PREPARING PRINCIPALS
FOR A CHANGING
WORLD

Lessons from Effective School Leadership Programs

Linda Darling-Hammond       Debra Meyerson
Michelle LaPointe           Margaret Terry Orr

In collaboration with

Margaret Barber       Carol Cohen
Kimberly Dailey        Stephen Davis
Joseph Flessa          Joseph Murphy
Raymond Pecheone       Naida Tushnet
PREPARING PRINCIPALS FOR A CHANGING WORLD
PREPARING PRINCIPALS
FOR A CHANGING
WORLD

Lessons from Effective School Leadership Programs

Linda Darling-Hammond    Debra Meyerson
Michelle LaPointe        Margaret Terry Orr

In collaboration with

Margaret Barber    Carol Cohen
Kimberly Dailey     Stephen Davis
Joseph Flessa       Joseph Murphy
Raymond Pecheone    Naida Tushnet

Jossey-Bass
A Wiley Imprint
www.josseybass.com
# CONTENTS

| Preface | vii |
| Acknowledgments | ix |
| About the Authors | xi |

1. Developing School Leadership: The Current Challenge .......................... 1
2. Studying Exemplary Programs ................................................................ 23
3. Preparing New Leaders: What Successful Programs Do ......................... 45
5. Evaluating Programs: What Well-Prepared Principals Know and Are Able to Do ........................................ 99
6. Supporting Exemplary Programs .............................................................. 123
7. Creating Policy for Leadership Development ......................................... 149
8. Pulling it All Together: Conclusions and Implications ......................... 179

Appendix A: Research Methods ................................................................. 193
Appendix B: Survey Instruments ............................................................... 217
Appendix C: Cross-State Comparisons of Principals’ Survey Responses ........ 281
References .................................................................................................. 301
Index .......................................................................................................... 309
Preface

Principals play a vital role in creating successful schools, but existing knowledge on the best ways to prepare and develop highly qualified candidates is sparse. What are the essential elements of good leadership? How are successful leadership development programs designed? What program structures provide the best learning environments? What governing and financial policies are needed to sustain good programming? The Stanford School Leadership Study, which is the basis for this book, was a major research effort commissioned by the Wallace Foundation to begin to answer these questions.

The study was motivated by two key premises: first, that high-quality teaching and learning for all students depend substantially on effective school leadership—that is, leadership that promotes and sustains learning gains for students, teachers, schools, and districts. The second premise is that American schools are hindered in providing effective education for all students, in part due to a lack of supports for developing such leadership. The purpose of the study was to identify effective ways of developing strong school leaders who are equipped to create effective learning environments for America’s diverse student populations.

In this study, which was undertaken by the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute in conjunction with the Finance Project and WestEd, we examined eight highly advanced principal development programs that address key issues in developing strong leaders. The study analyzes both principal-preparation and in-service professional-development programs that have been recognized as exemplary. It identifies the structure and content of each of these programs and investigates whether program graduates exhibit effective practices as school leaders. In addition, the study examines the state, district, and institutional policies and funding mechanisms that support and constrain these programs.

Findings from this study have been reported in a series of publications for practitioners, decision makers, and academics, including a literature review that provides an overview of current trends in principal preparation and professional development, a set of case studies providing an in-depth description of each program, and a final technical report. These
pieces can be accessed from the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute’s Web site, on the School Leadership Study’s landing page, located at http://seli.stanford.edu/research/sls.htm. This book pulls all the findings together and develops recommendations for policy and practice. It should be useful to researchers, policymakers, and practitioners interested in developing strong leaders for all schools.

Overview of the Book

In Chapter Two we describe the programs we studied and our research methods. Chapter Three summarizes data on the outcomes of these programs, illustrating how they differ from most other programs in their ability to develop principals who feel well prepared and who exhibit practices associated with effective leadership. Chapter Four describes how the programs accomplish these outcomes, drawing out the unique features of each as well as those that are common across programs. In Chapter Five we examine the range of policy levers that influence leadership development, comparing state policy contexts in our eight focal states and analyzing the policy contexts underlying the exemplary programs. Chapter Six summarizes our analysis of the costs of different programs and describes the different funding strategies used to finance programs. Chapter Seven provides a summary of the study’s findings and its implications, and in the final chapter we offer a set of recommendations for program leaders and district, state, and foundation policymakers.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In any large undertaking like this, there are many people responsible for the results. First, we want to acknowledge the financial and intellectual support of the Wallace Foundation, which has supported research and technical assistance to improve leadership in American schools on a scale and with perseverance unmatched by any other foundation. The team at Wallace played a major role in conceptualizing and critiquing the work as it progressed, greatly improving its quality and utility. For this, we thank Christine DeVita, Richard Laine, Ed Pauly, Mary Mattis, and Lee Mitgang.

