revealed that the participants did not feel prepared to transfer power between principals, develop school norms and professionalism, coach instruction, create a community of care to support students, and create an environment where equity is a priority.

The second strength of the professional development workshop is increasing principals' knowledge and skill practice and promoting a theoretical approach to decision-making that places students at the center. Principals need collegial relationships with colleagues as thought partners to see another perspective on problem-solving and implementing a plan.

I also identified two limitations related to this study: time constraints and participant availability. Time constraints may be a limitation of this project because it will be implemented during the summer after the newly appointed principals are announced. Some principals are appointed during the school year and will not participate in professional development. If I do not receive feedback about their learning during the professional development sessions, then the project will not be efficient.

The second limitation of the project is that principals who are appointed will not receive the information to transition into the position seamlessly with the support of collegial conversations and thought partners necessary to survive the first year. However, the Office of Organizational Effectiveness can sanction individualized sessions to meet the needs of principals appointed during the school year. The professional development

workshop will be for a specific group of principals appointed outside of the school year; therefore, the results could be different if scaled up within the district.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

An alternative approach to address the limitations involving time constraints and principal participation appointed during the school year is to have the Office of Organizational Effectiveness deliver the module after the principal meets with the superintendent and before the Board of Education appoints them. The professional development can be delivered individually via Microsoft Teams, and the resource documents can be electronically delivered to the participant via e-mail. Utilizing Microsoft Teams will allow for collaboration and collegial support to meet their needs as newly appointed leaders in a schoolhouse. Therefore, using Microsoft Teams as a presentation tool and facilitation from the Office of Organizational Effectiveness will provide the leadership strategies necessary to improve school culture and student achievement.

The right attitude is essential for principals to participate in a professional development workshop. They must be open to personal and professional growth. According to the Professional Standards for Leadership Development, honing their craft for leadership through attending this workshop will increase their skills and knowledge, which will benefit the school culture and impact student achievement. My recommendation is that all newly appointed principals participate in professional development workshops to build collegial relationships, strengthen their leadership and teacher development skills, and ultimately increase student achievement.

Scholarship, Project Development, Evaluation and Leadership, and Change

While reflecting upon my doctoral journey, my scholarship experience included completing major assignments, coursework, and the dissertation stages with a culminating project. My interest in this topic results from my experience as a career-changer moving into education and my leadership journey to the principalship. Each time I sat in a seminar about leadership, I learned more, but when I did my internship and put theory into action, I understood the burden of leadership is a lonely place. The suburban Mid-Atlantic school district where I am currently a leader is facing a challenge over the next 5 years: 20% of the school administrators will be eligible for retirement. While this may seem like a daunting number, it does provide the district with the opportunity to develop homegrown talent with professional development programs that support depth in the principal pipeline.

Being a doctoral candidate has increased my scholarly acumen and will impact my growth professionally and personally. I acquired critical thinking, assessing, and synthesizing research literacy skills because of reading journals and peer-reviewed articles and the books studied and cited. This project has kept me excited about principal professional development changes and validates my purpose as a researcher. I will continue my research and develop more professional development workshops to nurture and grow leaders nationally.

My professional development experience was birthed from my time in Corporate America, where I conducted development training and workshops for business units to utilize the proprietary software. Once I entered the work of education and made my

journey to the principalship, I realized that many of the planning sessions required more intensive training to ensure that principals are engaged and value the information provided to increase their skills to meet students' needs in schools. None of my prior training prepared me for the depths of research and planning that this project required. I found that developing principal professional development for newly appointed principals' is critical to ensure that principals have the skills and knowledge to lead a school is also evident in the national findings and literature reviewed in this study. It is necessary to provide principals with professional development to increase their skills and abilities to meet their teachers, students, and the school community's needs. Creating this professional development project stretched my skills as a researcher and leader and sparked my confidence that I am a true change agent.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

Professional development is the delivery method for districts to train aspiring principals for leadership. During the process of exploring perceptions of newly appointed principals in a suburban Mid-Atlantic school district's Associate Principal Leadership Development Program, I assumed that the results would inform the creative process of professional development to meet their needs as they transition to their new role. I interviewed secondary school principals because they are responsible for operationalizing the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership in the schoolhouse to improve student achievement. The 10 standards are centered on student achievement that offered many opportunities to provide a rich professional development experience.

The Associate Principal Leadership Development Program does a great job preparing aspiring leaders to transition to the principalship. The participants felt that the training was practical. However, after being in the position, they realized they needed development in data analysis areas to improve their school score for the Every Student Succeeds Act component of developing a school culture that involved the community and equitable practices. These skills can be taught and mastered through reviewing case studies and developing plans critiqued with a thought partner's support in professional development workshops. I learned that these components vary from school to school, but more needs to be done to meet aspiring principals' needs, which was evident in the findings of this study and the literature published nationally. Many opportunities should exist for principals to participate in customized professional development to increase their skills and abilities, preparing them to lead a school to improve student achievement.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

School leadership is critical to school improvement, and long-range support is critical for aspiring leaders (Gates, Kaufman, Doan, Prado-Tuma, & Kim, 2020). Principals play a vital role in setting the direction for successful schools, but the existing knowledge on the best way to prepare and develop highly qualified candidates is sparse (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). It is essential to provide principals with the relevant leadership professional development opportunities because most of their school day is spent leading and managing teachers, students, and the community. Research is ongoing regarding creating long-range plans and support for aspiring leaders in schools. I will

continue to advocate that effective professional development requires input and engagement from all newly appointed principals.

The purpose of this study was to understand the participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program model at preparing aspiring leaders seeking a middle or high school principalship position. The newly appointed principal participants felt that the program addressed leadership skills and knowledge except in the following areas: informing the transition of power, developing school norms and professionalism, instructional coaching, creating a community of care to support students, creating an environment where equity is a priority. I did not see many differences in the views of the participants. Information gathered in this study guided the creation of a professional development workshop to cover operationalizing the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership during the first year as principal.

This study and project imply that newly appointed principals need time to continue professional learning and increase their knowledge and skills as they transition to leading a schoolhouse. Principals need space to have collaborative and productive conversations regarding supporting teachers, instructional leadership, equity, and student achievement. Many leaders who completed the principal pipeline institute have a deep understanding of the standards, curriculum, and pedagogy among leaders (Gates et al., 2020). Schools led by these newly place principals in pipeline districts outperformed schools from other districts in student achievement and principal retention (Gates et al., 2020). Principal preparation and professional development must be relevant; therefore,

the potential for further research into the principals' perceptions of their year 1 evaluation would be beneficial.

Conclusion

The research and the workshop developed were essential to academia and me. I examined the perceptions of principals who completed the suburban Mid-Atlantic school district's Associate Principal Leadership Development Program, which led to developing a project that could be applied in 1 month of the school year and continually related to the appointment time for new principals. This work helped me understand the value of and need for ongoing professional development for principals as they transition to the principalship. The feedback from the professional development can guide the effectiveness of future principal professional development.

