

***Leadership Development System
for
District, School and Teacher Leaders***

East Baton Rouge Parish School District

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**East Baton Rouge Public School System (EBRPSS)
Leadership Development Charter Team**

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Executive Summary

Leadership makes a difference. Successful school systems depend on leaders who hold a vision for the future, motivate people to work together to achieve the vision, manage daily operations, use data to monitor progress, build positive relationships between employees and customers, keep learning and improving, and act honestly and ethically. East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) is no exception. EBRPSS needs leaders who can make a difference for students, teachers, and their community.

Leaders are in demand. The supply of district, school, and teacher leaders is low, and the competition for leaders is high. Nowhere is this more the case than in EBRPSS. It is estimated that 70 of the current 91 principals in EBRPSS (77 percent) have 20 or more years of experience and could retire tomorrow; 30 principals (33 percent) have 30 or more years of experience. The situation in EBRPSS is not unique. Neighboring school systems and school systems across the country are scrambling to compete for a small pool of qualified leaders. Studies have reported declines in the quantity and quality of applicants for principal positions. Inadequate compensation, too much time required to do the job, and too much stress are among the reasons cited for the declines.

School systems are not the only organizations worrying about sustaining an adequate supply of potential leaders. In the private sector, forward-thinking organizations are thoughtful and deliberate in building a pool of quality candidates to ensure success in producing an adequate supply of leaders. Strong organizations create the conditions to attract, grow, and sustain leaders. Creating conditions for success is not a simple task. Organizations must look at themselves to determine the opportunities to develop leaders and the obstacles that keep potential leaders away. Attracting and retaining leaders requires a system that begins with clear expectations for leaders and addresses how they work, how they are helped to learn new approaches, how they are held accountable, and how they are rewarded. There are examples of leadership development systems in large corporations. It is our experience that few school districts have such systems.

EBRPSS has set out on a journey to create an exemplary leadership development system. In September 2006, the EBRPSS superintendent convened a team that included participants from multiple levels within the system and partners from the East Baton Rouge community. The team met monthly, led by the superintendent with support of the chief academic officer and facilitated by a national consultant with expertise in leadership development and the EBRPSS director of professional development. Through dialogue and discussion, the team selected a leadership development system for district, school, and teacher leaders. Each of the three levels — district, school, and teachers leaders — has different expectations and needs for support. The system has the following six components that are common across the levels:

- *Recruiting and Orientation* — Ways to identify potential candidates for leadership positions, encourage potential candidates to meet the requirements for positions, prepare/orient candidates for the demands of leadership, and provide new leaders with the knowledge and support to adjust to positions of leadership.
- *Training and Education* — Opportunities for learning to help current leaders perform their daily responsibilities and continue to improve over time.
- *Evaluation and Development* — Processes that clarify expectations, identify areas of growth, provide clear measures of progress, and recognize leaders who meet expectations.
- *Supporting Policies* — Careful, periodic study of policies and practices to remove obstacles to new expectations and changes in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a “new generation” of leaders.
- *Staffing and Position Planning* — Equitable and effective use of staff and planning for future positions essential to school and district success.
- *Compensation and Benefits* — Compensation and incentives suitable to attract and keep high-quality leaders.

From September 2006 to January 2007, the team drafted a design for two levels of the system — district and school leaders. The team identified 50 recommendations for further action (see Appendix 1). Some of the recommendations require extensive study, time, and/or resources. Some suggest changes in current practices that could be implemented immediately with minimal cost. Most require careful consideration to determine those that will yield the greatest benefit for the least cost. The following are the Charter Team’s 15 highest recommendations:

Recruiting and Orientation

- Expand the principal mentorship program in which aspiring principals can work with mentors, participate in support groups, and visit schools outside the district.
- Design a comprehensive approach to internal leadership development in which the pathways to leadership positions are clearly identified and widely known, and individuals who have high potential for leadership are identified and encouraged.

Training and Education

- Train principals in analyzing data and conducting conversations with teachers about student performance data resulting in changes in instruction.
- Recruit or develop cadres of five or six “turnaround principals” for low-performing schools.

- Design a yearlong professional development calendar for principals to address key findings from curriculum/instructional strategy audits and priorities identified in the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan.
- Provide site-based, one-on-one coaching to principals.

Evaluation and Development

- Revise the principal evaluation instrument and process to be more performance-based, to be annual, and to reflect the goals of the district's Strategic Accountability Plan and the expectations for EBRPSS principals.
- Evaluate central office leaders annually and provide them with regular feedback on their contributions to the goals of the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and their performance in their area of professional responsibility.

Supporting Policies

- Provide opportunities for principals to be involved in decisions about programs and initiatives before decisions are made.
- Provide incentives for experienced, successful principals to assume leadership of low-performing schools.
- Align job descriptions for principals and assistant principals to the goals of the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and the Louisiana Standards for Education Leaders.

Staffing and Position Planning

- Conduct a comprehensive study of the leadership and staffing needs of each school, particularly schools performing at unacceptable levels in academics.
- Develop and use interview processes and assessment tools to ensure that district leaders are selected and matched with positions based on clear, objective criteria.

Compensation and Benefits

- Develop an adequate compensation package for leaders.
- Provide incentives for principals based on value-added growth in student achievement.

Next Steps

In its current form, the EBRPSS leadership development system is a significant accomplishment. It represents careful and strategic thought by informed district and community/business leaders. Nevertheless, in its current form the system is only a beginning. The team identified the following next steps necessary to make the leadership development system a reality:

- Creation of a three-to-five-year implementation plan by the EBRPSS executive leadership team, identifying the sequence of actions to be taken and milestones for implementation;
- Development of a three-to-five-year budget for supporting the implementation plan;
- Development of expectations and recommendations for teachers leaders; and
- Evaluation of the implementation of the leadership development system and its impact on improving student achievement.

Introduction

What does it take to be a leader in education in the current era of high expectations for schools and students and high-stakes testing? District, school, and teacher leaders are expected to accomplish something that has never been asked of them in the history of public education — that is, to ensure that *all* students meet high academic standards and graduate from high school prepared for postsecondary education and a meaningful career. No child is to be left behind. Although the expectations for leaders are higher and clearer and the consequences for not meeting expectations are substantial, the ways in which districts, schools, and teachers are to meet the rising expectations are less clear in spite of the national search for research-based approaches.

