



Closing The Representation Gap: A Series of Papers on Reshaping Educational Leadership For The Future

Invest in Leadership

Five Actions District Leaders Can Take to Increase School Leader Diversity



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Foreword

As K-12 districts continue to face unprecedented turnover, particularly among teachers of color, they're bracing for another crisis created as a direct result: fewer minority candidates for principal and superintendent positions. When teachers of color resign or retire early, they're not just leaving a classroom, they're leaving the leadership pipeline. This means districts will struggle even more to find principals and superintendents of color who reflect our students. That's a significant challenge, given that 78% of U.S. public school principals are white,¹ compared to a national student body that's 54% students of color.²

Yet as this white paper shows, it is possible to build a strong pipeline of diverse leaders, even amid a once-in-a-generation educator shortage.

When I was superintendent in Dallas, we created a team solely focused on boosting our pipeline of minority principals. Because candidates for those positions typically were assistant principals, we soon realized that we needed a team to strengthen that pipeline, too. And where do assistant principals come from? The teaching ranks, of course, which required an even sharper focus on recruiting minority educators.

In other words, the pipeline is a continuum, with each leg dependent on another.

As the following pages show, increasing diversity among school leaders requires careful planning, patience, transparency and a commitment to professional development. Districts that prioritize diverse talent pipelines see the greatest return on investment. I'm proud to say that in three decades as a district leader, 44 people (including 17 women) who worked with me became superintendents, and about 75% of them are people of color.

This step-by-step guide is a must-read for districts eager to fill their leadership ranks with people who reflect the diversity of their communities. With these action items, our K-12 districts can begin the work of preparing aspiring leaders of color for their next role in education.



*During his 43 years in public education, **Michael Hinojosa** served as superintendent of six K-12 systems, including Dallas Independent School District. He is superintendent-in-residence for the Council of Great City Schools and chief impact officer for engage2learn.*

1. National Center for Education Statistics. (2019, August). National Teacher and Principal Survey, US Department of Education. <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ntps/summary/2019141.asp>
2. National Center for Education Statistics. (2022, May). Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cge>

The Time to Diversify School Leadership Is Now

“ Districts that prioritize diverse talent pipelines see the greatest return on investment. ”

—Dr. Michael Hinojosa,
Superintendent-in-Residence, Council of Great City Schools

Research³ reveals better school and student outcomes, especially for teachers and children of color, when a principal of color is at the helm. Here’s why. Leaders of color hold higher expectations. They provide more rigorous academic opportunities for students of color.⁴ They foster school environments that are more supportive and sustainable for teachers of color.⁵ As a result, leaders of color accelerate student achievement for students of color, and critically, for all students.⁶

One way to improve the educational experiences of schoolchildren across the country is to increase their access to leaders of color—and strengthen the caliber of teaching and leading in our nation’s schools. Yet, despite the fact that diversity among our nation’s students is growing,⁷ diversity among teachers,⁸ principals,⁹ and district leaders¹⁰ continues to lag. This is known as the representation gap.



Strategic investments are needed to develop the next generation of school leaders who better reflect the communities they serve. A recent survey of district leaders conducted by New Leaders suggests a disconnect between intention and actions taken to advance diversity. The majority of respondents state that their district is committed to improving the diversity of its leaders, but an almost equal number report that there is no clear leadership path for educators of color within their district.

Building a diverse pipeline of school leaders who are well prepared and supported enables districts to retain the kind of talent that ensures all students thrive. Here are five actions you can take to shape the future of educational leadership in your district.

3. Grissom, J., Egalite, A., and Lindsay, C. (2021, February). How Principals Affect Students and Schools: A Systematic Synthesis of Two Decades of Research. Wallace Foundation. <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/how-principals-affect-students-and-schools-a-systematic-synthesis-of-two-decades-of-research.aspx>

4. Grissom, J., Rodriguez, L., and Kern, E. (2017). Teacher and Principal Diversity and the Representation of Students of Color in Gifted Programs: Evidence from National Data. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1086/690274>.

5. Grissom, J. and Keiser, L. (2011). A supervisor like me: Race, representation, and the satisfaction and turnover decisions of public sector employees. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1002/pam.20579>.

