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If we want more students to experience powerful learning, we need to create development pathways that allow school and district leaders to benefit from the same blended, competency-based and deeper learning experiences that they seek to create for students.

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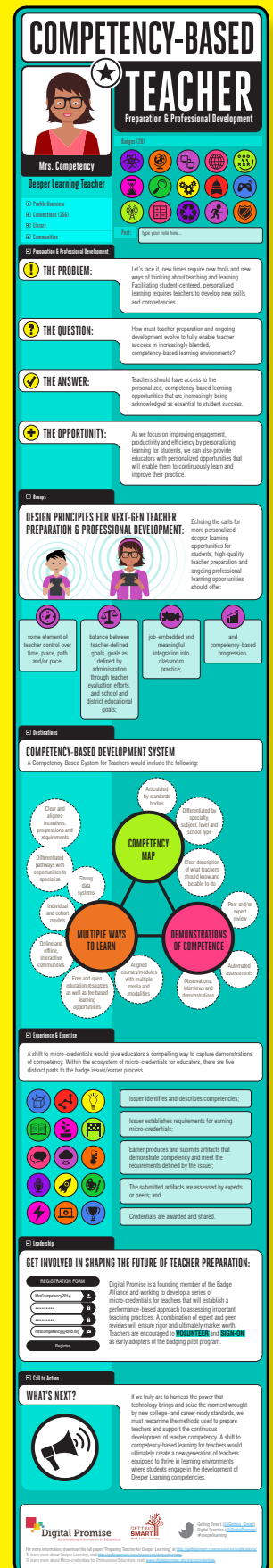
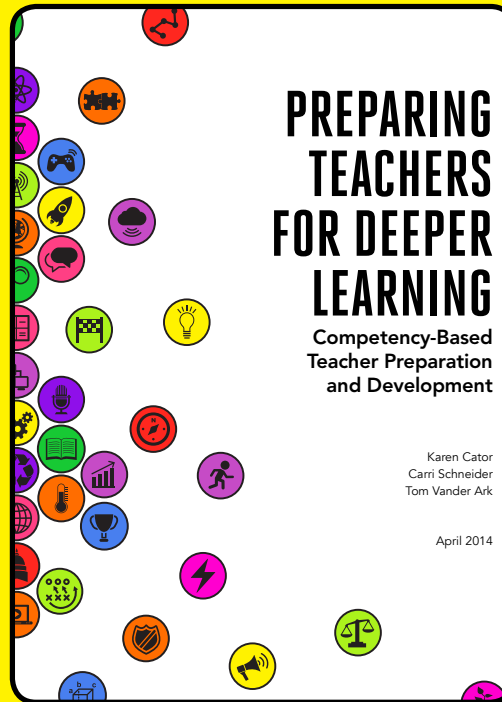
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BACKGROUND

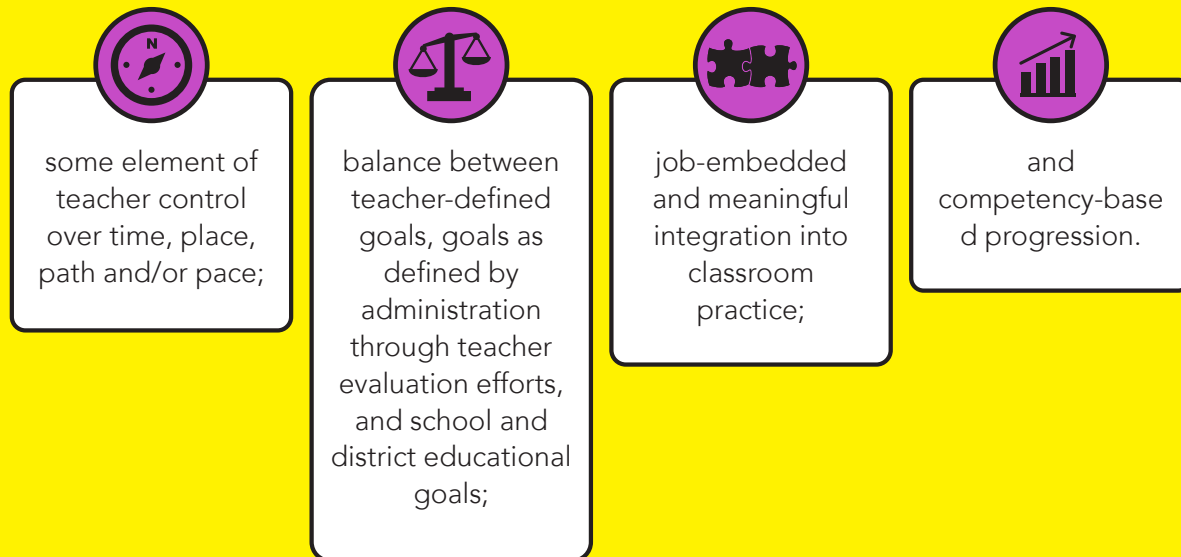
Last year Getting Smart and Digital Promise teamed up to describe a vision for the next generation of teacher preparation and development. In "Preparing Teachers for Deeper Learning," we explored the following questions:

If the goals of American education are being redefined, and the opportunities are expanded with advances in technology (the Internet and digital content) how must the role of the educator evolve? And, how must teacher preparation and ongoing professional development evolve to fully enable teacher success in this new environment?

The paper outlined the attributes of next generation teacher preparation and made recommendations to support the redesign of teacher preparation and development systems that equip teachers to create and thrive in deeper learning environments.



We described a new approach to high-quality teacher preparation and ongoing professional learning opportunities that echo the personalized, competency-based, blended learning environments best for students. The design principles for the next generation of educator preparation and development included:



The paper concluded:

"If we truly are to harness the power that technology brings and seize the moment wrought by new college- and career-ready standards supported by aligned assessments, we must reexamine the processes and methods used to prepare teachers, accredit institutions doing the preparing and support continuous development of teacher competency throughout their professional careers."

This follow-up paper, *Preparing Leaders for Deeper Learning*, picks up where the first paper left off by applying the same research questions to school, district and network leadership.