In Section 4, I analyzed the research and project development process and experiences gained from the doctoral journey. The project's strengths and limitations, recommendations for alternative approaches, scholarship, workshop development, and social impact were also provided. I have grown as a professional in the process and want my work to provide direction for future research and homegrown principal development programs. The research study and workshop are one step in future research and consideration in developing newly appointed principals. In 2010, it was estimated that 40% of the current principal workforce by 2014 (Clifford, 2010). Now that it is 2020, the percentage of principals currently exiting the workforce remains high; in the local school district studied, principals eligible to retire in 5 years are 30% of the current leadership. Many districts are maintaining principal pipelines and follow the vision of

managing career progressions for their aspiring principals and principals (Anderson & Turnbull, 2019). This area's work is urgent for depth in the principal pipeline, principal retention, and development of a succession plan as current principals leave the profession.

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Appendix A: The Project

The results of this research confirm the evidence in the literature that principals perceive that they are not prepared to lead a schoolhouse day one according to the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership to improve student achievement. Some participants in my student indicated that they needed more development in the following areas:

- Transfer of Power between principals
- Creating a community of care
- Developing Professional Norms
- Data Analysis according to the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Instructional Leadership
- Fostering a school culture where equity is valued

I concluded that a three-day professional development workshop would address their needs and develop collegial thought partners in their leadership journey. This professional development aims to close the gaps principals perceived they had after participating in the Associate Principals Leadership Development Program of a Mid-Atlantic suburban school district.

Goals:
Upon completion of this workshop, participants will have a sample 90-day entry plan, sample school progress plan, and a sample equity plan as a model when they enter their school buildings.

Target Audience: The target audience is newly appointed principals in secondary schools.

Learning Outcomes:
Over three days in a month, the attendees will meet the following learning outcomes:
Day 1: Who's Got the Power?
1. Transfer power between principals
2. Engaging the new school faculty, students, and community
3. Developing professional norms
4. Creating my 90-day plan

Day 2: Who's down with SPP? Yeah, you know me.
1. Defining school progress plan
2. Creating a community of care for students
3. Developing an instructional leadership model
4. Calculating the components of the Every Student Succeed Act.
5. Creating a plan for student achievement – SPP

Day 3: Creating a brave space
1. Helping my team value diversity
2. Performing an equity audit in the schoolhouse
3. Building leadership capacity for equity
4. Examining microaggressions and bias in the classroom

5. Developing a model plan for equity in the schoolhouse

Components

The professional development workshop is designed for a three day delivery with materials to meet the learning outcomes. The professional development plan was created from the responses of the participants during their interviews. The design was chosen based on the research that suggests that professional development workshops in a series build skills and knowledge over time (Davis, 2018). The program workshop will occur over three days a month with the ability to repeat as necessary. Attendees will have access to all the materials in Schoology for review upon completion of the workshop.

Workshop Timeline

<u>**Day 1: Who's got the Power?**</u>

Time	Topic
8:30 am – 9:30 am	Sign and Breakfast 9:15- 9:30 Welcome and Housekeeping
9:30 am – 10:30 am	Transfer power between principals
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Break
11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Engaging the new school faculty, students, and community
12:00 pm – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Developing professional norms
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Break
2:15 pm - 3:15 pm	Creating a 90-day plan
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	Reflection and Evaluation
Resources Needed:	Checklist for transfer, handouts, chart paper, markers, pens, post-it notes, laptops, smartboard, evaluation sheet, sign-in sheets, badges, rocks

<u>**Day 2: Whose down with SPP, you know me!**</u>

Time	Topic
8:30 am – 9:15 am	Sign and Breakfast 9:15- 9:30 Welcome and Housekeeping
9:30 am – 10:30 am	Defining school progress plan and creating a community of care for students
10:30 am – 10:45 am	Break
10:45 am - 11:30 am	Developing an instructional leadership model
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	Lunch

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Calculating the components of the Every Student Succeed Act.
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Break
2:15 pm - 3:15 pm	Creating a plan for student achievement – SPP
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	Reflection and Evaluation
Resources Needed:	Checklist for transfer, handouts, chart paper, markers, pens, post-it notes, laptops, smartboard, evaluation sheet, sign-in sheets, badges

Day 3: Creating a Brave Space

Time	Topic
8:30 am – 9:15 am	Sign and Breakfast 9:15- 9:30 Welcome and Housekeeping
9:30 am – 10:30 am	Helping my team value diversity
10:30 am – 10:45 am	Break
10:45 am - 11:30 am	Performing an equity audit in the schoolhouse and building leadership capacity for equity
11:30 am – 12:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Examining microaggressions and bias in the classroom
2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Break
2:15 pm - 3:15 pm	Developing a model plan for equity in the schoolhouse
3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	Reflection and Evaluation
Resources Needed:	Checklist for transfer, handouts, chart paper, markers, pens, post-it notes, laptops, smartboard, evaluation sheet, sign-in sheets, badges, coloring pencils, and coloring books

PowerPoint slides Day 1

WHO'S GOT THE POWER

NEWLY APPOINTED PRINCIPAL
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
DAY 1

	Session 1	Transferring Power
	Session 2	Meeting the new faculty and community
	Session 3	Creating a 90-day plan

LEARNING OUTCOMES

WELCOME

Introductions	

Gratitude Rock

Session Welcome

- Housekeeping
  - Silence your cell phone
  - Be present in the experience
  - Be willing to learn something new
  - Write Questions on the post-it notes for the parking lot.

TRANSFERRING POWER
STANDARD 9:OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT

- Several items must be addressed before you walk into the building day 1
  - Safety and Security
  - Fiscal Responsibilities
  - Managing the Staff
  - Managing Students
- Create contact list for central office support services

JAM BOARD

- WHAT ARE SOME THINGS YOU WOULD DO TO PREPARE FOR YOUR FIRST DAY ON THE JOB?
- https://jamboard.google.com/d/10UURnsr5CT7oMLCumKXK5_F-1_HvuxjTojtTPN2chAc/edit?usp=sharing

SAFETY AND SECURITY

- **Building access is through your identification badge and your keys.**
  - Set up a time to call safety and security office to inform them of your promotion and your first day on the job. They will need to change your access remotely so you can enter the building.
  - Meet with your assistant principal who oversees facilities to get a set of keys.
  - Walk the building with your AP and unlock doors to make sure the keys work.
  - Get the access code for the buildings security alarm system
- **Security Camera**
  - Get the username and password to access the security camera
- **Walkie Talkie System**
  - Understand the channel usage for the walkie talkie especially in case of an emergency
- **Emergency Plan**
  - Walk the building with your assistant principal to understand the egress during emergency drills
  - Request access to the school's emergency plan for updates