6. Cain Miller, C. (2018). “Does Teacher Diversity Matter in Student Learning?” The New York Times. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/10/upshot/teacher-diversity-effect-students-learning.html>.

7. National Center for Education Statistics. (2022, May). Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools. <https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cge>

8. Pew Research Center. (2021, December). America’s public school teachers are far less racially and ethnically diverse than their students. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/12/10>

9. National Center for Education Statistics. (2019, August). National Teacher and Principal Survey, US Department of Education. <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ntps/summary/2019141.asp>

10. American Association of School Administrators. (2021, April). American Superintendent 2020 Decennial Survey Now Available. <https://www.aasa.org/content.aspx?id=45539>





How to Build and Sustain a Diverse Principal Pipeline

Action 1 | Create leadership pathways for career mobility

Investing in high-quality leadership development and principal preparation is an integral part of building a diverse bench of talent that is well-prepared to move into—and stay in—the principal role. Here's how.

Ensure your aspiring leaders are job-ready. Inadequate preparation for the position is one of the top reasons principals exit the field.¹¹ The principal role, which has historically been largely focused on school operations and management,¹² is now focused on an urgent need to accelerate student learning, restore well-being, and attract and retain high-quality teachers. Today, researchers point to the varied kinds of leadership that successful principals leverage, from instructional leadership to adaptive, equity-focused to resilient, technical to talent management. Districts who recognize the demands of the role are more likely to attract, prepare, and support aspiring leaders and promote stability in the principalship over time, which can be a key indicator for sustained school improvement.

11. Levine, S. and Bradley, K. (n.d.) Understanding and Addressing Principal Turnover: A Review of the Research. National Association of Secondary School Principals and Learning Policy Institute. https://www.nassp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/nassp_edit06-WEB-1.pdf

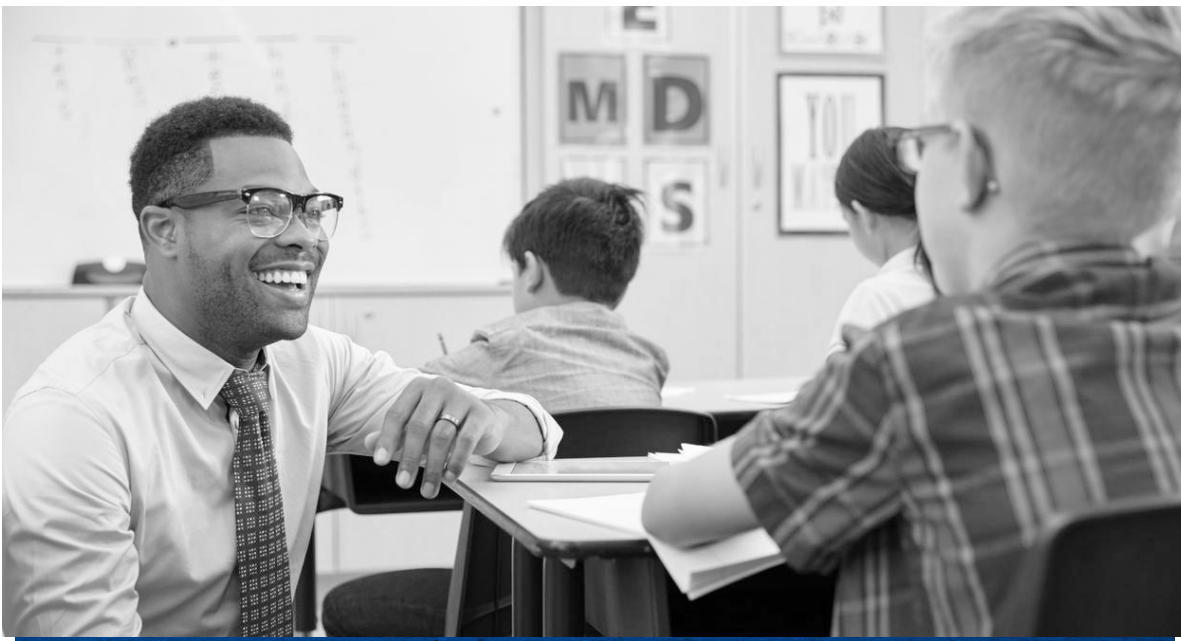
12. Desravines, J., Aquino, J., & Fenton, B. (2016). Breakthrough Principals. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



Establish partnerships with providers that demonstrate a commitment to and strong track record of preparing diverse cohorts of educators and leaders.