Research is clear on one point: strong leadership is critical to meeting raising expectations.¹ Recognizing the importance of strong leaders, the state of Louisiana, like most other states across the country, has standards for education leaders. The standards offer guidance to communities, school boards, and school systems about the knowledge, skills, and beliefs of successful education leaders. East Baton Rouge Parish School System (EBRPSS) has used the Louisiana Standards for Education Leaders, and added some of its own, to answer the question of what it takes to be an education leader. The expectations of EBRPSS, presented on pages 11 and 22 of this report, focus leaders on the EBRPSS goals of increasing student achievement; promoting a safe, caring, and service-oriented culture; improving communications; and expanding community engagement. The expectations are comprehensive and ambitious — and they need to be. The EBRPSS expectations describe the type of leaders needed to ensure that *all* students reach high standards.

Higher expectations for leaders come at a time when school systems are facing a shortage of qualified candidates for leadership positions. Just as the federal, state, and local expectations to educate all students to meet higher and more rigorous standards are increasing, the pool of potential leaders is decreasing. In 1998, before No Child Left Behind and higher expectations and accountability for districts and schools, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) commissioned a study that found that “approximately half of the school districts surveyed reported a shortage in the labor pool for K–12 principal positions they were trying to fill [that] year,” regardless of the schools’ grade levels and whether they were rural, suburban, or urban schools.² Compensation inadequate for the level of responsibilities, too much time required to meet the demands of the

¹ Marzano, Robert; Waters, Timothy; McNulty, Brian (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, Virginia: Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development.

² Educational Research Service (1998). *Is there a shortage of qualified candidates for openings in the principalship?* Study conducted by the Educational Research Service for the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

principalship, and too much stress were suggested as the primary reasons that the pool of applicants was declining.

Recent studies indicate that the problems continue to exist. In a study of 83 school districts published in 2003, the authors found that there were 17 applicants for each principal position, a decline from 19 applicants in the mid-1990s. A drop of two applicants per position may not seem to be cause for much alarm; however, 80 percent of the superintendents indicated that the shortage of qualified candidates is a moderate or major problem facing their districts. These superintendents believe that although the quantity of candidates has not declined significantly, the quality of the candidates in the pool has.³

The situation is more serious for EBRPSS. It is estimated that there were 4.4 applicants for each principal position during the 2006 and 2007 school years, far fewer than the 17 applicants in the national study of 83 school districts.⁴ The number of applicants for leadership positions in EBRPSS's most challenged schools was lower, 3 applicants for each principal position.⁵ A small pool of candidates comes at a time of high need. It is estimated that 70 of the current 91 principals in EBRPSS (77 percent) have 20 or more years of experience and could retire tomorrow; 30 principals (33 percent) have 30 or more years of experience.⁶ Because the situation is not significantly different in the neighboring parishes, competition for qualified candidates is expected to rise. To state the obvious, if all eligible EBRPSS principals decided to retire tomorrow, it is unlikely that qualified replacements could be found. Because leadership matters, EBRPSS students and schools would suffer.

Call to Action

EBRPSS recognized that something needed to be done to address the potential crisis. In September 2006, the superintendent charged a team to design a multiyear leadership development system for EBRPSS, and to do so quickly and in time to make recommendations for the 2007–08 budget. The team brought together district and school leaders of EBRPSS and business and community partners. The mix of internal and external members set the stage to explore new and bold approaches to meet the pressing needs. Further, the director of a national consulting firm with expertise in leadership development was selected to facilitate the process of designing a leadership development system and preparing the report. The consultant's involvement was sponsored by the Stupski Foundation, a national philanthropy that has partnered with EBRPSS to improve

³ Roza, Marguerite; Cello, Mary Beth; Harvey, James; Weshon, Susan. (January 2003). A matter of definition: Is there truly a shortage of school principals? Center on Reinventing Public Education, University of Washington. p.18.

⁴ EBRPSS Human Resources Department

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*

student achievement. In the spirit of internal and external collaboration, EBRPSS's director of professional development served as co-facilitator.

The team embarked on an ambitious four-month journey to define and design a leadership development system. The superintendent charged the team to develop a "system" — not a collection of separate programs or actions — to address the situation. The charge for the EBRPSS leadership development system was that it must (1) communicate and perpetuate organizational goals, objectives, and core values; and (2) be comprehensive. The EBRPSS strategic accountability plan describes the organization's goals, objectives, and values, so the team was charged with designing a leadership development system as an extension of that plan. The task of designing a system meant that the team needed to consider all areas that contribute to creating quality leaders. A systemic approach is based on the notion that fixing only one part of the system — such as improving recruiting — will have limited impact in bringing qualified leaders to EBRPSS. Multiple factors — including working conditions, support, and compensation — contribute to attracting qualified leaders, and all of the factors need to be addressed.

Nationally, few school districts have designed a comprehensive leadership development system in spite of the need to do so. Although model district systems are rare, attracting and retaining qualified leaders is not solely a concern of public education. Many large corporations have been designing and implementing leadership development systems as a strategy critical to their survival over time. Exxon Mobil is a corporation that has a leadership development system. Fortunately for EBRPSS, the plant manager of Exxon Mobil-Baton Rouge Refinery was a member of the team and introduced Exxon Mobil's system into the team's deliberation. Conversations about Exxon Mobil's system pushed the team's thinking and paved the way for the EBRPSS design.

As part of the design process, the team collected and analyzed data; used critical questions to examine the strengths of EBRPSS's current practices and experiences (see Appendix 2); and considered best practices, research, and experiences of other districts. The consultant conducted confidential interviews to gather EBRPSS principals' opinions about the district's and community's expectations for their leadership, the challenges they faced in meeting expectations and the professional learning support they received and they needed.⁷ A summary of the principal interviews as well as an overview and descriptions of the professional learning support provided to principals and district leaders were prepared by the consultant for consideration by the team. The use of data and research informed decision making and strengthened the rationale for decisions. The resulting design of the leadership development

⁷ Perry, G. (October 2006). East Baton Rouge Parish School System, Feedback from Principal Interviews.

system, which is a work in progress, clarifies expectations for leaders, identifies current supports provided to EBRPSS leaders, and recommends future actions.

EBRPSS Leadership Development System

The EBRPSS system is intended to provide a clear, comprehensive, and strategic structure for identifying and preparing future leaders and sustaining the continuous improvement of current leaders. The system's purpose is to enhance the efforts of EBRPSS leaders at all levels to improve student achievement.