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Bank Transfer and Sales and Use Tax**
    - meet with the fiscal assistant to ensure that your name is added to the school account
    - Have the fiscal assistant draft a letter to the State Comptroller to transfer the Sales and Use tax to your name
    - Sign the paperwork for the cell phone stipend
- **Kronos**
    - Sign up for the Kronos timekeeping and payroll class
    - Place a reminder in your calendar to process Kronos every two weeks so your clericals and hourly employees will be paid
- **Procure Card**
    - Sign up for the procurement card class
    - Sit with your fiscal assistant to understand how to sign up monthly on teacher charges
- **Advantage Financial**
    - Sign up for the class
    - Meet with your fiscal assistant to manage this account
- Set up monthly meetings with your fiscal assistant to review the budget for the school year

MANAGING STAFF

- Staffing System Access
    - Make sure you have access to the staffing system where you allocate your staffing
- Evaluation and Observation System
    - Make sure you have access to the evaluation and observation system and that you see your teachers
- Human Resources
    - Hiring Staff
    - Access to Hiring System

MANAGING STUDENTS

- Dashboard Access
    - You should have access to your school data through the dashboard.
- Special Education System Access
    - Request access to the Student Planning System and take the training if you do not have access
- FARMS data and NDA
    - Ensure you have access to the FARMS data and that you sign the NDA.

PLANNING YOUR TRANSFER – 10 MIN

- Using the handout, Make sure that you have access to the necessary programs during your first week in the building.

TALK AND TURN – 15 MINUTES

- At your table talk and turn with the person on your left, to discuss your authorization plan with your partner.

SHARE OUT YOUR PLAN

MAY I HAVE A VOLUNTEER TO
SHARE THEIR PLANS?

BREAK TIME

**30 MINUTES TO TAKE A BRAIN BREAK
THERE ARE SOME COLORED PENCILS AND
PICTURES ON THE TABLE FOR YOU TO
COLOR**

DEVELOPING A PLAN TO MEET THE FACULTY AND STAFF

SESSION 2

WELCOME BACK

- Share the last picture on your cell phone with the person on your right. Why was it important to capture that image?

MEETING WITH THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Drafting your letter to the faculty introducing yourself to the staff and students
- Drafting your letter to the community for informal meet and greets
- Meet with the current principal and assistant principals to understand the school culture
- Schedule individual meetings with the staff ,student groups and PTA
- Meet with the community leaders to understand their needs and develop strategic partnerships.

FACULTY INTRODUCTORY MEETING

- Components
  - Introducing yourself with a little about your background. Do not quote your result but give them insight into why your career choices prepared you for this role
  - Explain why you wanted the position or what attracted you to the school and invite them to the meet and greet session for the staff.
  - Plan on spending a day in the building to just interact with the staff and students informally
  - Provide them with your email address to reach out.
- Take time to draft your letter.

PLANNING YOUR FACULTY AND STAFF MEETING

- Keep the meeting brief.
- Give the new staff a snapshot of your resume and educational philosophy.
- Let them know you will be in the building to meet informally with the leadership team and teachers

LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

- Very similar to the letter to the faculty
  - Introducing yourself with a little about your background. Do not quote your result but give them insight into why your career choices prepared you for this role
  - Explain why you wanted the position or what attracted you to the school and invite them to the meet and greet session for the staff.
  - List the dates times for the community meeting
- Modify your faculty letter to become a community letter

PLANNING YOUR COMMUNITY MEETING

- Have a visual presentation
  - Give them some information about your background
  - Tell them about your educational philosophy
  - Tell them why you want to lead the school?
  - Other fun facts
  - Open the floor to questions
  - Keep the meeting to 30 minutes no longer than an hour

MEETING WITH STUDENTS

- Work with your school counseling department and your assistant principal to set up the meetings with the following groups
    - student leadership
    - students who are not engaged in clubs but are successful
    - students who are struggling.
- Develop a list of possible questions.

MEETING WITH COMMUNITY INFLUENCERS

- Schedule time to meet with the elected officials in your community.
- They are critical allies in the work.

PROFESSIONAL NORMS

- Set the expectation for ethical behavior and integrity
- Demonstrate that you are fair, transparent, collaborative and are focused on continuous improvement
- Place students at the center of your decision making
- Leading by Doing
- Write down your leadership philosophy based upon the above criteria.

LUNCH BREAK

11:00 – 12:00

90 – DAY PLAN

PUTTING THIS ALL TOGETHER

CREATING A 90-DAY PLAN

- Roadmap to opening the building for students.
- Provides you with a checklist to ensure that you are prepared.
- Reflect upon the past 90 days to share success and redo's

- Let's look at this 100-day entry plan template. Work with your table partner to create a 90 day. Use your current school as the sample.

SHOUT OUT !

WHAT IS ONE THING YOUR LEARNED THAT WAS YOUR AHA MOMENT?

REFLECTION AND EVALUATION

- Microsoft Form for feedback and evaluation

Evaluation for Day 1

Day 1 Evaluation

Presenter: _____ Date: _____

Please give a response to each question below. Your feedback is valuable and is confidential.