For many districts, the most strategic way to offer career mobility for teachers and aspiring principals is through building external partnerships. These partners often include institutes of higher education, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs), and national leadership development providers. To ensure success, partners need to demonstrate evidence of effectiveness and a commitment to supporting diversity. When looking for partners, be sure that the programming includes components identified by leaders of color as being critical to their success as principals, including change management and an exploration of leadership and identity. Further, make sure that your institutional or nonprofit partner prepares all aspiring principals to be equity-focused leaders who create positive and inclusive cultures for staff, families, and students.

*Baltimore City Public Schools is committed to investing in its leaders. To address issues of turnover, City Schools identified aspiring leaders—teachers, instructional coaches, assistant principals—as critical leaders to retain and develop. Through our partnership, New Leaders provides Baltimore educators with **professional learning support** to build their leadership capacity, develop highly impactful teams, and coach teachers effectively—all in preparation for future principal roles. To date, close to one third of all principals in the district have been trained by New Leaders, many of whom now serve as principal supervisors. “New Leaders does a great job teaching our participants how to be instructional leaders,” notes Tracee Frazier, Director, Educator Pipelines & Induction at City Schools. “Our partnership is critical for our pipeline.”*



Launch district-run Grow-Your-Own (GYO) programs.

Some districts prefer to develop and implement alternative district-run preparation programs, known as Grow Your Own (GYO) programs, for teachers and aspiring leaders. Research on the effectiveness of GYO programs is limited,¹³ but researchers point to six key elements for successful principal preparation programs.¹⁴ These elements include: a rigorous selection process; cohort-based learning; curricula that reflect real-world practice; an in-depth clinical experience (e.g., yearlong internship or residency); access to mentors or coaches during the training; and learning opportunities that address common school challenges. Like external partnerships, GYO programs need to incorporate content identified by leaders of color as critical for their success.

Remove financial barriers for advancement via public-private partnerships.

Careers in education continue to fall in earning potential.¹⁵ The often prohibitive cost of certification and licensure exams can dissuade people of color from pursuing traditional preparation programs as they often lead to burdensome debt. Some districts partner with nonprofits to provide financial planning support. Others prioritize equitable access to training programs and build partnerships with local philanthropies who can sponsor cohorts or provide scholarships to district-approved programs. Strategic investments that remove financial barriers to high-quality principal preparation not only help districts to increase school leader diversity, they champion more rigorous preparation for the role. Research suggests that better-prepared principals are less stressed and more likely to stay in the role, even in high-need schools.¹⁶



*The mission of Chamberlin Education Foundation (CEF) is to support educators and community partners to advance education equity and academic excellence for students in West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD). In alignment with the WCCUSD strategic plan, CEF prioritizes equity-focused school leadership and is prepared to provide scholarship assistance to aspiring principals in WCCUSD to participate in our **National Aspiring Principals Fellowship**. These private-public partnerships simultaneously remove financial barriers and provide more equitable access to high-quality principal preparation programs. “We believe strong school leadership is instrumental to achieving our goals, particularly for Black, Latinx, and other historically under-resourced student populations,” explains Caroline Damon, Vice President, Academics. “We are thrilled to support the development of aspiring principals.”*

13. Joseph, S. (2009). Planning to Grow Your Own Principal Preparation Programs: Cultivating Excellence in Tough Economic Times. Educational Planning. https://isep.info/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/18-2_4PlanningtoGrowPrincipal.pdf

14. Superville, D. (2022, June). Principal Prep and PD: What Works and What is Being Left Out. Education Week. <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/principal-prep-and-pd-what-works-and-whats-being-left-out/2022/06>

15. Freedberg, L. (2019, May). Wage gap between teachers and other college graduates exacerbates teacher shortages. EdSource. <https://edsources.org/2019/wage-gap-between-teachers-and-other-college-graduates-exacerbates-teacher-shortages/611728>

16. Levine, S. and Bradley, K. (n.d.) Understanding and Addressing Principal Turnover: A Review of the Research. National Association of Secondary School Principals and Learning Policy Institute. https://www.nassp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/nassp_edit06-WEB-1.pdf

Action 2 | Examine and advance more equitable promotion practices

Tapping into the existing talent in your schools is another strategy for increasing diversity and retaining effective leaders. Here are ways districts can do so equitably.