As a growing body of schools and districts recognize the need

▼ ***for deeper, blended, competency-based learning environments for students, how must the role of***
▼ ***leaders evolve to create and sustain them? And how***
▼ ***then must leader preparation and ongoing professional***
▼ ***development evolve to fully enable teacher and leader***
▼ ***success in this new environment.***

THE PROBLEM



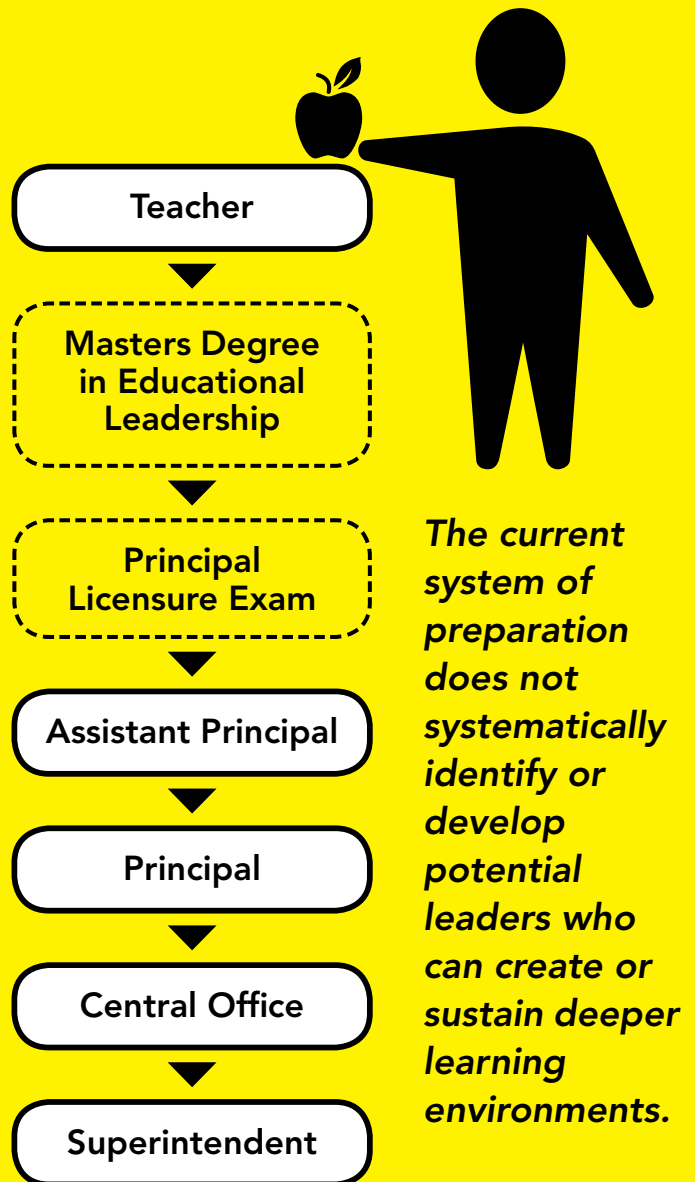
Deeper Learning Through a Global Lens from Asia Society's International Studies Schools Network

At a time when society is becoming increasingly global and complex, and technology and the Internet increasingly power learning, the need to engage students in deeper learning experiences has never been greater. In and out of school, opportunities abound to support students as they learn new skills to tackle challenging interpersonal issues of friendship, cross-cultural understanding and conflict resolution, as well as timely, pressing global issues like the availability of clean water and nutritious and affordable food, poverty and climate change.

At the same time, the ability of teachers to orchestrate deeper learning opportunities goes hand in hand with the capacity of school and district leaders to fully grasp the importance of deeper learning, support a culture of inquiry and to model critical thinking, collaboration and creative approaches to challenges. Ideally, these leaders will draw from their own deeper learning experiences. Where will these leaders come from, and how will they develop their skills to continuously improve throughout their careers?

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE CURRENT SYSTEM OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPING LEADERS?

- ▶ In most schools, teachers are regularly faced with an “either-or” choice, that might exist within inside a linear career trajectory that forces a jump from teacher to leader, most often without competency-based, authentic development experiences to adequately prepare for supervision, project management and the roles required to lead for deeper learning.
- ▶ The current leadership system relies on self-identification by teachers who wish to become leaders and then typically requires enrolling in a masters program in educational leadership, taking courses online or in the evenings, passing a principal licensure exam—hoping the school district approves class time as professional learning hours—later realizing that much of the program does not even apply to the leadership competencies actually required to lead in a school or district setting.
- ▶ Even the most well-intentioned educational leadership programs, often that might exist within inside traditional university structures, aren’t creating the type of training required to give future leaders the job-embedded, authentic learning opportunities required to create or sustain deeper learning environments.



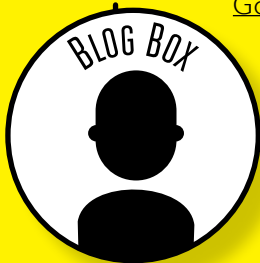
Look for “Blog Boxes” like these throughout the paper that feature highlights from more than 50 blogs in the “Preparing Leaders for Deeper Learning” series on GettingSmart.com. Each contains a link to the full article for your reference.

WHAT IF?

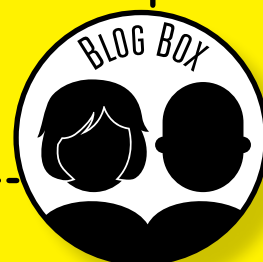


What if, instead of a linear path to leadership that forces teachers to choose between teaching and leading, they had a diverse web of career paths from which to choose? Imagine a “both-and” teacher and leader system that would replace the “either-or” teacher or leader system. Imagine a leadership development system in which preparation and development were inextricably linked. Instead of one path, the system would consist of a dynamic and customizable collection of paths driven by a set of job-embedded opportunities to demonstrate learning, all tied to professional goals. Imagine if every teacher had his or her own plan outlining learning opportunities to improve *current* roles and to chart paths toward *future* leadership goals.