1. Do you have a clear understanding of the process of transferring control from one principal to another?

2. What is your plan to communicate with the faculty, students, and the community?

3. What do you need to create a successful 90-day plan?

4. On a scale from 1 to 5, rate the effectiveness of this workshop, and state why?

PowerPoint Slides for Day 2
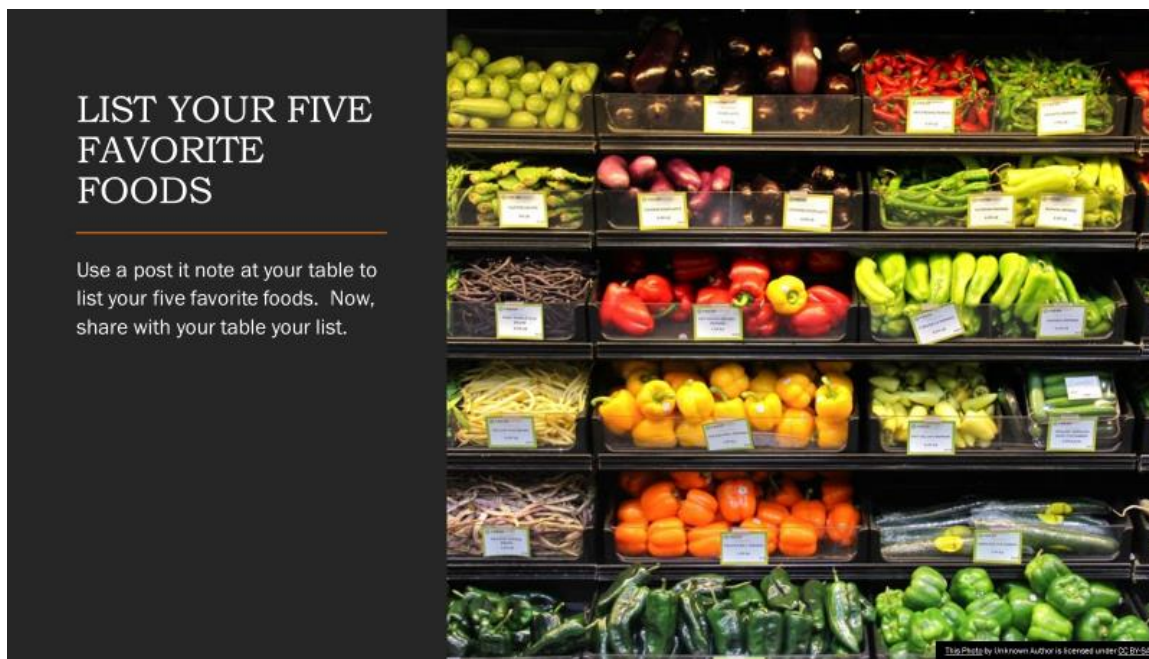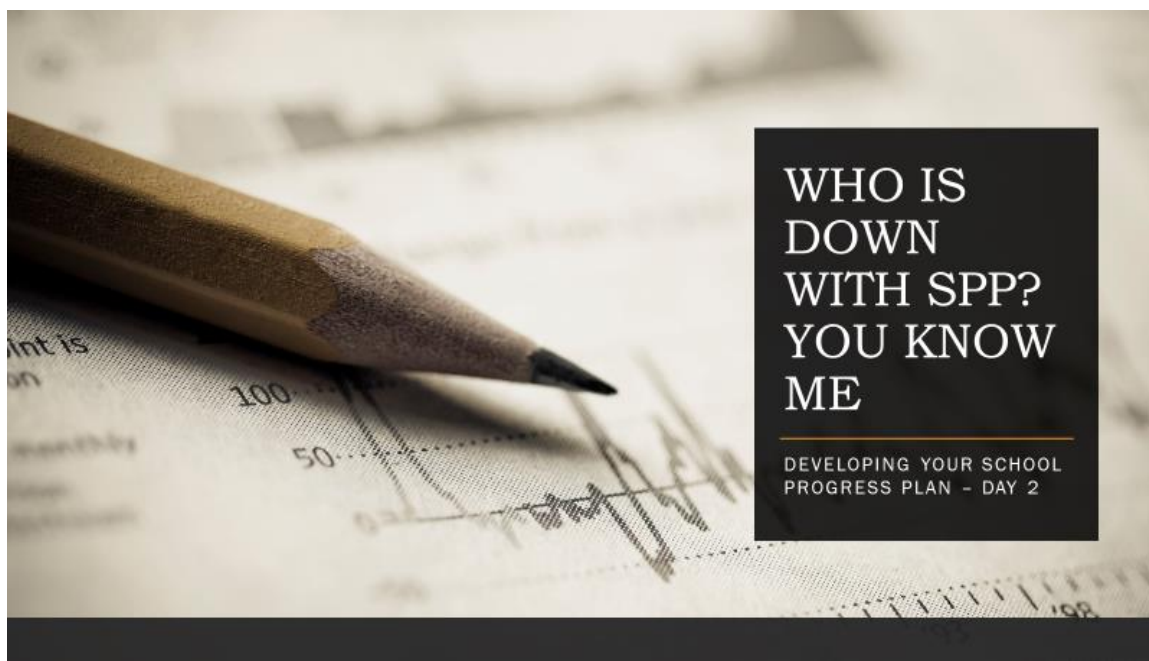
SESSION 1	SESSION 2	SESSION 3	SESSION 4
Defining school progress and creating a community of care	Developing an instructional leadership model	Calculating the components of the Every Student Succeeds Act	Creating a plan for student achievement – School Progress Plan (SPP)

AGENDA

Defining School Progress

The Every Student Succeeds is the latest iteration of the Section 8302 Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. This plan establishes standards to ensure student achievement so that states can receive federal funding for education.

The Every Student Succeeds Act in Maryland is determined by a calculation which includes academic achievement, graduation rate, English language proficiency, readiness for college and career, school quality and student success at the high school level.

At the middle school level, the calculation includes academic achievement, academic progress. English language proficiency and school quality and student success.

These calculation are at the heart of many school progress plans.

Maryland Reports – ESSA is about school progress

The state of Maryland reports a school's progress on a public-school report card and ranks a school by stars. The highest ranking is 5 stars.

Middle Schools are Ranked by 4 indicators
- Academic Achievement
- Academic Progress
- Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency
- School Quality and Student Success

High Schools are Ranked by 5 indicators
- Academic Achievement
- Graduation Rate
- Progress in Achieving English Language Proficiency
- Readiness for Post-Secondary
- School Quality and Student Success

Climate			
School Year	% of Students		% of Staff
	Feeling safe	Belonging	Feeling Safe
2019-20	59%	42%	41%

Student Attendance

93%	72%
Attendance Rate 2018-19	% Not Chronically Absent 2018-19
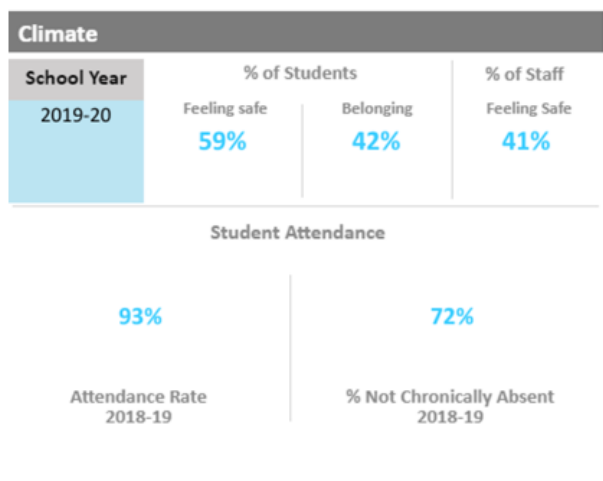
Look at the report from a school What does it say about the school?

Talk with your thought partner and create 3 questions you would ask the principal about this data?

Creating a community of care for students

A measurement of ESSA is School Quality and Student Success. This measurement is a calculation of the survey collected from student and staff. It analyzes their perceptions of the school environment. That is why it is essential for principals to consider how to create a community of care for students.

A community of care is about making a student feel that they are an integral part of the school culture. How is this done?

Let's Brainstorm!

Brainstorming Session and Gallery Walk – 15 minutes

With your table partners, use the posterboard to brainstorm idea to make students feel like they are a part of your school community?

GALLERY WALK: Walk to two other posters and give feedback on their suggestions with your post it notes.