Identify and remove barriers to advancement for educators of color. Researchers¹⁷ have found that promotions for teachers and leaders of color are less likely, and when they do happen, they take longer. Specifically, white teachers with administrative certificates were more than 1.5 times as likely to become principals than teachers of color with the same certification. And, male teachers of any race were more likely to become principals than women. To identify and remove barriers to advancement, districts need to conduct equity audits and analyze data by race and gender.¹⁸ They can also track participants in professional development opportunities to ensure there is equitable access and representation.

Support assistant principals of color to strengthen leadership pipelines. A natural stepping stone into the principal role, assistant principals play a key role in talent pipelines. Research reveals that assistant principals are more likely to be people of color¹⁹ and more likely to be sidelined into addressing only disciplinary issues.²⁰ As a result, they miss out on daily opportunities to engage in leadership practices needed to be an effective principal, including building teams, advancing rigorous instruction, and coaching teachers. Districts that are committed to equitable promotion practices must ensure assistant principals of color have the same opportunity as their peers to advance to the next level.²¹ This can be done through professional development on instructional leadership. Research shows that doing so has led to student gains.²² District guidance to principals on mentoring assistant principals of color and equitably delegating responsibilities is also key.²³



New Leaders Survey Results *Trends from District Leader Survey*

In the summer of 2022, New Leaders deployed a survey to district leaders to better understand the state of leadership diversity in our public school system.

Over 100 leaders from across the country responded. Here is what we learned.

There is a perceived representation gap between district leaders and the students they serve. Less than half of all survey respondents indicate that their district leadership reflects the diversity of their student population.

District leaders are dedicated to making progress. The majority of respondents state that their district is committed to improving the diversity of its leaders.

There is a perceived need for leadership opportunities and pathways, especially for aspiring leaders of color. Only half of survey respondents indicate there is a clear leadership pathway for educators within their district. Only one-third told us there are leadership pathways specifically for people of color.

Districts need support with developing effective strategies to increase diversity in school leadership. Nearly two thirds of respondents indicate their district does not know how to build a diverse pipeline of leadership.

17. Sparks, S. (2017, March). Steeper Paths From Teacher to Principal for Women, Minorities, Study Says. EdWeek.

<https://www.edweek.org/leadership/steeper-paths-from-teacher-to-principal-for-women-minorities-study-says/2017/03>

18. Goldring, E., Rubin, M., and Herrmann, M. (2021, April). The Role of Assistant Principals: Evidence and Insights for Advancing School Leadership. Wallace Foundation. <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/the-role-of-assistant-principals-evidence-insights-for-advancing-school-leadership.aspx>

19. Ibid.

20. Riddell, R. (2022, February). Diversifying, expanding the assistant principalship key to repairing leadership pipelines. K-12 Dive. <https://www.k12dive.com/news/diversifying-expanding-the-assistant-principalship-key-to-repairing-leader/619096>

21. Superville, D. (2021, December). Principals of Color Are Scarce. Here's What Districts Are Doing About It. EdWeek. <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/principals-of-color-are-scarce-heres-what-districts-are-doing-about-it/2021/12>

22. Master, B., Steiner, E., Doss, C., and Acheson-Field, H. (2020). How Can Assistant Principals Be Trained as Instructional Leaders? Insights from the PLUS Program. RAND Corporation. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_briefs/RBA255-1.html

23. Ibid.



Action 3 | Foster conditions that reduce turnover and retain school leaders of color

Intense workloads and compliance requirements along with shifting demands, charged political climates, and staff shortages are top reasons principals cite for leaving.²⁴ Principal turnover is disruptive to student achievement, teacher retention, and school improvement efforts. But it does not have to be the reality.

