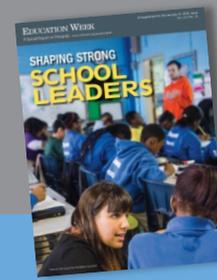


EDUCATION WEEK



SHAPING STRONG
**SCHOOL
LEADERS**

www.edweek.org/go/principals

LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

SHAPING STRONG SCHOOL LEADERS



by Denisa R. Superville
Staff writer, *Education Week*

Some Takeaways From Recent Research

- ◆ 50 % of principals leave their schools after 3 years
- ◆ Districts spend about \$75,000 to train and prepare principals for the job
- ◆ Principal “churn” costs school districts about \$163 million annually
- ◆ Principals who are not given professional development are 1.4 times more likely to leave. (*Churn: The High Cost of Principal Turnover*)
- ◆ Aspiring leaders receive inadequate coaching and training on key skills. (*Building Pathways to School Leadership*)
- ◆ **What Districts can do:**
 - ◆ Align goals, strategies, structures and resources in the district to support principals
 - ◆ Foster a culture of collective responsibility, balanced autonomy and continuous learning and improvement
 - ◆ Implement systems and policies to allow principals to effectively manage talent in their buildings. (*Building Principals at Scale*)

“Shaping Strong School Leaders”

How Districts Are Responding to Research

- ◆ Building a [principal pipeline](#)—from start to finish
 - ◆ Strategic focus by some districts, including Hillsborough County, Fla., and Denver, on growing principals from within
 - ◆ Creating leadership opportunities for aspiring principals, including teachers. In Denver, 1 in 5 teachers serves in a leadership role. 80 % of principals come from within the system
 - ◆ Partnering with local universities to develop tailored principal preparation programs
 - ◆ Mapping potential principal vacancies
 - ◆ Matching aspiring principals’ skills and backgrounds with schools’ needs
 - ◆ Providing continuous professional development, coaching and mentoring for principals
- ◆ A focus on [aspiring principals](#)
 - ◆ A more thoughtful approach to preparing aspiring principals for the job and matching aspiring principals’ skills with the district’s needs
 - ◆ Expanding aspiring principals’ responsibilities
 - ◆ Preparing assistant principals for actual challenges that they will face as principals

“Shaping Strong School Leaders”

How Districts Are Responding to Research

- ◆ Creating robust [professional development](#) and continuous learning opportunities
 - ◆ Must be job-embedded
 - ◆ Conducted over an extended period
 - ◆ Promote distributive leadership
 - ◆ Use a cohort model

- ◆ Rethinking the role of [principal supervisors](#):
 - ◆ Provide training and professional development for the supervisors
 - ◆ Develop standards for supervisors
 - ◆ Reduce the number of principals they oversee
 - ◆ Shift the focus from compliance to support

- ◆ Distributing leadership
 - ◆ E.g. [Teacher-leadership](#)
 - ◆ Central office reorganization

Recent Research

- ◆ **The Wallace Foundation:** [Reports on School Leadership](#)
- ◆ **Bain & Company:**
[Building Pathways: How to Develop the next generation of transformational school leaders](#)
- ◆ **The Thomas B. Fordham Institute:**
[Lacking Leaders: The Challenges of Principal Recruitment, Selection, and Placement](#)
- ◆ **The George W. Bush Institute and New Leaders:**
[Great Principals At Scale: Creating District Conditions that Enable All Principals to be Effective](#)
- ◆ **Center for American Progress:**
[The Changing Role of the Principal: How High-Achieving Districts Are Recalibrating School Leadership](#)
- ◆ **Center on Reinventing Public Education:**
[Policy Barriers to School Improvement: What's Real and What's Imagined?](#)
- ◆ **The School Leaders Network:** [CHURN: The High Cost of Principal Turnover](#)

A Few Resources

- ◆ [The Wallace Foundation](#)
- ◆ [New Leaders](#)
- ◆ [National Association of Elementary School Principals](#)
- ◆ [National Association of Secondary School Principals](#)
- ◆ [Center for Educational Leadership, University of Washington](#)

Story Ideas

- ◆ **New principals**
- ◆ **Professional development: How local districts are spending Title II funds and supporting principals at various stages in their careers.**
- ◆ **The diversity of the principal corps**
- ◆ **District partnerships with universities and non-profits**
- ◆ **District and charter principal training and exchange programs**
- ◆ **Principal preparation programs: Are they preparing principals for today's job?**