Let's look at these articles

http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/mar03/vol60/num06/Creating-a-School-Community.aspx

https://justaskpublications.com/just-ask-resource-center/e-newsletters/professionalpractices/community-of-care-and-support-for-students/

BREAK – 10:30 AM – 10-45AM

Developing an instructional leadership model

Instructional Model Design

As a principal, you are limited by the follow factors for implementation of an instructional design

- Funding

- Testing

- Time based constraints – such as credit requirements

- Non-Academic Services – such as transportation and food services

- State Law, School Boards, Collective Bargaining Units

- Not being able to exempt from policies

How do I work within my constraints?

❑Go back to the school data

❑Read the Collective Bargaining Agreements

❑Understand the workforce outlook for the region

❑Know your achievement gaps and ensure rigor in your courses

❑Think about what you can control

❏Be Creative within your limitations

This is what I can control to improve student achievement

Scheduling
- Class Period
- School Day
- School Year
- Summer Programming

Staffing
- Class Size
- School Size
- Looping
- Teacher Roles

Professional Learning
- Common Planning Time
- Professional Learning Time

Targeted Support
- Advisory
- Ability
- Grouping

Shifting Mindsets

Using research-based methods to reach your instructional goals.
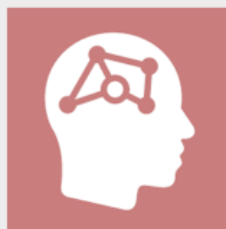
Professional Learning

- Common Planning Time
- Professional Learning

Using the data from our case study – Create a plan to close the gap in Math

Spend some time with your colleagues and create a plan to close the Math gap in your sample data. Think about how you will empower your teachers and giving them strategies and tools to meet the goal.

Sharing Out

List one item from your instructional model list to close the math gap

LUNCH TIME

11:30 am – 12:00 PM

WELCOME BACK

TELL ME WHAT
ANIMAL YOU
IDENTIFY WITH AND
WHY?

ESSA CALCULATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

61.6 %: 99.19

104.19

86.72

72.48

Calculation for Middle Schools

Let's look at our hand out and review the components of the calculation

The categories total 96.5 points and takes into consideration student achievement in math science and ELA, access to and completion of a well-rounded curriculum, proficiency in the English language, Attendance, and perceptions of students and educators.

This gives you a wealth of information when you compare the standard to your school's data

Calculation for High Schools

Let's look at our hand out and review the components of the calculation

The categories total 100 points and takes into consideration student achievement in math science and ELA, access to and completion of a well-rounded curriculum, proficiency in the English language, Attendance, graduation rate, and perceptions of students and educators.

This gives you a wealth of information when you compare the standard to your school's data.

Let's Examine a middle school and a high school case

Middle School

Examine the report from the middle school.

Write down what would you expect to see when you walk into that school day 1?

What questions would you ask the leadership team?

What questions would you ask the students?

What questions would you ask the parents?

High School

Examine the report from the high school.

Write down what would you expect to see when you walk into that school day 1?

What questions would you ask the leadership team?

What questions would you ask the students?

What questions would you ask the parents?

Write your responses on the poster paper. Use two sheets, one labelled high school and the 2nd middle school.

Shout out!

REPORT OUT

SHARE YOUR QUESTIONS

BREAK

2:00 pm – 2:15 pm

CREATING A SCHOOL PROGRESS PLAN

REVIEW THE DATA WITH YOUR PARTNER

- WHERE DO YOU WANT TO MOVE THE DATA?
- WHERE CAN YOU GROW?
- CREATE YOUR PLAN

SHARING YOUR PLAN

HERE IS THE DATA FOR A SCHOOL

BASED UPON THE INFORMATION ABOUT ESSA, SCHOOL CULTURE AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CREATE A SCHOOL PROGRESS PLAN.

Reflection & Evaluation

REFLECTION AND EVALUATION

Day 2 Evaluation

Day 2   Evaluation

 Presenter: _____ Date: _____

Please give a response to each question below. Your feedback is valuable and is
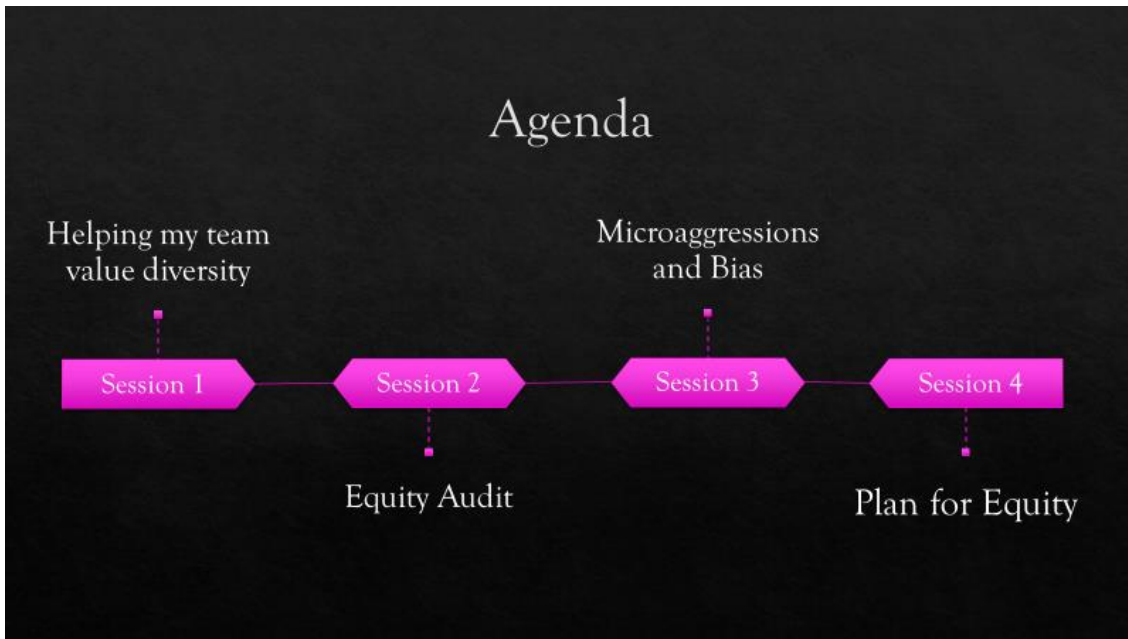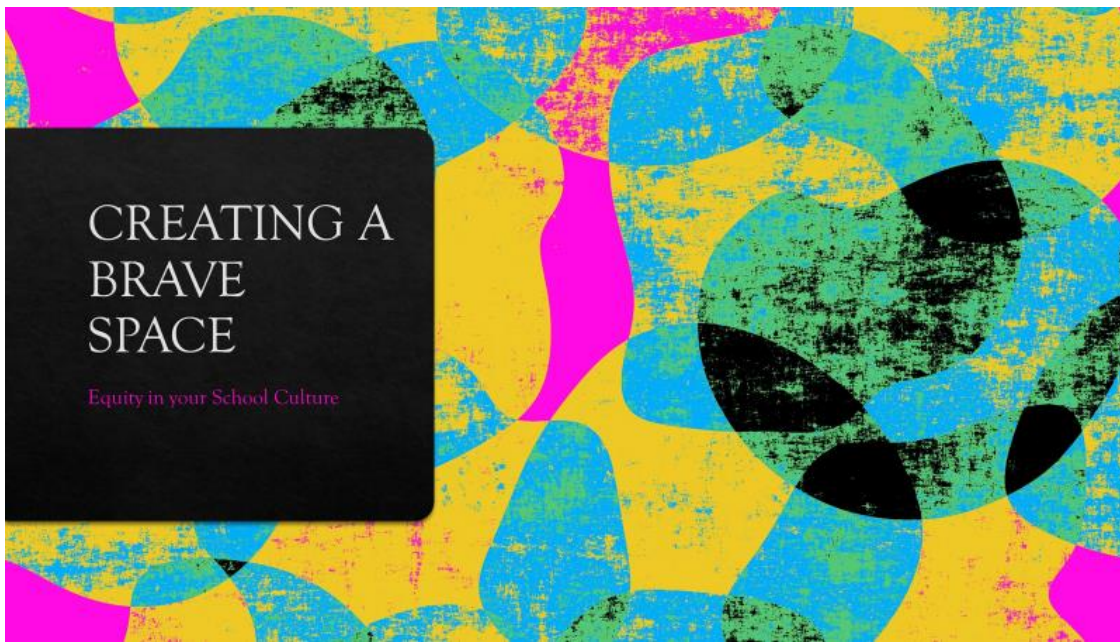confidential.