Provide access to tailored support via mentorship and job-embedded coaching. National trends suggest principals of color are frequently assigned to the most challenging schools and often the first leader of color in a school or district. As a result, they face unique challenges. Studies²⁵ show that having a mentor, particularly a mentor of color, is an important predictor of sustained success. Coaching also offers job-embedded support, providing on-time guidance for novice and experienced principals and improving retention and advancement.²⁶ Too often, professional development happens outside of schools, making it less applicable. A skilled coach helps school leaders overcome obstacles and chart a way forward specific to their school context—then holds them accountable for results. Look for coaches that push past compliance and challenge your principals to drive toward solutions.

Establish intentional networks of support for leaders of color. The hallmark of a resilient leader is persistence. Establishing communities of practice, affinity groups, and opportunities to network with other school leaders, particularly leaders of color, cultivates this kind of resolve. These systems of support create safe spaces to discuss challenges, collaboratively problem solve, gain insights from peers, and celebrate successes. Districts that invest in intentional programming to support these networks demonstrate their commitment to diversity. Having a strong support system prevents the isolation that often leads to burnout.



24. NASSP Survey Signals a Looming Mass Exodus of Principals from Schools. (2021, December). NASSP. <https://www.nassp.org/news/nassp-survey-signals-a-looming-mass-exodus-of-principals-from-schools>

25. Carver-Thomas, D. (2018, April). Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color. Learning Policy Institute. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/diversifying-teaching-profession-report>

26. Empowering Principals: Building Instructional Leadership Skills through Coaching. (2020, November). National Institute for Excellence in Teaching.

<https://www.niet.org/newsroom/show/feature/empowering-principals-building-leadership-skills-through-coaching>

Create systems that advance autonomy and data-driven decision making. Purposefully listening to school leaders can advance principal satisfaction along with a sense of efficacy in the role. Effective district leaders establish dedicated bi/weekly meetings and ask their principals the same series of questions: What is most important right now? What is working (based on data)? What is not working and can be stopped? The benefits of doing so are twofold. First, principals gain greater control and fluency with data-driven decision-making that addresses the needs of their schools.²⁷ And, second, district leaders gain first-hand insight into the areas of professional development principals need most. School leaders cite autonomy and access to professional learning as key reasons they choose to stay in the field.²⁸

Provide professional development to implement distributed leadership models. Many districts are prioritizing distributed leadership models as ways to advance student achievement and principal retention. Distributed leadership is a shared approach to leadership in which decision-making is spread from the principal to the school community. Instructional leadership teams (ILTs), teacher teams, and data/inquiry teams are all types of distributed leadership that engage the school community in finding solutions—and not just the principal working alone. This reduces principal isolation and improves working conditions. Teachers in schools with distributed leadership models also report higher levels of job satisfaction.²⁹ Professional learning that supports the creation of strong teams enables teachers, particularly teachers of color, to step into more leadership and equips principals with the skills they need to lead effectively.

Action 4 | Implement more transparent and equitable recruitment and hiring practices

Take the following steps to ensure that educators and leaders of color feel truly welcomed in the district and that district and school hiring processes are free from bias.

Engage with community stakeholders to advance recruitment efforts. From the earliest touchpoint, districts need to be intentional in how they demonstrate that workforce diversity is a priority. Some districts establish regular roundtables to engage with teachers and leaders of color as well as the broader community.³⁰ Others host focus groups and utilize surveys. Many districts are adding diversity hiring specialists to their human resources team to drive recruitment efforts, including serving as ambassadors to local HBCUs, HSIs, and MSIs and recruiting directly from their education programs. Working with churches and advocacy groups add additional avenues to share job openings and gain insights on how best to work in and support the community. Potential candidates are more likely to consider a career with a district when they perceive there is a welcome place for them.



27. Donley, J., et al. (2020). Principal Retention Overview. The Wing Institute. <https://www.winginstitute.org/quality-leadership-principal-retention>.

28. Levine, S. and Bradley, K. (n.d.) Understanding and Addressing Principal Turnover: A Review of the Research. National Association of Secondary School Principals and Learning Policy Institute. https://www.nassp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/nassp_edit06-WEB-1.pdf

29. Torres, D. (2019, March). Distributed leadership, professional collaboration, and teachers' job satisfaction in U.S. schools. Teaching and Teacher Education. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0742051X17314932>

30. Superville, D. (2021, December). Principals of Color Are Scarce. Here's What Districts Are Doing About It. EdWeek <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/principals-of-color-are-scarce-heres-what-districts-are-doing-about-it/2021/12>



Provide training to hiring teams on best practices and reduce bias in hiring decisions.