The system clarifies expectations and proposes strategic directions to support leaders at three levels of the organization:

- *Expectations and support for aspiring and current principals and assistant principals* — Principals have a critical role in raising student achievement. The achievement efforts of EBRPSS are vulnerable due to an acute shortage in the pool of applicants for principal positions.
- *Expectations and support for district leaders* — Powerful instructional and non-instructional district leaders who know how to support schools in raising student achievement are essential to a high-performing system. Effective district leaders know how to balance high expectations with strong supports and anticipate how their decisions and actions impact classrooms.
- *Expectations and support for teacher leaders* — Teacher leaders are those who have responsibility for assisting their peers in improving student achievement under the supervision of building and district administrators. Teacher leaders are not assumed to be future administrators. To be effective, teacher leaders need knowledge and skills to lead and support teachers as a peer and colleague.

Framework of the EBRPSS Leadership Development System

The EBRPSS leadership development system has three levels. Each level is designated by the primary leadership target audience: principals/assistant principals, district leaders and teacher leaders. Each level has six components. The levels and components work in concert to identify, support, and sustain quality leaders focused on raising student achievement.

The six components for each level are the following:

- *Recruiting and Orientation* — Leaders are actively recruited and prepared to assume leadership. Expanding the pool of leaders includes identifying potential candidates for leadership positions, encouraging potential candidates to meet the requirements for positions, preparing/orienting candidates for the demands of leadership, and providing new leaders with the knowledge and support to adjust to positions of leadership.

- *Training and Education* — Learning does not stop once leaders are selected. Opportunities for learning are continuous. Best practices suggest that the most effective learning is embedded into the daily activities of leaders. Opportunities for intensive learning take into consideration the need of leaders to perform their responsibilities. Further, training for leaders is not being focused exclusively on short-term needs.
- *Evaluation and Development* — Staff evaluation systems add the most value when they measure that which is most important. Leaders know the difference between real staff evaluations and “going through the motions.” Effective evaluation systems clarify expectations, identify areas of growth that are attainable and important, include clear measures of progress, recognize leaders who meet expectations, and are aligned to district goals and rewards systems. Also, evaluation clarifies to supervisors and leaders which leaders are effective and which are not.
- *Supporting Policies* — All organizations have policies and practices that stand in the way of meeting changing expectations. Careful, periodic study of policies and practices are necessary to remove obstacles to new expectations. Also, policies and practices need to address changes in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of a “new generation” of leaders.
- *Staffing and Position Planning* — As is the case with policies and practices, the amount and types of positions available may provide obstacles to achieving changes in expectations. Not all schools are equal, and equity does not always translate into the assignment of equal resources to schools or departments. Increasing expectations without the careful review of capacity to deliver on expectations may result in unrealistic demands on schools and departments.
- *Compensation and Benefits* — A leadership development system should address whether or not the compensation and rewards for leaders are suitable to attract and keep high-quality leaders. Money alone is not the determining factor. How leaders are recognized and valued in the broadest sense is part of their compensation.

While the six components apply to all three levels, the team chose to focus its work on two levels – principals/assistant principals and district leaders. The decision to postpone developing recommendations for teacher leaders was based on two considerations: the immediate need for recommendations for principals/assistant principals and district leaders, and the understanding that a different team – one that includes representatives of teachers – should be formed to develop recommendations for teacher leaders. Developing recommendations for teacher leaders is one of the key next steps proposed by the team.

The following sections use the six components as organizers for describing leadership development needs for principals/assistant principals and district leaders. Each of the levels partially developed by the team begins with expectations for leaders at the specified level. The expectations are used as criteria to guide the assessment of EBRPSS practices and current supports and

the areas of need, or “gaps” among the expectations and the knowledge and skills of potential/current leaders. Recommendations to address the gaps are offered for additional professional learning opportunities and changes in current practice. The team’s one to three highest recommendations appear first among the recommendations and are designated by asterisks (***)

Section One

Recommendations for the EBRPSS Leadership Development System Principal/Assistant Principal Level

Expectations for Principals

EBRPSS principals are expected to increase student achievement; to promote a safe, caring, and service-oriented culture; to improve communications; and to expand community engagement by doing the following:

- Engaging the school community in developing and maintaining a student-centered vision for education that forms the basis for school goals and guides the preparation of students as effective lifelong learners in a pluralistic society;
- Using knowledge of teaching and learning in working collaboratively with faculty and staff to implement effective and innovative teaching practices that engage students in meaningful and challenging learning experiences;
- Promoting the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for safe and orderly learning environments;
- Working with the school community to review data from multiple sources to establish challenging standards, monitor progress, and foster continuous growth of all students;
- Using an understanding of the culture of the community to create and sustain mutually supportive school-community relations;
- Collaborating with faculty and staff to plan and implement professional development activities that promote both individual and organizational growth and lead to improved teaching and learning; and
- Demonstrating honesty, integrity, and fairness to guide school programs in an ethical manner.⁸

Current Supports and Recommendations for Leadership Development

EBRPSS recognizes that principals will need support and continuous professional learning in order to meet expectations. The following are the leadership development supports currently provided to principals and recommendations for future actions in each of the six leadership development components.

Recruiting and Orientation

Current Supports

- Principals for Tomorrow — Participants (32 in 2006–07) are fully state certified in administration, have at least three years of teaching

⁸ See EBRPSS elaborated standards for details on each expectation.

- experience, are full-time teachers, and do not hold administrative positions. Activities include (1) facilitative leadership training, (2) three sessions on the “Nuts and Bolts of EBRPSS,” (3) an on-line course on the Louisiana Standards for Education Leaders, (4) site visits for shadowing principals, and (5) placement in Administrative Summer School positions.
- State-Mandated Principal Induction Program (a collaborative program with the School Leadership Center of Greater New Orleans and the Wallace Foundation) — Participants (eight in 2006–07) are new, first-time principals with provisional certification. The two-year program offers principals training in instructional practices through (1) four “school learning” walks, (2) two coaching visits per year, (3) a platform of beliefs, (4) seven meetings of colleague teams for critical feedback and mentoring, (5) quarterly professional development days, and (6) portfolios to document their leadership development. Mentor principals and principal coaches are provided to the eight principals new to EBRPSS. Each new principal is assigned (1) an experienced mentor principal who is available to answer questions and visit with the principal regularly, and (2) a coach who visits monthly to assist the principal in meeting expectations on a leadership development plan.