“What if teachers took all that time, money and energy and channeled it into actually learning more about how to do their current jobs better and prep for future roles? What if districts (like most large employers) provided training and development associated with professional growth instead of requiring teachers to gain degrees of limited value?” Leadership Development in U.S. Schools: The Opposite of Good, Tom Vander Ark, CEO, Getting Smart



“Why can’t today’s one-teacher-one-classroom design work for deeper learning at scale? Because districts expect principals to be ‘instructional leaders,’ helping 30 or more teachers each achieve instructional excellence. Combined with the other roles a school leader must play, that’s a responsibility few execute well. Too few gain leadership experience before the principalship, and the number of teachers they lead is too large to help each one improve on the job. Then, the best leaders often earn ‘promotions’ into the central office, where they are somehow expected to ensure the success of 30 or 40 schools. None of this worked very well in the era of basic learning. It’s a train wreck in the era of deeper learning.” For Deeper Learning, Transform Schools Into Leadership Machines, Bryan Hassel and Emily Ayscue Hassel, co-directors, Public Impact



WHY DEEPER LEARNING?

According to its proponents and practitioners, deeper learning means students are developing and using their knowledge and skills in a way that prepares them for real life. The deeper learning framework describes six competencies for students to develop:

- 1 Master Core Academic Content
- 2 Think Critically and Solve Complex Problems
- 3 Work Collaboratively
- 4 Communicate Effectively
- 5 Learn How to Learn
- 6 Develop Academic Mindsets

Evidence confirms that deeper learning environments positively influence student academic outcomes and social-emotional factors.¹ A decade of research confirms that school leaders play a vital role in impacting student achievement.² As more schools realize that a focus on the development of deeper learning competencies can contribute to college- and career-ready goals, it becomes increasingly important to build the cadre of leaders prepared to both create and sustain these environments in which students and teachers can thrive.

Addressing the deeper learning leadership challenge is not only important, but it is possible.



Getting Smart Deeper Learning

Getting Smart's work in deeper learning traces back to 2012 with How Digital Learning Contributes to Deeper Learning, which identifies three ways that digital learning promotes deeper learning and 15 new student roles. In 2014, we released three deeper learning reports. The first, Deeper Learning for Every Student, Every Day, profiles 20 deeper learning schools to dispel current myths and to show it can happen anytime, anywhere and with any teacher. Next, in partnership with Asia Society, ConnectEd California, Envision Education and New Tech Network, we released Assessment for Deeper Learning: A Survey of Performance Assessment & Mastery-Tracking Tools, which outlines 12 key features of performance-based assessment systems and identifies barriers to obtaining better tools. Our most recent report, Preparing Teachers for Deeper Learning, produced in partnership with Digital Promise, outlines a new vision for competency-based teacher preparation and professional development that better equips teachers to create and sustain deeper learning environments.

1. See for example: May, 2014. "Study of Deeper Learning: Opportunities and Outcomes." AIR: American Institutes for Research. <http://www.air.org/project/study-deeper-learning-opportunities-and-outcomes>

2. Marzano, R. J.; Waters, T.; & B. McNulty (2005). School Leadership that Works: From Research to Results. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

OUR GOALS

- ▶ To describe a vision for the future of education leader preparation and development that would address the current gap between principal preparation and the environments in which they will serve;
- ▶ To highlight the voices of practicing leaders and involve them in shaping the vision;
- ▶ To share examples of programs and organizations guiding the way toward a new system of leadership development; and
- ▶ To build support for a new vision of leadership preparation and development that ensures deeper learning.

OUR PROCESS

To capture a diverse set of voices, Getting Smart cast a wide net—ranging from current practicing principals to representatives from pioneering programs and organizations whose missions address educational leadership challenges. The team reviewed the literature on leadership development and spent a year tracking the progress of high-performing educational leadership programs, talking to practitioners and researchers at conferences and events to learn from others passionate about this work; this yielded dozens of conversations and guest blog contributions to inform the research.

What follows is a vision for preparing leaders for deeper learning, informed by approximately 50 guest blog contributions and interviews in response to such questions as:

- ▶ As schools shift to personalized, competency-based deeper learning, how will the role of the leader change? What sorts of skills, habits and mindsets will support these significant shifts in education?
- ▶ Are there gaps between current leadership preparation and professional development programs and the realities of schools and school districts? How would you describe the gaps, and what suggestions would you offer on bridging them?
- ▶ What role do leaders play in terms of creating and supporting deeper learning environments? What skills are inherent in deeper learning leaders?
- ▶ What personalized learning and work experiences help prepare leaders to lead in deeper learning schools? What best practices exist to help leaders cultivate a deeper learning experience?

The Deeper Learning Video Series from Hewlett Foundation and The Teaching Channel offers more than 50 videos that showcase 10 Deeper Learning networks that collectively serve more than 500 schools and 227,000 students.

LEADING TOWARD DEEPER LEARNING

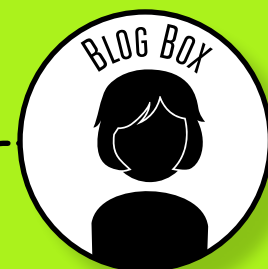
It is challenging to prepare leaders for learning environments that don't yet exist at scale--despite the increasing need for them.

We know deeper learning environments hold the potential to support all students and to develop necessary skills for success in college, the workforce and modern civic life. A wide body of research supports that teachers and principals prove critical factors in supporting student success. It's a given that classroom teachers must master these skills so they can orchestrate deeper learning experiences. But education leaders at all levels also must understand, articulate and model deeper learning skills, while supporting a culture of inquiry and risk-taking so the system is coherent and aligned. If we want more deeper learning environments for students, we need more teachers and leaders who can "lead toward deeper learning." We need leaders who can recognize and nurture already existing "pockets of deeper learning" to inspire school-wide expansion of those practices.

There are six areas of deeper learning that have been identified as critical for today's students. They are also critical for the development of education leadership. Education leaders should embrace and model deeper learning skills and expect everyone within their organizations to practice them with increasing competence.

1. Master core content. Education leadership is its own domain, and learning the core processes, procedures, history and language is critical as a basis for grounding analysis and making decisions in a local context. Much of this can be learned through experience, formal classes, reading and discussion.