To increase equitable representation, districts must provide training to their hiring teams on how to build diverse candidate pools and reverse biased trends. One such hiring trend is that teachers of color, especially males, are far more likely to be selected for roles primarily focused on discipline and family outreach over school leadership.³¹ Using a “blind” resume review and structured interviews can mitigate against these biases. In a blind resume review, demographic information or identifying characteristics, such as name, graduation date, gender, are removed so only the qualifications remain. In a structured interview, candidates are asked the same set of standardized questions without deviation. Detailed job descriptions add further clarity on expected qualifications and experiences. Equally beneficial is to incorporate teachers and leaders of color in the hiring process in meaningful ways.³²

Establish a leader tracking system to support district diversity goals.

“Leader tracking systems”³³ have also been found to positively impact hiring practices. These digital databases collect relevant candidate information regarding qualifications, training, and performance evaluations. By using them, districts are able to filter potential qualified candidates for open positions in a more objective, effective, and efficient way. According to a recent research study, these systems enabled district leaders to “unearth strong candidates who otherwise might not have been on hiring radar screens, to more easily make good matches between school needs and job candidates and to remove some bias from hiring decisions.”³⁴



*Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District is committed to building more equitable representation by prioritizing teacher leadership development as a stepping stone to the principalship. Through our partnership, New Leaders supported district leaders in launching a performance management system and examining district recruitment and hiring practices through an equity lens. Our **executive leadership coach** supports district leaders in identifying ways to avoid national trends in which candidates of color are limited to roles that do not have a pathway into school leadership. “There are not enough people in the country who want to be principals or are prepared to be principals,” notes superintendent Elizabeth Kirby. “We want to identify the right talent to fill these roles.”*

31. Insights into the Black Male Educator Experience. Donorschoose. <https://www.donorschoose.org/black-male-educator-insights>

32. Carver-Thomas, D. (2018, April). Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color. Learning Policy Institute. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/diversifying-teaching-profession-report>

33. Anderson, L., Turnbull, B., and Arcaira, E. (2017). Leader Tracking Systems: Turning Data Into Information for School Leadership. Wallace Foundation.

<https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/leader-tracking-systems-turning-data-into-information-for-school-leadership.aspx>

34. Ibid.



Action 5 | Truly prioritize and measure school leader diversity

Closing the representation gap and creating more equitable opportunities for educators of color to grow as leaders and advance in their careers requires commitment and resolve at every level.

Establish school leader diversity as a district priority through public communications. Intentionally communicating workforce diversity as a priority ultimately improves the implementation, accountability, and sustainability of these efforts. In the initial announcement, include data showcasing the need, high-level goals, timelines, and a preview of specific strategies the district will employ in the months and years ahead to make meaningful progress on stated goals. With this formal plan in place, districts are better able to designate funds or secure grants to advance their goals.³⁵ By reinforcing this priority via consistent communication and engagement with school system staff, stakeholders, and the public, districts can cultivate greater alignment both within the district and with the broader community.

Conduct an audit and regular reviews of school leader diversity data. Collecting data and measuring results is critical. An equity audit will ascertain the current state of affairs and inform a district's vision for addressing gaps. Once the data is available, be sure the board schedule includes time for periodic updates from district leaders and staff as well as for public input on strategies and progress. Consistent and ongoing review and data analysis enables district leaders to adjust course as needed and build more equitable representation to the benefit of all students.

35. Superville, D. (2021, December). Principals of Color Are Scarce. Here's What Districts Are Doing About It. EdWeek. <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/principals-of-color-are-scarce-heres-what-districts-are-doing-about-it/2021/12>





How to Invest In and Keep the Best Teachers and Leaders

*Reflections from Dr. Melissa Kim,
New Leaders alum and Deputy Chancellor for District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)*

“Being on the cusp of meaningful change and having your values amplified by your district,” observes Dr. Kim, “is a great motivator to stay.”