Recommendations for Future Actions

Additional professional learning opportunities

- ***Expand the principal mentorship program in which new principals can work with principal mentors, participate in support groups, and visit schools in the district. The principal mentorship program would provide first-year principals with a mentor on a one-to-one ratio. The expanded program would be similar to the mentor program conducted in 2005–06. (See Appendix 3).
- Develop a full-year internship program. Providing aspiring administrators with a full-year internship during which they gain practical and relevant on-the-job experience is an EBRPSS best practice, and one that has been recognized as a best practice nationally.⁹ The experience of EBRPSS with internships has been to have principal interns take a one-year sabbatical, be assigned full-time to a school for a year, and learn “how to be a principal” from an experienced, mentor principal. Graduates of EBRPSS’s internships suggest the experience prepared them well for assuming the principal’s operational and public leadership roles.¹⁰ Some suggest the

⁹ See, for example, descriptions of Boston Public Schools’ Principals Fellowship Program in the United States Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, *Innovations in education: Innovative pathways to school leadership*, Washington, D.C., and from the Broad Foundation.

¹⁰ Perry, G. (October 2006). East Baton Rouge Parish School System, Feedback from Principal Interviews.

experience could be made stronger by having interns split their time during the year between two schools that serve different student populations. Some graduates indicate that the sabbatical, during which the intern did not earn a full-salary, was a hardship, which may deter potential candidates from seeking internships.

- Use PrincipallInsight. PrincipallInsight is a research-based selection tool offered by the Education Division of the Gallup Organization. It combines information about the talents of outstanding principals with Web technology in an assessment that applicants can complete at their convenience in about 40 minutes. Going beyond a surface inquiry into knowledge and skills, the tool assesses talents needed for success as a principal. Districts receive fast, accurate assessment results from Gallup through a secure Web site. The assessment report includes a score that predicts an applicant's potential for success, based on his or her talents.
- Develop a system of succession planning that encourages principals to notify EBRPSS of their intent to retire by March of each school year and assigns new principals to schools before the end of the school year to provide overlap.
- Standardize the EBRPSS orientation program for new and aspiring principals, and develop on-line policies and resources. It is recommended that new and aspiring principals receive more support in learning EBRPSS operations and procedures. Suggestions include a week of orientation before assuming the principalship, on-line or electronic policy manuals and directories, and more opportunities to raise questions about policies and practices.

Changes in current practices

- ***Design a comprehensive approach to internal leadership development in which the pathways to leadership positions are clearly identified and widely known, and individuals who have high potential for leadership are identified and encouraged. A work group/charter team would be needed to identify the pathways — a combination of learning and relevant experiences — that would help potential candidates gain the technical, political, and cultural knowledge and skills necessary to meet leadership expectations.¹¹ EBRPSS has examples of pathways to leadership in place; however, access and opportunities are available only through current leaders who are intentional about identifying and nurturing leaders. A comprehensive approach could include expectations and rewards to encourage current leaders to be “recruiters” who select and nurture future leaders, include a career track with different and broad experiences, and

¹¹ See, for example, Tichy, Noel. (1997). *The leadership engine: How winning companies build leaders at every level*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

provide opportunities for those in the career track, such as deans/assistant principals, to demonstrate competence (i.e., becoming summer school principals).

- Develop an external recruitment strategy that includes accessing recruitment tools such as the state Web page, pursuing candidates from alternative pathways, and advertising earlier, locally and more widely, and often.
- Allow bonus points toward the interview process for those who complete the Principals for Tomorrow program.

Training and Education

Current Supports

- Support and Supervision from Assistant Superintendents — Principals have regular visits from assistant superintendents in which they talk about teaching and learning and visit classrooms. Assistant superintendents lead monthly meetings that include professional development on identified areas of need across all schools.
- Superintendent's Leadership Institute — Principals and central office administrators participate in monthly (half-day) meetings. Institutes include sessions on various topics and provide opportunities to share information.

Recommendations for Future Actions

Additional professional learning opportunities

- ***Provide site-based, one-on-one coaching to principals. Coaching as a form of professional learning has become a nationally recognized best practice in education as well as the private sector.¹² Coaching provides the benefits of individualized, situation-based support to leaders. Regular opportunities to interact with a coach who knows them and their schools, and who holds the conversations in confidence can result in significant increases in the principal's capacity and effective leadership. Coaches bring experience and expertise. Some coaches are retired principals. Other coaches are content or process experts who have experience in improving teaching and learning in a content area, in creating structures and time that maximize student learning (such as small schools or flexible scheduling), and/or in facilitating the change process. To be effective, coaching needs to have a well-defined purpose, willing participation by the principal, and regular contact (at least monthly) with the coach.

¹² See for example, Elmore, Richard (2006) *School reform from the inside out: Policy, practice and performance*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard Education Press. And Fullan, Michael (2001) *Leading in a culture of change*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.

- ***Train principals in analyzing data and conducting conversations with teachers about student performance data resulting in changes in instruction. Effective use of data begins with the principal. Schools that use data well create a clear understanding of essential data tied to specific performance objectives.¹³ These schools capture and report data, know the meaning of the data collected, and apply the information yielded from the data to improving practices, implementing appropriate and effective interventions, and further developing instructional leadership. Schools that use data have many conversations to develop shared understanding and to apply their knowledge to practice. Principals need support in being able to lead conversations about data, to pinpoint essential data, to design reporting processes, and to locate time in the school day for conversations. A comprehensive process for learning how to use data effectively in all schools requires additional whole-group professional learning, the development of materials and supports, one-on-one/small-group coaching for principals, and monitoring to assist principals in applying their learning.
- ***Recruit or develop cadres of five or six “turnaround principals.” EBRPSS recognizes that schools need different kinds of leaders at different times. Leadership for schools whose students have not met performance targets are of particular concern at this time. EBRPSS seeks principals who have the skills and experiences to lead schools that are in need of accelerating student performance dramatically and quickly. In addition, principals require support from district leaders to build upon the strengths of their schools and remove obstacles to progress. Also, principals need time to reflect on their work and learn from colleagues engaged in similar enterprises. It is suggested that a work group/charter team be convened to define the characteristics and expectations for turnaround principals; to identify district support necessary to raise student performance; to establish principal professional learning opportunities that include collegial support through participation in a cadre of principals of like schools; and to identify incentives and rewards for principals and schools.
- Conduct curriculum/ instructional strategy audits to gather data in each school and across the system on what is being taught and the use of research-based instructional practices. Curriculum/instructional strategy audits are a school-by-school, classroom-by-classroom data collection process through which evidence of academic content and the use of research-based instructional strategies is collected. Audits can be conducted by external evaluators or by district/school teams that have

¹³ See, for example, DuFour, Richard and Eaker, Robert (1998) Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement. Bloomington, Indiana: National Education Service.

knowledge of the required Comprehensive Curriculum, goals and targets identified in the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and have been trained to identify research-based practices. Using district/school teams has the added advantage of building shared understanding of curriculum and instructional practices.