2. Think critically and solve complex problems. Leaders are constantly charged with a changing landscape, political pressures and myriad challenging situations. They must be able to draw on tested methods and processes for analyzing a complex question, problem, issue, or perspective, to identify its relevant parts or dimensions and consider possible approaches. They must recognize facts, evaluate the reliability and



"For many teachers across the country, learning about learning has become really interesting. There are so many choices and modes of learning at a teacher's fingertips. That's the power of personalized learning—but not yet an experience most teachers have." [Deeper Learning Really IS Everywhere, Ariana Witt](#), communications associate, Alliance for Excellent Education

If we want more deeper learning environments for students, we need more teachers and leaders who can "lead toward deeper learning."

validity of new information, analyze evidence and incorporate ideas from multiple sources and perspectives. Also, they must develop skills of changing course when a planned approach doesn't work. This kind of critical thinking can be theoretically learned in formal environments, but the ability to apply it develops over a lifetime of trial and reflection.

3. Work collaboratively. Leaders must build their trusted teams and develop shared leadership throughout the organization, including teachers and students. This means setting and reviewing goals, sharing information, listening, developing a culture of “yes, and” and encouraging questions in order to work productively toward goals. Although conflict resolution skills and other skills of collaboration can be learned in a formal environment, the application of those skills emerges on the job—every day.

4. Communicate effectively to inspire and communicate a vision. Of course, communication goes a long way towards staving off conflict and developing shared understanding. But leaders must be able to identify varied audiences and create clear, accessible and useful messages tailored for each one. And since communication goes two ways, a necessary skill to hone involves garnering feedback from reliable sources by engaging with questions, critiques, counter arguments and suggestions.

5. Learn how to learn. Underpinning all of these skills is the motivation and ability to seek out intellectual, creative and personal challenges that lead to growth and learning. A lifelong learner knows to set personal goals and track progress, recognize what you don't know and seek support and feedback from others. Taking risks and supporting others in doing so requires understanding the role that mistakes play and even the power of failure, leading to continuous improvement and learning. Reflection is a must.

6. Develop leadership habits of mind. All of these skills contain aspects of the best habits for leading in the complicated, people-intensive endeavor that is public education. The best leaders reveal persistence and engagement in the face of challenges. The relationships and support systems they build, plus their core ethical values, will enable the transformation of a system by engaging teachers and students to achieve at increasingly high levels.

Fullan and Langworthy contend:

“... We find more and more leaders—students, teachers and administrators alike—who [recognize] and embrace the new possibilities ... The good news is that things are converging to create the distinct possibility that a critical mass of radically new learning practices are emerging. There is a good chance that these developments could turn out to be the new norm one day soon. Leadership at all levels has never been more critical. The best news is that leaders who want to make a difference now have an opportunity to have a huge impact.”³

3. Fullan, M. and Langworthy, M. “A Rich Seam: How New Pedagogies Find Deep Learning.” Pearson. January 2014. http://www.michaelfullan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/3897.Rich_Seam_web.pdf

HOW DO WE MAKE THE MOST OF THIS IMPACT OPPORTUNITY?

Getting there requires answering two fundamental questions:

ROLES

What should deeper learning leaders know and be able to do?

RECOMMENDATIONS

What would a system of preparation and development need to include in order to prepare deeper learning leaders?

ROLES:

What Should Deeper Learning Leaders Know and Be Able To Do?

Recently, the Council of Chief State School Officers ([CCSSO](#)) and the National Policy Board for Educational Administration ([NPBEA](#)) released an updated set of standards for educational leaders. The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards ([ISLLC](#)) describe what school leaders (principals, assistant principals, superintendents and other district heads) should know and demonstrate in order to prepare students for college and the workforce.

The updated standards may be a competent standard for managing for a defined instructional environment, but they incompletely address the design opportunity that best leads to significant improvement within deeper learning outcomes.

[New Leaders](#) and the [Bush Institute](#) recently released [Great Principals at Scale](#), which provides a framework for enabling great school leadership across a district. Like the CCSSO standards, this describes the technical job of running an aligned instructional system but doesn't address creating and sustaining new systems.

When defining school leadership, leadership coach and CEO of Future Management Systems [Lyle Kirtman](#) suggests a broader focus. Kirtman says, "Our educational leaders need to broaden, not narrow, their leadership competencies to be successful in today's world."

Kirtman's book, [Leadership and Teams](#), outlines seven leadership competencies starting with challenging the status quo—questioning common practices and traditions, taking risks and looking for innovations to get results. While the other competencies resemble the CCSSO/ NPBEA standards, Kirtman's place stronger emphasis on communications and building external networks and partnerships.

While these recent studies signal a growing awareness of problems related to existing educational leader preparation and development, they fall short of acknowledging the challenges specific to leading in next-gen learning environments.

As a field, what leaders should know and be able to do remains nebulous. The current leadership preparation system largely creates leaders based on outdated notions of what leadership means and a sequence of courses designed to meet accreditation standards rather than leadership competencies identified by schools and districts.

The results of dozens of conversations and interviews revealed that leading towards deeper learning will require leaders to become proficient in a number of new and varied roles. We acknowledge the technical and managerial roles that will always be a part of each school and district leader's job. The recommendations that follow describe how a new system for preparation and professional development would create a robust talent development strategy to alleviate the tension of simply adding more roles to an already complex and often-overwhelming job description.

Our research has produced ten roles that are required to lead toward deeper learning. The graphic below describes how each role fits into a process of deeper learning implementation. The pages that follow describe each role in more detail and offer illustrative insights from current practitioners and innovators in educational leadership preparation and development.