Linda Darling-Hammond and Debra Meyerson, who served as co-principal investigators for the research, were ably assisted by research director Michelle LaPointe, who coordinated all the work of the case-study researchers and the collaborating organizations. WestEd administered the surveys under the capable leadership of Naida Tushnet with the assistance of Kimberly Dailey. Terry Orr and Stelios Orphanos took major responsibility for analyzing these data. The Finance Project conducted the cost analyses under the direction of Carol Cohen. Without their competent collaboration, this study would never have been accomplished.

In addition, we were supported by a skillful group of researchers who collected data about the programs and policies and helped develop the set of initial case studies. They include Margaret Barber, Stephen Davis, Joseph Flessa, Joseph Murphy, and Raymond Pecheone. We are enormously grateful to them for contributing their talent and insights to this work. Mo Fong and Jason Wingard directed the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute while this study was launched under its auspices, and they provided expert help to get the research off the ground. Lisa Marie Carlson provided invaluable administrative assistance throughout the project. We thank all of these partners whose help was so essential to the success of the work.

We also thank our colleagues at the School Redesign Network in the School of Education and in the Graduate School of Business at Stanford, who have helped us think hard about strong leadership and how to
Acknowledgments

develop it, so that schools can become supportive learning environments for children and the adults who serve them. Finally, we thank all the leadership preparation and development program officials, faculty, students, alumni, and their district partners for sharing their thoughts, experiences, and insights into understanding how and in what ways their programs develop leaders who can, with teachers and other staff, create schools and support learning for all children.
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Linda Darling-Hammond is the Charles E. Ducommun Professor of Education at Stanford University, where she serves as co-director of the School Redesign Network and the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute. Her research, teaching, and policy work focus on teaching quality, school reform, and educational equity. She is co-founder of a charter high school in East Palo Alto that seeks to offer powerful teaching and learning opportunities to students who are historically underserved in American schools. Among her more than 300 publications are the award-winning books *The Right to Learn*, *Powerful Learning*, *Powerful Teacher Education*, *Teaching as the Learning Profession*, and *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World*.

Debra Meyerson is an associate professor at Stanford University’s School of Education and (by courtesy) Graduate School of Business and co-founder and director of Stanford’s Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society and its program on Private Initiatives and Public Education. Her research has focused on conditions and change strategies that foster constructive and equitable gender and race relations in organizations. Her more recent projects investigate scaling and innovation in the charter school field, the role of philanthropy in shaping educational innovation, and conditions that foster learning and distributed leadership in organizations. She is the author of *Tempered Radicals: How Everyday Leaders Inspire Change at Work* and over 60 articles in scholarly and mainstream publications.

Michelle LaPointe has over fifteen years of experience evaluating programs for children and analyzing educational polices. LaPointe has worked for university research centers, as a consultant to school districts, and for the U.S. Department of Education (ED). She was the Research Director for the Stanford School Leadership Study. More recently, she served as co-principal investigator of an evaluation commissioned by the Wallace Foundation to assess the impact of their district grants on school leadership preparation programs. While an analyst at ED, she coordinated national evaluations of school choice initiatives, comprehensive school reform, and bilingual education. Dr. LaPointe co-authored the

Margaret Terry Orr is on the faculty of the Bank Street College of Education where she directs the Future School Leaders Academy and other partnership leadership preparation programs. For the past six years, Dr. Orr has co-chaired the national UCEA/LTEL-SIG Taskforce on Evaluating Leadership Preparation Programs. Through the taskforce, she has been comparing the impact of programs on their graduates as leaders of school improvement, and is collaborating on statewide evaluations of program effectiveness. She has authored several research articles on effective leadership preparation and its evaluation, and is coauthor of Developing Effective Principals Through Collaborative Inquiry. Her research also focuses on effective leadership to improve low-performing urban schools.
PREPARING PRINCIPALS FOR A CHANGING WORLD