Changes in current practices

- ***Design a yearlong professional development plan for principals to address key findings from curriculum/instructional strategy audits and priorities identified in the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan. The priority areas could be designated for (1) all EBRPSS schools (including either a content focus, such as increasing student performance in literacy, and/or one of the seven EBRPSS expectations for principals identified as needed for all principals); (2) principals of schools by level (elementary, middle, or high school); or (3) schools by student populations/identified needs. Professional learning should use various approaches, including dialogue and conversation, examination of simulations and scenarios, and sharing of resources electronically.
- Provide assistance to principals in developing approaches to help marginal teachers and designing professional growth plans. Some principals would benefit from one-on-one coaching in ways to help marginal teachers to improve. Assistance in the process used could be provided by the Human Resources Department; professional learning opportunities and support could be provided by the Professional Development Office; and support in identifying and having conversations with teachers in need of assistance could be provided by assistant superintendents.

Evaluation and Development

Current Supports

- Principals are evaluated at the end of their contracts (every two years).

Recommendations for Future Actions

Changes in current practices

- ***Revise the principal evaluation instrument and process to be more performance-based, to be annual, and to reflect the goals of the district's Strategic Accountability Plan and expectations for EBRPSS principals. Principals should have opportunities to provide input into the design of the instrument and the process. Each of the seven district expectations for principals would be accompanied by a particular product or documentation that the principal would produce as part of the evaluation process. Principals would have an annual professional learning plan that describes a few areas of individual development.

- Expand the recommendations of the Quality Support Teams to include support for the principals to enhance the quality of instruction.
- Tie incentives for principals to evaluation based on value-added growth in student achievement.

Policies

Current Supports

- The charter team did not identify specific examples of current districtwide policies that support principals in meeting expectations.

Recommendations for Future Actions

Changes in current practices

- ***Align job descriptions for principals and assistant principals to the goals of the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and the Louisiana Standards for Education Leaders.
- ***Provide opportunities for principals to be involved in decisions about programs and initiatives before decisions are made.
- ***Provide incentives for experienced, successful principals to assume leadership of low-performing schools.
- Clarify expectations for the amount of time principals are to be in classrooms each day. EBRPSS principals know that they must focus their time and attention on instruction if student achievement is to improve. Principals have embraced walk-throughs and the importance of time in classrooms and in conversations with teachers on teaching and learning. Although principals know that they are expected to spend more time in classrooms, they do not know of an EBRPSS expectation for the amount of time they should spend. The absence of a specific expectation results in principals diverting time away from classrooms and onto other immediate and pressing issues. If there was an expectation that principals spend two, three, or four hours a day in classrooms or in conversations with teachers/administrators on teaching and learning, then there would need to be a subsequent reduction in the amount of time they spend on other expectations (such as being away from the school during the hours students are in attendance, being available to parents and other visitors, and responding to requests for information).
- Establish limits on the number of days each month principals may leave their schools for meetings. Principals reported being away from their schools for a significant percentage of their time to attend meetings, to engage in professional learning, and to respond to requests for information. Periodically, principals are away from their schools for a majority of their working week. Principals are away from their schools for

many reasons. However, principals know that their absence detracts from their ability to work with teachers on improving teaching and learning. A limit on the number of days principals may leave their schools to attend any type of meeting, along with appropriate monitoring, may contribute to better coordination of meetings, better prioritizing of tasks, and more focus on teaching and learning.

- Provide principals with more control over teacher selection, appointments, and transfers.
- Establish criteria and procedures for school-based leadership roles for teacher leaders, deans, and assistant principals.
- Increase the principals' authority over the selection and termination of non-classified staff.
- Provide principals more control over professional learning provided for their schools, including the use of professional development days.
- Reassess the level of authority/control that should be provided to schools.

Staffing and Position Planning

Current Supports

- Staff formula drives decisions about the number of administrators and teacher leaders available to the school.

Recommendations for Future Actions

- ***Conduct a comprehensive study of the leadership and staffing needs of each school, particularly schools performing at an unacceptable level in academics. A work group/charter team should oversee the design and use of a district-wide study of schools. The study would provide data on the staffing and administrative levels of schools and recommend a staffing formula based on the equity needs of the schools. The study should address whether the position of instructional dean is necessary in all, some, or none of the elementary schools.

Changes in current practices

- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of department heads, including their contributions to assisting other teachers in improving teaching and learning. Department heads can provide a pivotal role in leading learning communities in their content areas focused on improving the achievement of all students. Department heads have the content-level knowledge of state standards to help the department make informed decisions about the level of rigor needed for students to demonstrate content mastery. Further, department heads can assist teachers in improving their teaching, deepening their content area knowledge, and understanding standards-

based instruction through direct support or by encouraging collaboration among teachers. The expectations of EBRPSS for department heads should be reviewed and clarified, and department heads should be supported and evaluated on their performance in meeting expectations as departmental instructional leaders.

Compensation and Benefits

Current Supports

- EBRPSS expects to review compensation, benefits, and incentives for principals and district leaders in 2006–07.

Recommendations for Future Actions

- ***Develop an adequate compensation package for leaders.
- ***Provide incentives for principals based on value-added growth in student achievement.

Expectations for Assistant Principals

Although the expectations for assistant principals are the same as those for principals, EBRPSS recognizes that assistant principals have particular needs in their current roles and as potential future principals. The following are the *education and training* supports and professional learning provided to assistant principals and recommendations for future actions.

Training and Education

Current

- Monthly meetings on operational issues.

Recommendations

Additional professional learning opportunities

- Provide assistant principals with opportunities for professional development on instructional strategies. EBRPSS recognizes that assistant principals need additional support in knowing standards-based and effective instructional strategies, and in how to conduct conversations with teachers about improving student achievement. The charter team recommends additional professional development for assistant principals, possibly on Saturdays, during the summer, or monthly during the work day, as a short-term action to address an immediate need. A longer-term strategy is presented below.
- Identify and start grooming, early in their careers, assistant principals who show promise to be principals. Assistant principals provide a pool of potential candidates for principal vacancies. Traditionally, assistant principals have focused their attention on improving discipline and

operations and helping teachers with classroom management. As principals have assumed more responsibility as instructional leaders, assistant principals have taken on more responsibility for handling discipline and operations. An unintended consequence has been that assistant principals are becoming less prepared to meet the new expectations for principals, and the assistant principal position has become a destination for some administrators. A work group or charter team should recommend ways that the assistant principal position should prepare candidates for principal positions. In particular, the recommendations should consider ways to engage assistant principals in working with teachers on improving teaching and learning. Recommendations may include changes in the assistant principals' job description and/or evaluation, and changes to the position to provide assistant principals with experiences that prepare them for principal positions (such as holding assistant positions at three different school sites before being appointed to a principalship). Recommendations for preparing assistant principals could be developed by a separate group or be part of the charge to a work group considering a comprehensive approach with pathways to leadership development (see recommendation for principals' recruiting and orientation).