1.   What are the components of the ESSA progress plan?

2.   Can you analyze data according to the ESSA requirements and make
     recommendations?

3.   What do you need to create a successful school progress plan?

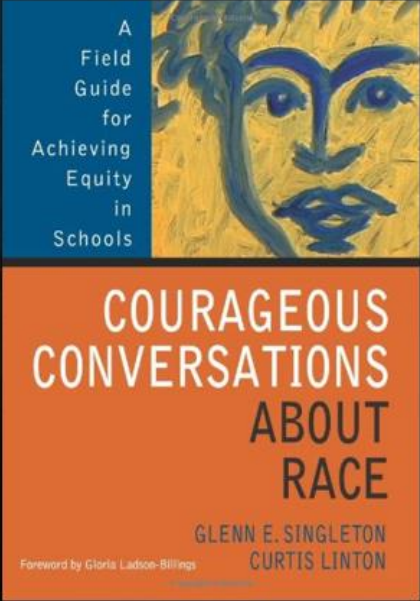4.   On a scale from 1 to 5, rate the effectiveness of this workshop, and state why?

Day 3 PowerPoints

WHAT DOES THIS PICTURE REPRESENT?

The following slides are adapted from

A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE

GLENN E. SINGLETON
CURTIS LINTON

Foreword by Gloria Ladson-Billings

Courageous Conversations about Race

- ◇ The Racial Achievement Gap has not closed with many of the interventions proposed by education
- ◇ Examples of excuses for lack of performance
    - ◇ Social Factors
    - ◇ Economic Factors
    - ◇ Political Factors
- ◇ Three Factors are necessary for schools t close the racial achievement gap
    - ◇ Passion – level of connectedness educators bring to anti-racism work
    - ◇ Practice – individual and institutional actions to educate every student to their full potential
    - ◇ Persistence – time and energy

## Facilitating Conversations

- ◇ Equity is a characteristic to foster
- ◇ Leaders must be passionate for equity work and this will permeate throughout the school and student of color will achieve
- ◇ People must feel safe to talk about race in a safe and honest way
- ◇ Courageous Conversation Protocol is the vehicle to close the racial achievement gap
- ◇ Focus Questions:
    - ◇ Why do racial gaps exist?
    - ◇ What is the origin of racial gaps?
    - ◇ What factors have allowed these gaps to persist for so many years?

UNDERSTANDING CCR PROTOCOL

- STAY ENGAGED
- SPEAK YOUR TRUTH
- EXPERIENCE DISCOMFORT
- EXCEPT AND ACCEPT NON-CLOSURE

- SIX CONDITIONS
  - PERSONAL. LOCAL AND IMMEDIATE
  - ISOLATE RACE
  - NORMALIZE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION AND MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES
  - MONITOR AGREEMENTS AND ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS
  - ESTABLISH A WORKING DEFINITION OF RACE
  - EXAMINE THE PRESENCE AND ROLE OF WHITENESS

COMPASS

- Allows for a democratic discourse
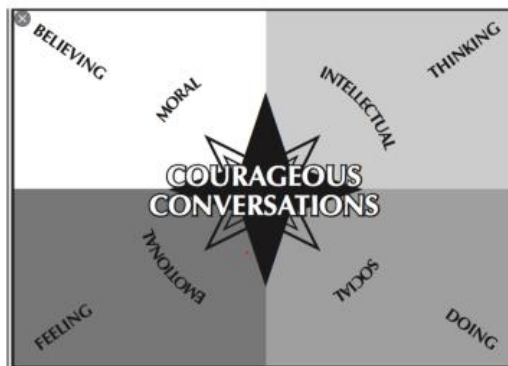
Activity

◈ Get into a group of three people

◈ Using the handout respond to the questions 1 and 2

◈ Pause and share out

◈ Write your response to question 3
  ◇ Personal
  ◇ Collective

◈ Discussion about definition

◈ Reflect as a leader on equity by answering the questions

Got Passion ?	
1. My passion • What is a non-school related activity about which I am truly passionate?	2. Looks and Feels Like What is it that I feel and that you would see as I engage in the activity?
3. Equity/Anti Racism What is my personal definition of equity/anti-racism? What is our collective definition of equity/anti-racism?	4. Leadership • When am I engaging in equity/anti-racism work, what do I feel and what do I see? • What qualities and characteristic are exhibited by school leaders who are engaging in equity/antiracism work? • In what ways do I personally exhibit these qualities and characteristics of equity/anti-racist leadership?

Why Race?

◈ Race: social construction attached to physical attributes

◈ Racism: beliefs and an enactment upon beliefs that on set of characteristics is superior to another set

◈ Racist: any person who subscribes to these beliefs and perpetuates them intentionally or unconsciously

Think about this Statement

◈ Racism is the systematic mistreatment of a certain group of people on the basis of skin color or other physical characteristics. This mistreatment is carried out by societal institutions or by people who have been conditioned by the society to act, consciously or unconsciously, in harmful ways towards people of color. Racism is different that prejudice, A person of color can hurt a White person because of prejudice. The difference is that in this country, people of color face systematic and ongoing personal and institutionalized biases every day.   Julian Weissglass 2001

◈ Racism is so universal in this country, so widespread and deep-seated that it is invisible because it is so normal. – Shirley Chisholm

What reaction do you have to Weissglass's and Chisolm's assertions that racism is systematic, universal, invisible and perpetrated by the dominate race? In what ways does this suggest that only white people can be racist? What is your belief?

