

The Principal Residency Network Program Components and Requirements

Performances

Learning Plan and the Residency

Each aspiring principal develops an individualized learning plan that determines her/his particular program of study. The aspiring principal (AP) crafts the learning plan in conjunction with the mentor principal (MP) and the project director, ensuring that it addresses the PRN standards (RI Leadership Standards, ISLLC standards, and technology standards). The learning plan remains a work in progress that the AP revises regularly. It outlines proposed project work, research, and reading and explains how this work will lead to proficiency in the program's standards.

There are also common core experiences each aspiring principal is expected to participate in/lead, read, or complete. Aspiring principals document these, as well as all their other work, in the learning plan and provide evidence of accomplishment in the portfolio.

Action Research Project

Aspiring principals choose a challenging action research project focused on increasing equity in their schools through which they develop essential skills in instructional leadership. Project-based work involves identifying a problem or need, analyzing school-based data, developing strategies for change, engaging stake holders to build consensus, planning and implementing the plan of action, evaluating outcomes, and making mid-course corrections. AP's review critical literature associated with their project and visit other schools to inform their decision-making.

Sharing and Reflecting

Shadowing

AP's shadow mentor for a two weeks in the first few weeks of the school year.

Written Reflection

AP's write weekly reflections that they share with MP's and receive written feedback.

Aspiring and Mentor Meetings

Each team meets daily for at least a half hour to check-in on logistical matters and to promote continual communication. In addition, teams are expected to schedule weekly extended meetings to debrief the events of the week and to plan the coming week. At these meetings, mentors give critical feedback to their AP's and discuss ways in which the AP's can improve their practice. To prepare for these meetings, pairs are encouraged to share their journals or other reflective writing.

Readings

Aspiring principals are required to read current publications, articles, books with their cohort and on their own to meet their specific needs. The learning plan identifies required and recommended readings.

Institutes and Network Meetings

Institutes and network meetings allow program participants to spend concentrated, in-depth time together as a broad learning community. Aspiring and mentor principals come together for four afternoon network meeting and a two-day institute in the fall and the spring to share their work, receive critical feedback, and take part in seminars and workshops. The network also comes together in January and June for exhibitions. In January, first exhibitions take place. At the spring retreat, participants present their project work and portfolios

Workshops, Trainings, and Conferences

AP's attend workshops, training, and courses as these are available and as they suite the AP's specific needs.

School Visits and SALT

Aspiring principals are expected to visit at least four other schools that represent a diversity of demographics, level and or size of program. The purpose of these visits is twofold – to expose participants to different school practices, designs, and cultures and to network with other school principals. Visiting AP's write a detailed account of the visit, which is included in their portfolios. One of the visits must be a SALT visit.

Feedback Circle

Each aspiring principal enlists at least three members of the school community to participate in an on-going evaluation of his/her learning and growth. The group provides the feedback and support necessary for the AP to grow as a leader. The AP is expected to check in with members of the group regularly and to meet with them formally at least two times in the course of the year.

Assessment

The handbook includes instructions and a rubric for each assessment. The assignments are turned in to the director electronically or by paper. Often the mentor, feedback circle members, and PRN cohort provide feedback. The director also provides feedback in writing and indicates if parts will need to be revised.

Vision Paper

Aspiring principals articulate their vision and explain how it developed, how it guides their work and what questions or puzzles still remain. They examine their own vision in light of the school's philosophy and structure and then describe how their action research supports their vision and contributes to school improvement efforts.

Portfolios

Aspiring principals develop extensive portfolios that illustrate their action research work, other residency work, writing, reflection, research, and reading. The portfolios manifest both the depth and the breadth of residency-based study and provide physical documented evidence of completed work and learning. Graduates use the portfolio, along with the final transcript, to demonstrate proficiency in each of the six program standards and demonstrate their leadership experiences and work readiness to both Departments of Education – for purposes of certification – and potential employers.

Exhibitions

Twice each year, aspiring principals present their project work to a panel of other AP's, MP's, faculty, and members of their school community. These presentations, called exhibitions, give participants a chance to reflect on the growth awarded by their in-school experiences, connect that growth to the program competencies, receive critical feedback, and identify learning areas that demand further work. At each exhibition, panel members fill out feedback forms that help inform subsequent revisions of the learning plan and document the participants' leadership development.

Mid-Course Assessment and Narrative

Aspiring and mentor principals write detailed narratives assessing the AP's work following an assessment process. These documents outline the project work done in the school and give critical public feedback to the AP.

Final Paper

The final paper is an opportunity for the aspiring principal to reflect on the growth of their leadership, learning throughout the residency, and plans for future learning. The paper consists of three parts:

1. understanding yourself as a leader
2. crystallizing your leadership learning
3. charting your course

Drafts are distributed to three mentors in addition to the project director, for review and feedback.

Final Assessment

Mentor principals and the project director complete a final assessment of the aspiring principal and determine each to be distinguished or proficient. A designation of less than proficient requires additional time beyond the one-year residency; however, every effort is made to identify and subsequently address these needs at the mid-year assessment.