- Mandate or enforce a new policy regarding support and procedures to ensure assistant principals support instruction.

Section Two

Recommendations for the EBRPSS Leadership Development System District Leader Level

Expectations for District Leaders

EBRPSS district leaders are expected to increase student achievement; promote a safe, caring, and service-oriented culture; improve communications; and expand community engagement by doing the following:

- Focusing on student achievement;
- Taking responsibility for success;
- Building their knowledge of best practices from experiences within and outside EBRPSS, including research;
- Being accountable for their actions;
- Acting in ways that develop trust through honesty and integrity;
- Seeing the “big picture”;
- Being creative and willing to take risks;
- Meeting the demands of dynamic systems by balancing daily responsibilities and working on continuous improvement strategies; and
- Developing thoughtful rationale and budget projections for new approaches.

EBRPSS district leaders, particularly senior leaders, often perform “one-of-a kind” services for the district. Expectations for specialized positions are found within job descriptions and within the skill sets/technical knowledge that are recognized for the position. District leaders are expected to be service-oriented rather than compliance-oriented in their dealing with schools. District leaders must “fit” comfortably into the district’s culture or ways of working.

Current Supports and Recommendations for Leadership Development

EBRPSS recognizes that district leaders will need support and continuous professional learning in order to meet expectations. The following are the leadership development supports provided to district leaders and recommendations for future actions in each of the leadership development components.

Recruiting and Orientation

Current Supports

- Most of the candidates for central office positions have been generated through self-initiation and personal interest.

- Central office positions are filled by candidates who respond to a classified advertisement and the “green sheet.”
- Positions are most often filled by those who have the most seniority in the office.
- District leaders are expected to take the initiative and “know” what to do.

Recommendations for Future Actions

Additional professional learning opportunities

- Make available tools and processes to ensure that new district leaders are oriented into the “culture” of EBRPSS. Tools should include a handbook of written policies and procedures essential to implementing the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan, and explanations of budgeting processes and financing and funding sources.
- Include opportunities to broaden the perspectives of new central office leaders from seeing the needs of one or a few schools to whole-district, systems thinking. Consider providing a “systems orientation program” under the guidance of a senior district leader. The orientation would not be “one shot” training but would be integrated into the continuous learning and development of central office leaders.
- Identify key district leadership positions for turnover procedures. Every effort would be made to anticipate a change in personnel, select a replacement in advance of a vacancy, and provide a period of time for training in the new position before the incumbent position holder leaves.

Changes in current practices

- Increase service orientation and empathy toward the needs of principals by filling most central office positions with candidates who have been principals.
- Create and communicate a consistent and comprehensive system to identify, encourage, and develop “high-potential” leaders in schools to replace district leaders. The system, designed to increase the pool of potential candidates from those who self-select to those who are mentored, would include creating and monitoring the expectation that it is the responsibility of central office leaders to find and nurture high-potential leaders. The system would ensure that high-potential leaders have opportunities to build their strengths and perspectives and assume increasing authority and responsibility as district leaders. [NOTE: This recommendation, like the one for assistant principals, could be treated separately or be part of the charge to a work group considering a comprehensive approach with pathways to the leadership development (see recommendation for principals’ recruiting and orientation).]

Training and Education

Current Supports

- Current training and educational opportunities, particularly for one-of-a-kind positions, are often left to the discretion of individual central office leaders.
- Budgets for central office departments usually have a small allocation for professional development.

Recommendations for Future Actions

Additional professional learning opportunities

- Encourage and support central office leaders to become members of selective regional and national organizations that can keep them abreast of developments in their technical areas of responsibility and emerging best practices. Expected benefits and reasons for participating in professional learning opportunities and membership in professional organizations are stated and discussed as part of individual performance improvement plans.
- Provide district leaders at all levels with opportunities for individual development and structured professional learning in areas of organizational leadership, change and project management. Expectations for professional learning should be explicit and expressed both through individual performance improvement plans and annual learning plans for teams and departments. Content for professional learning should address individual leadership needs and district/system-wide expectations based on individual and team self-assessment and data analysis. The performance improvement plans should provide central office staff with opportunities to identify, with their supervisors, areas of personal growth in need of attention and the support they will receive (or seek) to meet expectations. For example, individuals may need support in learning about systemic and strategic thinking, while departments, teams, and district leaders as a whole might engage in learning about district-wide initiatives such as project management, community engagement processes related to curriculum adoption, and/or creating professional learning communities.
- Develop systems for cross-training central office staff within and across departments so the knowledge of essential functions is not lost when key individuals retire, leave, or go on extended leave.

Evaluation and Development

Current Supports

- EBRPSS does not have a formal, uniform system for evaluating the performance of central office staff.

Recommendations for Future Actions

- ***Evaluate central office leaders annually and provide them with regular feedback on their contributions to the goals of the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and their performance in their area of professional responsibility.

Policies

Current Supports

- District leaders include those selected from outside the district and those promoted from within. Maintaining a blend of leaders with external and internal experience leads to opportunities for “constructive tension” essential to growth and improvement.

Recommendations for Future Actions

Changes in current practices

- Develop and communicate an organization chart.
- Provide regular opportunities for assistant superintendents and other central office leaders to walk through schools with principals to deepen understanding and focus on instruction and to coach principals.
- Re-evaluate, revise, and update role expectations of central office employees.
- Create and update employee directory annually.

Staffing and Position Planning

Current Supports

- There is a sense, shared by the Charter Team and school leaders, that the EBRPSS central office departments are not adequately staffed.

Recommendations for Future Actions

- ***Develop and use interview processes and assessment tools to ensure that district leaders are selected and matched with positions based on clear, objective criteria based on the goals of the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan, expectations for district leaders, and expectations for the technical requirements of their position. The development of the interview processes and assessment tools should be informed by EBRPSS Human Resources practices as well as changing expectations determined by the board, the superintendent, and the executive leadership team.
- Conduct a comprehensive study of the leadership and staff needs of each central office department. A work group/charter team should oversee the

design and use of the study. The study would provide data on the staffing levels of each department, and the department's responsiveness to the needs of schools. Recommendations would include expectations for each department based on the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan, performance indicators that would indicate that the department meets or exceeds expectations, multiple measures for assessing the department's progress on the performance indicators, and the department's level of staffing and positions necessary to meet expectations.