Becoming an Anti-Racist

◈ Conscious and deliberate efforts to challenge the impact and perpetuation of institutional white racial power, presence, and privilege

◈ Anti-Racist implies an action

◈ Non-Racist – passive

◈ To close achievement gaps, teachers must be aggressively anti racist, promotes an environment of healing

Creating a culture in a school building

◈ Anti racist schools move beyond the celebration of diversity and create communities where students can talk about how they experience unfairness and discrimination and to heal

◈ Begins by walking through your building

BREAK

EQUITY AUDIT IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE

◈ An equitable school provides the climate, process, and content which enable students and staff to perform at their highest level. An equitable school ensures successful academic outcomes by providing equitable resources and appropriate instructional strategies for each student.

1. Has a clear mission that is committed to equitable access, processes, treatment, and outcomes for all students, regardless of race/ethnicity, gender, English Learners, disability status, gender identity/sexual orientation or socioeconomic status.

2. Provides an inclusive visual environment - halls, displays, and classrooms exhibit pictures and information about diverse students and cultures.

3. Reflects and works in collaboration with the various socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, language, gender, and disability groups within the school community.

4. Works in partnership with parents, the business community, and civic and community organizations to enrich the curriculum, provide consistently high expectations for all students, and develop supports and opportunities for all students.

Look at the handouts

◈ Equity Audit Template

◈ Let's review the templates, think about your school and answer the questions about the building and the classrooms. Discuss with your partner.

◈ Make recommendations for changes.

Dismantling Equity

◈ Let the Data Lead

◈ Be Prepared to Be Uncomfortable

◈ Ask Everyone to speak their truth

◈ Keep Every One Engaged

◈ Expect and Accept Non- Closure

LUNCH
BREAK
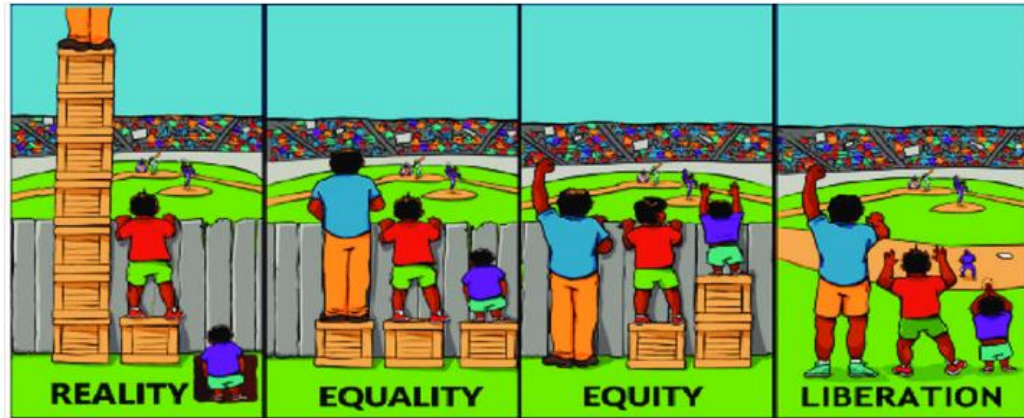
What is a MicroAgression?

◇ Microaggressions are "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, sexual orientation, and religious slights and insults to the target person or group" (Sue, 2010). Often described as "death by a thousand cuts," the emotional, behavioral, and cognitive impact of microaggressions is cumulative and over time results in harmful psychological and physiological effects for targeted individuals.

EXAMINING MICROAGRESSIONS

- What are they?
- Look at the handout, reflect upon your experience as a teacher, chair and assistant principal, did you see these in the classroom?
- You are smart for a boy!
- That's ok girls take longer to grasp math!
- You don't act gay!
- I understand, you are from a single parent home!
- Why do you have to be so extra!

Counteracting Microaggressions

- Ask clarifying questions to assist with understanding intentions.
- Come from curiosity not judgment.
- Tell what you observed as problematic in a factual manner.
- Impact exploration: ask for, and/or state, the potential impact of such a statement or action on others.
- Own your own thoughts and feelings around the impact.
- Next steps: Request appropriate action be taken.

Let's Role Play

◈ Look at the Role Play Handout, Using the tools from ACTION that we practices. Address the Microaggression in the scenario

CREATING AN EQUITY PLAN

◈ The equity plan is based upon your observations of the classroom and a lot of research to deal with specific situations in your school. Beginning with an equity audit is the first step, the second step is examining microaggressions, third step is looking at your data.

BREAK

REFLECTION
AND
EVALUATION

Day 3 Evaluation

Day 3   Evaluation

 Presenter: _____ Date: _____

Please give a response to each question below. Your feedback is valuable and is confidential.

1.   What is the working definition of race?

2.   Can you implement the concepts of courageous conversations in your school?

3.   How would you begin your equity audit?

4.   What are the steps to counteract microaggressions?

5.   On a scale from 1 to 5, rate the effectiveness of this workshop and state why?

Appendix B: The Interview Questions

Research Questions for the study are listed below:

RQ1: How do participants who completed the Associate Principal Leadership Development program model utilized by a suburban public-school district in the mid-Atlantic perceive the program's ability to prepare them for a middle school and high school principalship?

RQ2: How do participants, who completed a mid-Atlantic school district's Associate Principal Leader Development program, perceive the program's curriculum topics' ability to prepare them to improve school culture and achievement utilizing the Professional Standards for Educational Leadership?

The interview questions below are labeled to align with the research questions:

Interview Questions

1. Did you participate in the Associate Principal Leadership Development Program?

2. What level of school do you lead?

3. How many years have you been a principal?

4. How have you as a principal developed the mission, vision, and core values for your school.? (RQ2)

5. How do you communicate the professional norms, ethical practice to the school? (RQ2)

    a. Do you feel the staff understands your expectations? What is the evidence? (RQ2)

6. How have you led the implementation of equitable practices in your school? What is the evidence? (RQ2)

7. How well are you prepared to assess instruction, curriculum implementation, and assessment in your building? (RQ2)

8. How do you foster a community of care in your building for students? (RQ2)

9. How do you grow the professional capacity of your school personnel? (RQ2)

10. How do you foster a professional community for staff and teachers? (RQ2)

11. What strategies do you use to engage families and communities? (RQ2)

12. How do you manage the operations of your schoolhouse? (RQ2)

13. How do you improve your school data? ESSA? (RQ2)

14. How do you feel about the Associate Principal Leadership Development program model ability to prepare you to lead a school day 1? (RQ1)

Appendix C: Sample Interview Transcript

R: Good afternoon, Participant 1. How are you doing today?