SET AND CONVEY VISION FOR DEEPER LEARNING



Vision Builders &
Mission Drivers



Conversation
Leaders

INNOVATE & MANAGE SHIFTS TO DEEPER LEARNING



Design
Thinkers



Smart
Innovators



Change
Managers

LEAD FOR DEEPER LEARNING OUTCOMES



Deeper Learning
Instructional Leaders



Distributive
Leaders



Advocates
for All Students

ENGAGE & SCALE DEEPER LEARNING



Civic and Community
Catalysts



Policy
Advocates



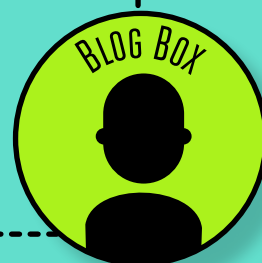
Vision Builders & Mission Drivers

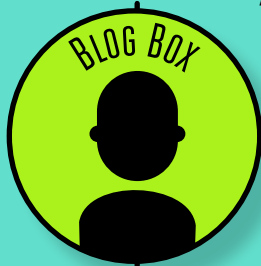
Leading for deeper learning means that leaders understand and are committed to the concept. They are able to set up what deeper learning environments look like as the starting point for education. The [Deeper Learning Planning Guide](#) is a useful resource, providing a framework for establishing a vision and useful strategies for implementing a theory of action. To help the institution, organization or school uphold the vision, transformative leaders can create a vision and craft a mission to drive goal-setting, strategy and implementation.



Engaging Students in Work That Matters at High Tech High

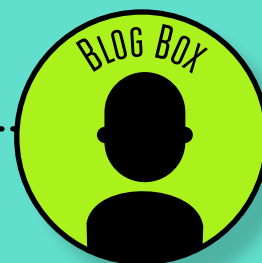
"Leadership cultivates relationships. On Saturday I attended a community working session in El Paso led by deputy superintendent Ivonne Durant. She shares her vision for active and engaged learning with passion. She listens with patience. She understands people and systems. It's obvious that she values staff and community relationships. Powerful tools can help us know our students better; they can help teachers connect them with powerful experiences. But it's leaders [like Ivonne and others] that create the context—from classroom to city—for life-shaping relationships." [The Primacy of Relationships](#), Tom Vander Ark





"I think the number one mindset I engage with is that leaders have to look at whether or not they are willing to have ownership of the vision of their schools vs. seeing themselves as being compliant. It's not an either/or. As a leader, you should stand for what you believe in and figure out how to address the external work as you go as opposed to looking at the external demands and fitting into that first. The permissions seeking mindset is detrimental. Instead, leaders can take a real leadership stance and buffer staff from the external demands." [On School Leadership: Mindsets for Visionary Leaders](#) featuring an interview with Michael Soguero, director of professional development, Eagle Rock Professional Development Center

In [Advice for School Principals on Implementing Competency Education](#), Brian Stack, principal of Sanborn Regional High School in Kingston, New Hampshire, suggests "setting the stage by creating a sense of urgency and pulling together a guiding team." He then advocates for deciding what to do and developing the change vision and strategy, and communicating that vision for understanding and buy-in by all stakeholders. Finally, he suggests empowering others to get involved, resolving not to quit and establishing a new culture. Stack writes, "It is the role of the principal to create the sense of urgency that will motivate others to want to act immediately."



[New Leaders](#) has been training leaders for high performing schools for 13 years. Their [Urban Excellence Framework](#) has "personal leadership" as its foundation. The framework includes: Belief-Based, Goal-Driven Leadership, Culturally Competent Leadership, Interpersonal Leadership, Adaptive Leadership and Resilient Leadership. Principals must "strike a balance between being very firm about non-negotiables—and demonstrating genuine engagement with others, humility and relationship-building." For more, see [Preparing Principals: Consider the Adaptive Challenge](#), Tom Vander Ark

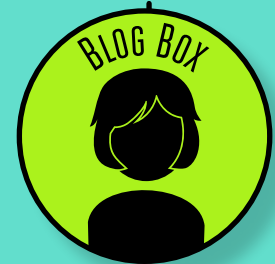
Conversation Leaders

As community builders, education leaders must be great listeners, conversation leaders, organizers and campaign leaders. They need to be well-versed in political psychology, campaign strategy, communications and social media. Leading community service projects and campaigns can be invaluable for aspiring educational leaders. Learning to cultivate a positive social media presence is a must. Communicating opportunity and results to parents becomes particularly important in portfolio districts. Conversation leaders build intimacy, interactivity, inclusion and intentionality. Education leaders share a directional vision and shape a series of temporary agreements that provide clarity around next steps.

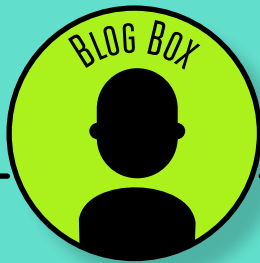
Conversation leaders are able to develop a shared vision of deeper learning and can craft temporary agreements that move a community a step closer to that vision. Public change management is the art of agreement crafting.



"In a recent brief, portfolio strategy guru Paul Hill and his Center for Reinventing Public Education colleague Shannon Murtagh added an important role for leaders to our running list by insisting that principals leading transformational efforts should be the 'lead communicators.' While their piece focuses primarily on leaders in the context of school systems using portfolio strategies ('autonomous schools held accountable for their performance'), their assertion that 'empowered principals can be assets for public engagement' extends to education leaders in other settings as well. Hill and Murtagh write, 'School districts are always announcing new strategies ... If the strategy is to survive long enough to make a difference, leaders must be prepared to handle criticism and maintain a positive balance between support and opposition. They must develop new constituencies from the civic, cultural, business, foundation and higher education communities ...'⁴ They suggest that building a strong coalition of diverse stakeholders will require a transformation in the way traditional communication occurs. This is because typical school or district communication is episodic (focused on good news announcements and bad news crisis management) and centralized (with the district leaders at the core of communication). Leading for deeper learning requires us to flip this and encourage leaders to be Lead Communicators." EdLeaders as Lead Communicators, Carri Schneider, director of publications, Getting Smart

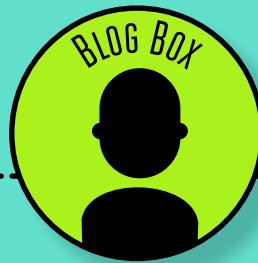


4. Hill, P. and Murtagh, S. "Principals: The Lead Communicators in the Portfolio Strategy." CRPE Portfolio Strategy. February 2015. <http://www.crpe.org/sites/default/files/crpe-principals-lead-communicators-portfolio-strategy-brief.pdf>



"Schools are social institutions, the health of which depends on the temporary agreements among stakeholders. Superintendents and principals are the parties most responsible for these agreements, whether articulated or otherwise more subtly understood. Schools are not unusual in this regard. All organizations orbit around a set of agreements, but schools require an unusual number of people be party to the agreements, the agreements are unusually complex, the stakes are unusually high, and school leaders have unusually little control over the parties involved. The scale, complexity, stakes and loosely-coupled nature of the educational enterprise requires leaders to reach out, frame questions, build consensus and enact agreements."