Compensation and Benefits

Current Supports

- EBRPSS expects to review compensation, benefits, and incentives for principals and district leaders in 2006–07.

Recommendations for Future Actions

- ***Develop an adequate compensation package for leaders.
- Provide incentives for district leaders based on success in meeting goals and targets identified in the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and departmental performance indicators.

Next Steps

The design of the EBRPSS leadership development system is an ambitious undertaking, and one that is still a work in progress. The team believes that making the system operational will help to ensure a sustainable pool of quality leaders who have the commitment, accountability, nerve, skill, and will to make sound decisions and to raise student achievement. When fully operational, the system will do the following:

- Prepare leaders to be effective in raising student achievement;
- Ensure the supply of leaders to meet the demand;
- Promote consistency and stability;
- Improve the organization's efficient and effective use of human and material resources;
- Align and coordinate activities; and
- Provide an opportunity to engage the community.

Yet a fully operational system will take time and resources to build and realize. The team suggested several next steps to make the leadership development system a reality. The steps include the following:

- Creation of a three-to-five-year implementation plan, created by the EBRPSS executive leadership team, that identifies the sequence of actions to be taken and milestones for implementation;

- Development of a three-to-five-year budget for supporting the implementation plan;
- Development of expectations and recommendations for teachers leaders; and
- Evaluation of the implementation of the leadership development system and its impact on improving student achievement.

Appendix 1

EBRPSS Leadership Development System Recommendations by Component

Component	Recommendation
Recruiting and Orientation	***Expand the principal mentorship program in which new principals can work with principal mentors, participate in support groups, and visit schools in the district.
	***Design a comprehensive approach to internal leadership development in which the pathways to leadership positions are clearly identified and widely known, and individuals who have high potential for leadership are identified and encouraged.
	Develop a full-year internship program.
	Use Principal/Insight.
	Develop a system of succession planning that encourages principals to notify EBRPSS of their intent to retire by March of each school year and to assign new principals to schools before the end of the school year to provide overlap.
	Standardize the EBRPSS orientation program for new/aspiring principals, and develop on-line policies and resources.
	Develop an external recruitment strategy that includes accessing recruitment tools such as the state Web page, pursuing candidates from alternative pathways, and advertising earlier, locally and more widely, and often.
	Allow bonus points toward the interview process of those who complete the Principals for Tomorrow program.
	Make available tools and processes to ensure that new district leaders are oriented into the “culture” of EBRPSS.
	Include opportunities to broaden the perspectives of new central office leaders from seeing the needs of one or a few schools to whole-district, systems thinking.
	Identify key district leadership positions for turnover procedures.
	Increase service orientation and empathy toward the needs of principals by filling most central office positions with candidates who have been principals.
	Create and communicate a consistent and comprehensive system to identify, encourage, and develop “high-potential” leaders in schools to replace district leaders.
Training and Education	***Provide site-based, one-on-one coaching to principals.
	***Train principals in analyzing data and conducting conversations with teachers about student performance data resulting in changes in instruction.
	***Recruit or develop cadres of five or six “turnaround principals.”

	***Design a yearlong professional development focus and plan for principals to address key findings from curriculum/instructional strategy audits and priorities identified in the district's Strategic Accountability Plan
	Conduct instructional strategy audits to gather data in each school and across the system on what is being taught and the use of research-based instructional practices.
	Provide assistance to principals in developing approaches to help marginal teachers and designing professional growth plans.
	Provide assistant principals with opportunities for professional development on instructional strategies.
	Identify and start grooming, early in their careers, assistant principals who show promise to be principals.
	Mandate or enforce a new policy regarding support and procedures to ensure assistant principals support instruction.
	Encourage and support central office leaders to become members of selective regional and national organizations that can keep them abreast of developments in their technical areas of responsibility and emerging best practices.
	Provide district leaders at all levels with opportunities for individual development and structured professional learning in areas of organizational leadership, change and project management.
	Develop systems for cross-training central office staff within and across departments so the knowledge of essential functions is not lost when key individuals retire, leave or go on extended leave.
Evaluation and Development	*** Revise the principal evaluation instrument and process to be more performance-based, to be annual, and to reflect the goals of the district's Strategic Accountability Plan and the expectations for EBRPSS principals.
	*** Evaluate central office leaders annually and provide them with regular feedback on their contributions to the goals of the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and their performance in their area of professional responsibility.
	Expand the recommendations of the Quality Support Teams to include support for the principals to enhance the quality of instruction.
	Tie incentives for principals to evaluation based on value-added growth in student achievement
Policies	***Align job descriptions for principals and assistant principals to the goals of the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and the Louisiana Standards for Education Leaders.
	***Provide opportunities for principals to be involved in decisions about programs and initiatives before decisions are made.
	***Provide incentives for experienced, successful principals to assume leadership of low-performing schools.

	Clarify expectations for the amount of time principals are to be in classrooms each day.
	Establish limits for the number of days each month principals may leave their schools for meetings.
	Provide principals with more control over teacher selection, appointments, and transfers.
	Establish criteria and procedures for school-based leadership roles for teacher leaders, deans, and assistant principals.
	Increase the principals' authority over the selection and termination of nonclassified staff.
	Provide principals more control over professional learning provided for their schools, including the use of professional development days.
	Reassess the level of authority/control that should be provided to schools.
	Develop and communicate an organization chart.
	Provide regular opportunities for assistant superintendents and other central office leaders to walk through schools with principals to deepen understanding and focus on instruction and to coach principals.
	Re-evaluate, revise, and update role expectations of central office employees.
	Create and update employee directory annually.
Staffing and Position Planning	***Conduct a comprehensive study of the leadership and staffing needs of each school, particularly schools performing at an unacceptable level in academics.
	*** Develop and use interview processes and assessment tools to assure that district leaders are selected and matched with positions based on clear, objective criteria based on the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan goals, expectations for district leaders and expectations for the technical requirements for their position.
	Clarify the roles and responsibilities of department heads, including their contributions to assisting other teachers in improving teaching and learning.
	Conduct a comprehensive study of the leadership and staff needs of each central office department.
Compensation and Benefits	***Develop an adequate compensation package for leaders.
	***Provide incentives for principals based on value-added growth in student achievement.
	Provide incentives for district leaders based on success in meeting goals and targets identified in the EBRPSS Strategic Accountability Plan and departmental performance indicators.