P1: I am doing well. How are you?

R: I am doing great. How was your day at work?

P1: It was long, but you know how it is in administration.

R: I am working my way into that role, but I am not sure about the experience. However, thank you for participating in this interview today. Did you understand the informed consent that you signed earlier and returned? Do you have any questions for me before we proceed, and may I record our conversation?

P1: No, I understand and am excited to share my perspectives, and you may record.

R1:   To begin with some background, are you a middle or high school principal, and how many years have you been in your position

P1: I am a middle-high school principal with three years of experience. I was appointed after I finished the program in June.

R: What cohort were you in?

P1: I was in the 2016 cohort. That was the first after the Sups academy

R1: Okay, I have heard a lot about the Sups academy. Let us get started

R1: Did your participation in the Associate Principal Leadership development program prepare you to lead a school?

P1: I felt prepared for my principalships. The modules covered many of the skills I need for my job.

R1: Can you expand? What knowledge and skills did you gain?

P1: I learned that when I go into the position, I need to have a clear understanding of where the school is by looking at the data, get a pulse for the culture by meeting with the stakeholders and then reflect upon what changes should be made to improve student data. The case studies and practice scenarios in training beefed up my skills in those areas.

However, the most beneficial portion of the training was the internship, where I could apply the knowledge gained to a real-world situation.

R: Thank you, I am interviewing you after another participant who stated that they wanted more training in transferring power and creating a 30-day transition plan. Did the program prepare you in those areas?

P1: That is interesting. I never thought about that until you mentioned it. I relied upon colleagues during the time to transfer power, and I never created a 30-day plan. That would have helped make the transition seamless and give me a guide to follow that was organized. I used a notebook and created some things I thought were important. That was a great insight from that person. It has been so long since the first year that I forgot.

R: Have you developed the mission, vision, and core values for your school?

P1: I did develop a mission, vision, and core values for my school. When I arrived in the building, the culture was not supportive of students, and there was a serious gap in the data for my marginalized students. I had to change that quickly, so I worked with my leadership team to create a mission and vision and core values that included our diverse population. Once we introduced this to the staff, there was a series of professional development sessions to ingrain it in the building's culture.

R1: You talked about ingraining the culture into the building. How does that happen

P1: It became part of our daily announcement. I ordered signs for each classroom with the mission vision and values. We had a spirit week that included our values. Our school was dedicated to ensuring that each student was celebrated for displaying the core values daily. Eventually, it was second nature, and I transformed the culture of the building.

R: Thank you. How do you communicate professional norms and ethical practices in the school?

P1: How do you communicate the professional norms and ethical practices in your school? That is an interesting question. You know I am not sure how to communicate these to my staff. Let me think
I guess I just communicate with them during meetings at the beginning of the year, setting my expectations.

R: Did they go over this in the program?

P1: Not really. I just did what I thought was right.

R: Did your staff understand the expectations, and how did you know?

P1: I think the staff just went along with it. I do not have any evidence that they internalized them. They just did them

R: Could the program have done a better job in that area?

P1: Yes, I could use more support in that area now that I think about it.

R: How have you led the implementation of equitable practices in your school?

P1: Equity is always a difficult topic. We receive outside equity training, but I would want more training specific to my staff's needs. As the only minority in the building, equity conversations are tough because my staff thinks, Here we go again.

R: Did the program prepare you to lead equity?

P1: We received other helpful equity training, but I think a refresher course in having courageous conversations and implementing the compass would be helpful. Nevertheless, the program did not talk about equity implementation in detail.

R: How well are you prepared to assess instruction, curriculum implementation, and assessment in your building? Did the program prepare you to assess these items?

P1: Before entering the program, I was adept at assessing instruction, curriculum, and assessment. The program has just brought people from the curriculum offices to talk to use, but I could have used more instructional coaching training. Like, I can see the problems, but how do I fix them.

R: Thank you for your honest answers, and we have a few more to go. Do you need to take a break, and I call you back, or are you OK to continue?

P1: I am OK to continue; this is a welcomed break after being quarantined and trying to open a school remotely.

R1: I can only imagine those challenges. This is my first year, and I do not know what I am doing from day-to-day.

P1: I know, right

R: Did you learn how to foster a community of care in your building for your students?

P1: The program did not discuss building a community of care in the building. I just viewed this as the culture of the school. I wanted an environment where all students are represented. That was my focus, and my team could get on that bus or transfer

R: That seems extreme

P1: I needed to do real work to improve student achievement and did not have time to play

R: How do you foster a professional community for staff and teachers? Did the program provide any training in that area?

P1: I felt that the program did a decent job of providing strategies for building a professional community for staff and teachers, such as developing PLCs, building a schedule that allows for common planning time, and ensure that all team members are on a committee so they can be a part of the solution. I even made the faculty council a committee to resolve any issues quickly in the building. It has been successful.

R: That is excellent news and some great strategies. I will use some as I begin my journey

P1: Any time you need support, just reach out to me

R1: I appreciate that. Thank you.

R: What strategies did you learn to engage families and communities? Did the program provide training in that area?

P1: Engaging families and community are very tricky. That deals with building up the community of support for a student. It depends upon the student. No training was provided in that area, but I could use support to bring in disengaged parents. I know that it is challenging district-wide. Now that we are in Covid, the engagement from parents is wrong and worse than before. They jump into a virtual classroom like this is not a professional space. But let me stop venting and get back to my answer
Engagement is challenging, but I think the best way is to use a survey to see when parents are available and how they want to connect with the school. I would use that data to build my strategies for creating a community of care around my student.

R: Thanks for that. How do you manage the operations of your school?

P1: Finally, an easy question, this is part where you have plenty of support. You just call another office to assist. It would have been helpful to have a contact list in one place. Nevertheless, I navigated that on my own. The program did not have a module about building operations, but they did have various offices present, so we would know where to go.

R: Did you learn how to improve and analyze data? What about ESSA?

P1: We did extensive training on data analysis, but we used only MSA data and MAP data. ESSA was not around at the time. However, the program did an excellent job of emphasizing data analysis. Now that we are in the dawn of ESSA, I would like more information about what goes into that calculation. I could target initiatives to move data and improve student achievement.

R: Thank you for taking the time to speak to me today. I always see your name in the directory, and it great to get to know you a little better and gain some insight into your perspective of the program. Once I transcribe the telephone call, you will receive an email in 5 days to approve that everything I transcribed is accurate. After you review, you may edit and say in the email I approve. As I said initially, this data is confidential and kept under lock and key with an alias.

P1: Thank you, and I look forward to working with you in the future.

R: Yes, I hope our paths cross again. Thank you, and good night.

P1: Good night.

The telephone call ends.