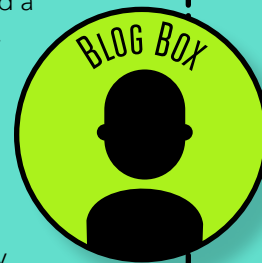
[Agreement Crafting: 10 Lessons on the Politics of Schooling](#), Tom Vander Ark



"Educational technology has morphed the role of K-12 educators into the new hybrid role of 'Edutographers.' With this new role, educators have the unique ability to digitally capture innovative learning experiences occurring in the classroom. Dublin City Schools, located in Dublin Ohio, has utilized [#TheDublinDifference](#). This hashtag was designed to provide clarity about the Dublin learning community. The teachers love the fact that they are able to use "Tell Your Story" to earn graduate credit as they streamline licensure renewal requirements, document evidence for the state mandated evaluation process, communicate with parents and have on-demand access to examine their colleagues' best practices. [Columbus City Schools](#) is the third largest urban district in the Midwest region and suburban [Olentangy Local Schools](#) is recognized as a nationally top performing school district. Both Central-Ohio districts have invested in using personalized professional development, in order for individual teachers to demonstrate how they are facilitating the great learning occurring in their classrooms. Teachers enjoy the opportunity to Capture-Curate-Share a unique view of students' engagement in deeper learning tasks. In this new digital age of transparency and accountability, educators are assuming the essential role of Storyteller-In-Chief." [Capture-Curate-Share: Building a Personalized PD Culture](#), Randall Sampson, founder, Liberty Leadership Development

"The truth is we need more opportunities to be ourselves. Life happens. School happens. I've learned that leadership isn't something that we can script out like Grandma Hayknee's famous pre-prepared Snickerdoodles that comes out perfect everytime. There are always variables, perspectives, histories and cultures that the very best relationship-based leaders always find a way to embed into their own understanding of the situation before making a rash decision. So, here's my question for you: How can educational leaders take advantage of social media to support each other through challenging situations arising daily in a profession where we've added so much to the 'plate' that many of us actually go back and get a second plate (what we'll refer to as working nights and weekends while limiting family time which leads to burnout and troubled relationships with family and friends)? As educators we're not getting any more time put back into our days. One thing we don't do well as a field is maximize the time we do have. This is an area that we are working really hard to innovate at @MCDPEL because you can have great strategies and execution, but if you can't manage your time as a leader, you won't be able to maximize the potential of your efforts."

[Behind MCDPEL's New & Interactive Scenario Podcast for EdLeaders](#), Joe Mazza, leadership innovation manager, University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education

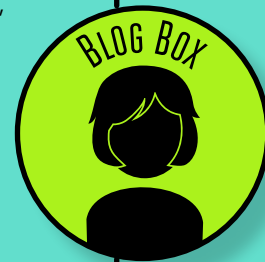




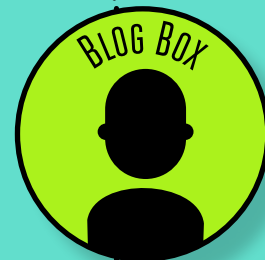
Design Thinkers

While process management is process-centric, design thinking is student-centered. It starts with desired outcomes and remains open to a variety of solutions. IDEO's Sandy Speicher said design thinking means "to connect with the lives of students." Because design thinking relies on borrowing innovations from other fields, experiences with the tools and processes of consulting can be very useful. In addition to problem analysis and presentation skills, consulting provides preparation in group problem solving, ideation, design and planning. IDEO's Tim Brown suggests that takes insight, observation and empathy.

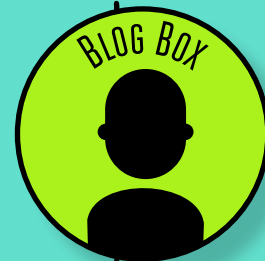
"IDEO and the d.school are currently collaborating to create School Retool. It's a professional development fellowship that helps school leaders redesign school culture using small, scrappy experiments called 'hacks.' Hacks may start small, but they're built on research-based practices that lead to deeper learning, and can create the kind of big change that principals aspire to—namely, preparing students for life in the real world ... Getting into the hack mindset has been the most difficult thing for the principals we've worked with. It's also been the most important." The "Hack" Mindset of School-Wide Change, Sally Madsen, senior design lead, IDEO



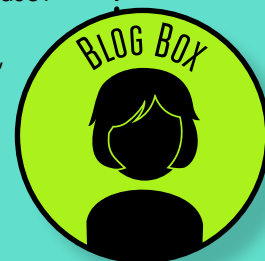
"Courage comes in many forms. Sometimes it's the simplest of these—a willingness to try something different—that can have the biggest impact. Rather than operating from the same school concept that dates back for generations, we've designed an entirely new approach that meets the needs of our students." Four Key Attributes for Deeper Learning Leadership, Kyle McCartney, principal, Oxford Middle School in Oxford, Alabama



"My assumption is that if we are preparing candidates for existing jobs, we are reinforcing the status quo. If, on the other hand, their projects for this module require them to implement real solutions in real contexts, navigating pathways and forming alliances that do not currently exist, they will be better equipped to invent for themselves the jobs our public school students need them to be doing." Update: Leadership for Equity in Washington State, Jeff Petty, founder and director, Puget Sound Consortium for School Innovation



