**Develop approach for support of early career principals**

**Step 1:** Articulate the needs of early career principals

**Step 2:** Develop curriculum for a new principal cohort learning experience

**Step 3:** Assign mentors to all new principals and design the mentor experience

**Step 4:** Implement feedback processes to adapt supports

***What is the goal?***

The goal of developing an approach for support of early career principals is to ensure onboarding, professional learning, mentorship, and other programs meet the specific needs of new school leaders.

***Why is it important?***

District data illustrates opportunities for improvement:

* One-third of MNPS principals are in their first three years of serving and 11% are in their first year
* Early career principals in their first three years tend to be less effective than experienced principals
* High-poverty schools have a higher proportion of first year principals (13%) compared to low-poverty schools (9%)
* Early career principals in MNPS tend to struggle with some predictable things: family involvement, developing teacher leaders, data analysis, and supporting and retaining teachers

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| Steps | Guiding Questions | Resources |
| 1. Articulate the needs of early career principals | * What are the biggest challenges for early-career principals? * What is different about the principalship in the first few years? * Are there principals hired within the past five years who can help articulate the needs of new principals? * How are AP’s trained to transition to the principal role? | Wallace Foundation’s [*“Learning From Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning”*](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/investigating-the-links-to-improved-student-learning.aspx) |
| 1. Develop curriculum for a new principal cohort learning experience | * What is the best way to deliver information to new principals? * How should a curriculum be sequenced? * Who will deliver training and what is its frequency? * What is currently working and what is not? | Wallace Foundation’s [*The Making of the Principal*](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/The-Making-of-the-Principal-Five-Lessons-in-Leadership-Training.pdf)  Learning Policy Institute’s [*Supporting Principals’ Learning*](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Supporting_Principals_Learning_REPORT.pdf) |
| 1. Assign mentors to all new principals and design the mentor experience | * What experience, skills, and characteristics make for a great mentor? * How should mentors be selected? * How should mentors be recognized and/or compensated for their role? * How should mentors and mentees be matched? | [Wallace Foundation podcast on supporting early career principals](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/episode-4-mentors-support-novice-principals-on-the-job.aspx)  [Wallace Foundation’s *“Getting Principal Mentorship Right”*](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/Getting-Principal-Mentoring-Right.pdf) |
| 1. Implement feedback processes to adapt supports | * How should we gather feedback from early career principals about the supports we are providing? * How should we gather feedback from mentors? * How should mentors and early-career principals be involved in adapting the program for future leaders? | [Wallace Foundation’s *“Quality Matters”* toolkit](https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/quality-measures-principal-preparation-program-assessment.aspx) |

**Things to Consider:**

Develop professional supports that will be applicable to and anticipate the needs of as many early career principals as possible, knowing that there will be unavoidable limitations. Provide supplemental support through a personalized network of support that includes mentors, coaches, supervisors, and others that foster a culture of continuous growth.

Ensure that each network of support is well-implemented by:

1. Setting expectations and clearly defining roles
2. Thoughtfully selecting and matching principals and mentors/coaches
3. Creating and protecting time for principals and coaches to meet

**Metrics of Success:**

1. Improved effectiveness of early career principals
2. Increased retention of early career principals