As Deputy Chancellor, Dr. Kim and her team drive instruction and equity work in all 116 DCPS schools. It’s not something she ever imagined as an English language learner in schools where her culture and accent were not accepted. That pattern of exclusion based on identity is not one she wants repeated in schools.

“This is where leadership really matters. We have to cultivate and bring on people who have a different purpose for why we do this work. It’s more than just closing the achievement gap. It’s about students becoming whole, being ready to engage in and take on the world right now.”

Every day, Dr. Kim engages with a diversity of stakeholders to figure out solutions. This kind of adaptive leadership requires leaders to

listen intently and pull more people into the process, particularly the teachers who don’t typically get tapped. All these varied perspectives enable Dr. Kim and her team to think outside the box and champion a more inclusive mission.

“I definitely lose many nights of sleep worrying about not having enough people to do the work, but I also know that it is incredibly motivating to be a part of something worthy and full of purpose.”

Create the Change You Want to See

The barriers to people of color in education begin as students. They are heightened by inequitable access to high-quality professional training and continue to impact the duration and height of their careers. This does not have to be. Strategic investments in diversifying school leadership, coupled with clear pathways for career advancement and inclusive district and school cultures, can help to reshape educational leadership for the future and improve the educational experience of schoolchildren across the nation. With intentional actions, district leaders can build diverse principal pipelines so all students see and benefit from more equitable representation.



Our thanks and appreciation to the Barr Foundation, Clark Atlanta University, Morehouse College, and Spelman College with whom we are collaborating on school leader diversity research to be released in fall 2022. That research inspired this series of papers which include quotes from alumni across these institutions.

Bring the National Aspiring Principals Fellowship to Your District

A first-of-its-kind online principal certification and master's degree program designed to train the next generation of equity-focused school leaders who better reflect the students they serve.

The National Aspiring Principals Fellowship is an online principal certification and master's degree program designed by New Leaders in partnership with two preeminent Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)—Morehouse College and Clark Atlanta University.

The Fellowship integrates the 20-year research and evidence base of New Leaders nationally renowned principal preparation program with the equity-centered conceptual frameworks of Morehouse and Clark Atlanta University. The result is a transformative online experience that prepares diverse cohorts of aspiring principals to lead schools and deliver exceptional results for their students and school communities.

Results You Can Count On

The leaders we develop drive quantifiable outcomes in learning, teaching, and equity and get results where it matters most: in schools, for students. According to the RAND Corporation, New Leaders has the strongest evidence base of any education leadership program in the country.

Multiple independent evaluations have proven that in schools led by a New Leaders principal:



Students perform better in reading and math



Students gain additional months of learning



Students have better attendance rates



Principals themselves stay in their roles longer

Why Bring the Fellowship to Your District?

Build a robust pipeline of equity-focused principal candidates

Increase principal retention and decrease costs required to train and replace principals

Increase teacher retention by supporting career advancement

Advance greater equity in schools by systematically addressing the absence of leaders of color

Improve learning outcomes for ALL students by providing them with equity-focused school leaders trained to ensure every child in every school has a pathway to success

The Fellowship develops the next generation of equity-focused school leaders who better reflect the students they serve. Build more equitable representation in your district today.

[Explore The Fellowship](#)

www.fellowship.newleaders.org





Invest In Your School Leaders Today

The need for resilient leadership has never been greater. New Leaders brings two decades of experience providing best-in-class leadership training—for teacher leaders, principals, and their supervisors—to accelerate learning for every student in every classroom, every year.

[Discover Our Leadership Programs](#)

www.newleaders.org/who-we-serve/district-leaders

Get started today: Connect with our Partner Engagement Team at partnerships@newleaders.org

About New Leaders

New Leaders builds the capacity of equity-minded school leaders who are committed to the success of every child. Our leaders remove barriers to success for underestimated and underserved students, supporting students in fully realizing their futures as the next generation of great thinkers, innovators, and leaders for our society.

In 20 years, we have trained more than 8,000 equity-focused leaders—sixty percent of whom identify as leaders of color. Our leaders impact more than 2 million students in our K-12 school system annually and serve as powerful and positive forces for change in their communities.