"I was recently at a school with exceptional performance on high stakes tests. While exploring whether to commit to PBL, they struggled to reconcile changing their teaching practices with their current success by traditional measures. What happens if teachers try something new and scores decrease? What will parents say? What will district administrators say? To move school staff and parents past this dilemma, leaders started with questions that refocused them on their mission and vision for the future, What do our students need to be successful in the future? Is traditional academic knowledge enough? What kind of teaching will make our hopes and dreams for our students come true? For other schools, the questions might be about increasing student engagement, building a better school culture, or finding new strategies for raising test scores. When we ground everyone in the why, the how (PBL) becomes crystal clear." 4 Truths about Effective Project-Based Learning Leaders, Jennifer Cruz, director of implementation, Buck Institute for Education



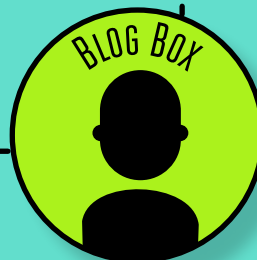
"The best leaders are the ones who are not afraid to try new ways to get results. In fact, these great leaders even reach out to both public and private sector partners to increase their bandwidth to include new opportunities for the students in their districts.

The following are 7 Competencies that will help produce innovative leaders who build creative, sustainable learning environments with high expectations and great results for students."

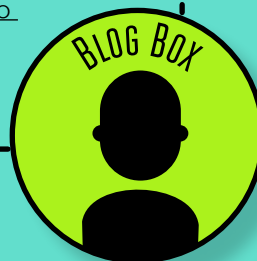
Kirtman's Seven Competencies for High Performing Leaders in Education:

- Challenges the Status Quo
- Builds Trust through Clear Communication and Expectations
- Creates a Commonly Owned Plan for Success
- Focuses on Team over Self
- Has a High Sense of Urgency for Change and Sustainable Results in Improving Achievement
- Commitment to Continuous Improvement for Self and Organization
- Builds External Networks and Partnerships

Innovation Leadership, Lyle Kirtman



"If EdLeaders need to be some mixture of Doug Lemov and Clayton Christensen while effectively communicating and advocating, what are the implications for preparation? APOC calls it 'a leadership approach that promotes effectiveness and efficiency by linking process measures to outcomes.' Process leadership combines process analysis, process improvement and coaching to boost fidelity to best practices. The best way to learn these skills is to serve as an instructional coach while learning technical process management skills (via courseware with a cohort or accessed on-demand)." Leadership Implications of the Brave New Blended World, Tom Vander Ark



Smart Innovators

Education leaders need to be smart innovators who leverage trends, build constituencies and earn deposits of political capital through trustworthiness. These smart innovators phase ideas, iterate and create and emphasize flexibility to ensure innovations can scale. With all this emphasis on innovation and, in an era of "getting things done," can principals hold seemingly opposing abilities to carry forward work demands while simultaneously continuing to innovate?

Principals are often expected to hold dichotomous roles. Similar to specialists in medicine, educational leadership will become more specialized and preparation will become linked to specific school models and situations. Even with increased specialization, all education leaders need to balance execution (managing repeatable processes that deliver solid instruction in every class, every day) and innovation (new tools and approaches).

Lindsey Own teaches science at The Evergreen School in Shoreline, Washington, and regularly speaks about Scaling Innovation in Schools, and she has written a unique job description for what it takes to be an innovative leader: Here's her job posting for an Innovative Learning Strategist: "The _____ School is committed to strengthening and enriching student learning through innovative teaching methods that put the student and his or her own goals for the future at the center of all learning experiences, and empower students to identify and solve problems, bridge content across traditional "subject" domains and develop an unshakable growth mindset. We define innovation as mindsets, design processes and teaching practices that challenge traditional norms and assumptions. These can take the form of new strategies or iterations or remixes of existing strategies.

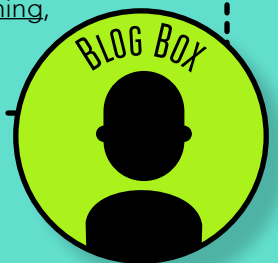
Seeking: A listener and risk-taker to lead and support innovative teaching and learning in our school.

Qualifications:

- Varied professional experience, both in classroom settings and outside of schools. Former entrepreneurs encouraged, having demonstrated ability to independently develop professional connections and skills.
- Demonstrated expertise in listening and understanding needs, as well as in introducing new ideas without forcefulness.
- Demonstrated reflection upon and learning from failures. Examples will be requested.
- Demonstrated perseverance, resilience and comfort with ambiguity. Examples will be requested."

Innovation Leadership in Schools, **Lindsey Own**,
science and health teacher, The Evergreen School

"Many professions, like doctors, go through shifts in technology and mediated treatment that results in significant shifts in practice. But this is more like a train conductor becoming an air traffic controller. To complicate things, we don't really have a new model fully realized, so leadership takes a small leap of faith and a lot of iterating. The leadership shifts reflect a dramatic change in the mental model of senior district officials in terms of how they understand systems, what they look for in classrooms and how they organize roles and goals of staff members." [Helping Chief Academic Officers Make the Shift from Managed Instruction to Personalized Learning](#), Tom Vander Ark

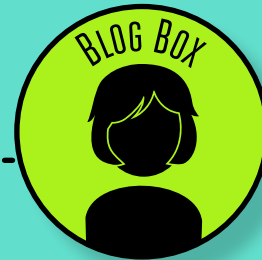
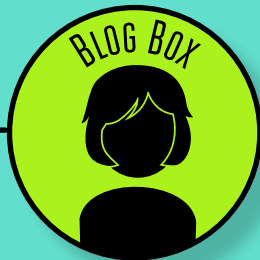




Change Managers

Leading for deeper learning can mean either leading in a purpose-built, visionary school or transforming a traditional or even a struggling school. Schools, districts and networks that are getting this right have strong, transformational leaders—those connected to deeper learning outcomes. These leaders are disciplined about measurement and rigor. This type of leadership occurs in conjunction with broader shifts in schools to deeper, personalized, competency-based learning from a change management standpoint. Leaders must be able to be change managers. Leaders should be able to navigate the complex environments they oversee and apply change theory to balance the need for improvement and the ideals of innovation. Leaders who can manage the tension between improvement and innovation along with all the associated projects and processes are the ones who will find success as change managers and change leaders.

