**Develop an Aspiring Leader Program**

**Step 1:** Use research and the Leadership Framework to identify skills and knowledge that you want the program to include

**Step 2:** Identify current aspiring leaders’ professional learning and crosswalk with desired skills and knowledge

**Step 3:** Adapt current experiences and develop new experiences based on the skills and knowledge you want aspiring leaders to have

**Step 4:** Set up the infrastructure and implement feedback process

***What is the goal?***

The goal of an aspiring leader program is to intentionally supply the bench with well-trained, qualified aspiring leaders who have been calibrated on district needs and values.

***Why is it important?***

District data illustrates the need for a robust bench of future leaders:

* Roughly 10% of principals are in their first year on the job. One-third are in their first 3 years.
* Some Assistant Principals with lower TEAM practice ratings are promoted to the principalship.
* Principals hired into high-poverty schools are more qualified in terms of years as a principal and years as an AP. They are rated less well during their first year in the school, however.
* Prior years of experience does not predict TEAM ratings for first year principals, but prior TEAM ratings do.

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| Steps | Guiding Questions | Resources |
| 1. Use research and the Leadership Framework to identify skills and knowledge that you want the program to include | * What are the most critical knowledge, skills, and experiences for individuals to have before being seated as a principal? * What responsibilities and functions have newly hired principals needed the most support around? * What types of preparatory experiences do we need for aspiring leaders? | Wallace Foundation’s [*“The Making of a Principal”*](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/the-making-of-the-principal-five-lessons-in-leadership-training.aspx)  Hillsborough County’s [Future Leaders Academy](https://www.sdhc.k12.fl.us/docs/00/00/06/01/Hillsborough_Principal_Pipeline_1Future_Leaders_FINAL.pdf) |
| 1. Identify current aspiring leaders’ professional learning and crosswalk with desired skills and knowledge | * What professional learning do we currently provide to prepare aspiring leaders? * Are there prioritized skills, knowledge, and experiences for which we do not have a formal preparation opportunity? * What current experiences for aspiring leaders are most effective? * What current experiences are not yielding the results we need? | MNPS Leadership Framework |
| 1. Adapt current experiences and develop new experiences based on the skills and knowledge you want aspiring leaders to have | * What is missing from our current offerings for aspiring leaders? * What is the optimal structure and process for aspiring leaders to gain skills and knowledge? * How can newly-placed and/or veteran leaders help us design these experiences? | RAND and the Wallace Foundation’s [*Principal Pipelines*](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Principal-Pipelines-A-Feasible-Affordable-and-Effective-Way-for-Districts-to-Improve-Schools.pdf) |
| 1. Set up the infrastructure and implement feedback process | * Who will manage the program? * How will changes be made to the program? * How will feedback be gathered about the effectiveness of the program? * How will we track participants, effectiveness, trajectories, and success? * How will we incorporate feedback to support content improvement? | [Wallace Foundation’s *“Quality Measures”* toolkit](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/quality-measures-principal-preparation-program-assessment.aspx) |

**Things to Consider:**

Leadership Data System, Align All Professional Learning to Framework and Succession Planning

support and strengthen the implementation of this strategy. Find the one-pagers for these strategies on the [Explore](https://nashvillepef.org/principal-quality-explore/) page.

University Principal Preparation Programs play an integral role in improving a district’s principal pipeline. Additional information from the Wallace Foundation on strengthening these partnerships can be found [here](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Improving-University-Principal-Preparation-Programs.pdf).

Despite improvements in preparation for new leadership talent, it may take a while—several years even—for districts to see results from these efforts, as positions for aspiring leaders may not be readily available at the same rate as aspiring leaders become ready for them. Be sure to design opportunities for aspiring leaders waiting in the pipeline to continue to develop their capacity and retain them in the district.

**Metrics of Success:**

1. Increased effectiveness of first-year principals
2. Sufficient supply of prepared candidates for each vacancy