Appendix 2

Guiding Questions for Leadership Development

Analysis of the Current Situation

- How many EBRPSS teachers have degrees in administration? Has the size of the pool of teachers with degrees in administration changed during the last five years?
- How many EBRPSS teachers are working toward degrees in administration? Has the size of the pool of aspiring administrators changed during the last five years?
- How many EBRPSS teachers are administrative interns?
- What is the current capacity of EBRPSS to have a highly qualified teacher for all students? Has the capacity changed during the last five years?
- What are the years of experience (in education and as a principal) for principals at each school level? Has the number of years of experience changed during the last five years?

Recruiting and Orientation

- What are our current recruiting and orientation programs and practices? (i.e., principals identifying and nurturing teacher leaders)
- Do our practices build effective leadership that improves student achievement?
- What programs and practices should we add? What programs and practices should we stop or change?

Training and Education

- What are our current approaches to professional learning for principals? (i.e., monthly professional learning sessions conducted by assistant superintendents)
- Do our approaches help principals meet the expectations of EBRPSS for effective leadership that improves student achievement?
- Are our approaches consistent and/or aligned? Are all principals receiving adequate support based on their needs and the needs of their school?
- What approaches or areas of learning do we need to add? What approaches should we stop or change?

Evaluation and Development

- What is our current process for assessing building administrators' progress toward clear expectations? (i.e., biannual evaluation by assistant superintendent)
- Do our processes help administrators meet the expectations of EBRPSS for effective leadership that improves student achievement?
- What should be the rewards for meeting the expectations of EBRPSS?

- What processes do we need to add? What processes should we stop or change?

Supporting Policies

- Are our expectations for principals as effective leaders focused on improving student achievement clear?
- What are our policies and practices that enhance the ability of principals to lead improvement in student achievement? (i.e., walk-throughs)
- What are our policies and practices that stand in the way of meeting changing expectations?
- What policies and practices do we need to add? What policies and practices should we stop or change?

Staffing and Position Planning

- What is our current staffing capacity to lead the improvement of student achievement? (i.e., principals, assistant principals, department heads, teacher leaders)
- Is our staffing capacity adequate to meet the leadership needs of EBRPSS?
- Are the leadership needs of schools different? What are the conditions or situations that determine difference?
- What staffing do we need to add or reassign? What staffing should we eliminate?

Compensation and Benefits

- What is the current compensation and benefits package for principals and assistant principals? How well does the compensation and benefits package compare with that of similar districts?
- What, besides salary, would be attractive to administrators?
- Should the compensation package offered to EBRPSS administrators change?

Appendix 3

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SCHOOL SYSTEM NEW PRINCIPAL MENTORING PROGRAM Summary

WHY A MENTORING PROGRAM

Throughout the nation, school principals face a daunting task. Every day they are called upon to exercise instructional, financial, community, and individual leadership, and every day they are held accountable for the academic, social, and emotional success of children. Clearly, principals need a variety of supports to meet these responsibilities. One of the most promising avenues according to research for providing instructional, emotional, and managerial support to new principals is to give them experienced, expert principals as mentors.

BENEFITS OF A MENTORING PROGRAM

There are many benefits to having a mentor and many reasons for providing new principals in particular with individual mentors. Although the obvious reason is to help new and struggling principals become instructional leaders, a more important and immediate reason to have a mentor is that it lessens the isolation of being a principal. It can be said that the mentor's ability to help a new principal understand and master the administrative details of running a school will allow the principal to begin to focus on becoming an instructional leader. The sharing of the experience and expertise of the mentor principal in all matters that pertain to leading a school is another reason for having mentors.

Even with the many professional supports provided by the district, there is still a need for individualized assistance, available at all hours of the day and night. Mentors will allow new principals to visit models of successful schools, programs, and teaching in order to begin to craft their own schools. Mentors provide emotional support as well as skills and knowledge, and they supply a powerful and successful role model for their newest principals.

CRITERIA FOR MENTOR SELECTION AND EXPECTATIONS

1. Mentor principals should be expert instructional leaders with solid knowledge about current learning theories, curriculum, assessment, and school organization. Mentors will be selected who possess a strong instructional knowledge base, are reflective and compassionate, are good listeners and communicators, and are able to speak the hard truth. Mentors will be chosen from those schools with "Academically Successful" labels.
2. Matching principals with their mentors will be done purposefully and carefully. Mentors will be expert instructional leaders who have successful experience with

schools similar to the mentees' schools, and mentors with particular strengths will be provided to mentees with parallel needs. Assistant superintendents will recommend mentors, and the superintendent and the CAO will have final approval.

3. When selecting principals as mentors, care will be taken to select only those whose schools are sufficiently strong that they will not suffer as a result of the principal being a mentor and spending time and energy working with another school leader.

4. Mentors and mentees must agree to the following minimum time commitment:

- Weekly e-mails and phone calls.
- Monthly after-school meetings.
- Two school site visits per semester. The school visits may be a full day or, at minimum, a half day. One visit should be at the mentor's school and the other at the mentee's school.

5. Mentors will have an understanding of the achievement data, demographics, and community of the mentee's school.

6. The selection of topics on which each pair of principals works is at the discretion of the mentor and the mentee. In fact, the process of deciding what to work on is an important part of establishing a good working relationship between mentor and mentee. However, work will concentrate throughout the year to enhance knowledge and skills in the following leadership areas:

- Day-to-day school operation.
- SIP process (School Improvement Planning).
- School culture and professional learning communities.
- Building effective leadership teams and developing effective leadership skills.

7. Mentors will meet monthly with the director of professional development as a group for professional development to study and enhance the mentoring experience. These meetings will be used to design the monthly mentor-mentee meeting, making sure to incorporate a to-do list for administrators for each month.

8. Mentors will be required to complete the mentor service expectation sheet, the mentor-mentee discussion guide, and the mentoring log.

9. Mentors will be compensated in the form of a supplement in the amount of \$1500 for the amount of time and energy they are expected to spend with and on behalf of their mentees.

10. Evaluation will be based on whether there is evidence of changes in practice on the part of the mentee and improvements in student and/or teacher performance. In addition, mentors will assess their success based on the nature of their relationship with the mentees. Other evidence that will be assessed is written mentor logs and notes, mentor service expectations sheets, and mentor-mentee discussion guides.

CONCLUSION

There is no question that the job of school principal is difficult, multifaceted, and extremely demanding. Principals, and in particular new principals, need a variety of supports to help them on their way to success. Although there is a great deal of professional development that can be offered to groups — and much of this is critical to a principal being able to lead a school — there is also some support that can best be provided on a one-to-one basis.