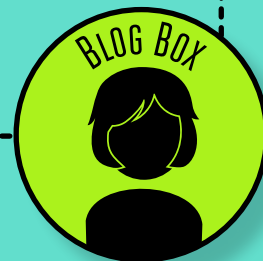
"Change is hard work. No one knows this better than [New Tech Network](#) (NTN) school administrators. Leading a school through systemic change requires constant attention to all stakeholders and developing multiple adaptive strategies to build vibrant learning environments that challenge and reward students and teachers." [Facilitating Systems Change](#), Lydia Dobyns, president and CEO, New Tech Network



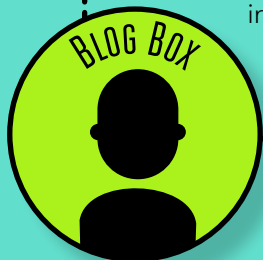
"In a recent [blog article](#), Ken Kay and Valerie Greenhill of EdLeader21 offered this driving question: What competencies are essential for successful 21st-century education leadership? Leaders are adopting the 4 C's—communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity. They write, 'When we visit highly effective 21st-century organizations, we see the 4Cs modeled by students as well as teachers, instructional leaders and central office members. We see effective communication taking place, adults working effectively on complex projects in collaborative teams, teams thinking critically to analyze and solve complex problems and staff members generating original ideas that can be put into practice.'" [Ed Leaders for the 21st Century](#), Bonnie Lathram, project manager, Getting Smart

Leading Educators offers two distinct routes for creating systemic change. They have two programs that help work with educators to create school impact. The first is the national Leading Educators Fellowship. This is a two-year participant experience with curriculum designed to develop core competencies in Core Beliefs and Mindsets, Management of Self and Others, Cultural Leadership and Instructional Leadership. The training modules are all designed to create impact when applying change management theory with practice. Leading Educators' also has a Strategic Support Initiatives (SSI) program offers customized consulting to districts, charter management organizations (CMOs), schools and nonprofit organizations that leverage teacher leadership in order to increase student achievement.

The Chief Learning Officer (CLO) is a trend seen expressed in the business world. Rob Lauber, CLO at McDonald's Corp., said, "The role has shifted over the years, from leader of a portfolio of training elements to enabler of learning," he said. "More than anything else, it's a shift in mindset." Another business leader, Bradley Samargya, CLO of Ericsson, a global communications and services company based in Stockholm, Sweden, said, "Unlocking the ability of our employees to learn from each other is a key part of our learning strategy, and I consider it a key part of my mission as a CLO," he said. "It is a way to build competency without having to build formal training. And that is at the heart of enabling employees to learn on the go." CLOs: Agents of Change, Sarah Fister Gale, freelance journalist



"In A Rich Seam: How New Pedagogies Find Deep Learning by Michael Fullan and Maria Langworthy, the authors discuss a new 'inherent change' model: a model that taps into the human need to do things that are intrinsically meaningful, and to achieve outcomes that are of value to others. Put simply, the new pedagogies spread when the teachers, students and leaders who are implementing them collaborate to share their experiences and energy, and to [analyze] the often amassing impact these learning practices have on everyone involved. These new learning environments promote 'learning, creating and doing dispositions that young people need to thrive now and in their futures.' Fullan and Langworthy stress the importance of creating a directional vision and building a culture that invites change and the capacity that makes it more organic." Preparing Principals: Consider the Adaptive Challenge, Tom Vander Ark



Deeper Learning Instructional Leaders

In *Preparing Teachers for deeper learning*, we explained that blended, competency-based approaches to teacher preparation and development yield deeper learning outcomes for educators by “promoting active inquiry, critical thinking and collaborative problem solving, as well as content mastery.” Similarly, programs that prepare and develop school and district leaders who will create or sustain deeper learning environments should embody and model deeper learning in a way that produces future leaders with experience in such settings themselves. Teachers and leaders need to experience this kind of environment before they create them for students. In turn, school leaders committed to deeper learning principles for students should also create deeper learning experiences for their teachers, staff, parents and community. Many of the recommendations described later in this report (such as cultivating teacher leadership, building competency-based systems and collaborating regionally) demonstrate how deeper learning skills can be an innate part of the entire learning ecosystem.



As this video from [Public Impact's Opportunity Culture](#) initiative explains, the teacher leader and Multi-Classroom Leadership model (MCL) can create new opportunities for teachers and leaders to practice deeper learning competencies such as collaboration, problem-solving, self-directed learning and academic mindsets in their own professional learning.

Teachers lead the way: Arne Duncan and the team at the US Department of Education announced they have a new program called Commit to Lead (#CommitToLead), where teachers can share best practices with one another. Duncan says Commit to Lead is an “online community that directly engages teachers and other educators to define what teacher leadership can and should be in their communities, so that collectively we can help make it part of the fabric and culture of every school. It builds on the great work that already exists in the field and invites the creation of new ideas.” Educators can share, vote and get feedback on their work.

“I recently met with some colleagues from my Educational Leadership program. A year after graduation, many are now working as administrators in local schools and we reflected on the gap between what we learned in the program and the skills needed on the ground. The dialogue at our table reflected the gap between the content of our preparatory coursework and the managerial work of an assistant principal. The message from the field is clear—principalship comes after proving yourself as an assistant principal. One of my fellow classmates commented that he hoped he would be an assistant principal for a short period of time so he wouldn’t forget all of that good stuff: ‘You know, before you get trained.’ The one voice of hope at the table is working in a small innovative school who sees herself as a partner in hiring, guiding and building the school and valued the program for her own practice. Secretary Arne Duncan, in his remarks to the American Association of Colleges for Teachers Education Conference, lamented the lack of instructional leadership among principals, ‘I want to make the case that our teacher and principal preparation programs need transformational change, not tinkering with the status quo.’ I add to that a need for transformational change—and contend that the status quo that needs to change is located just a little closer to home.” Management and Learning: Rethinking the Role of School Leadership, Lee Fleming, principal, Bonsall High School; director, New School Development at New Tech Network

“How do you drive instructional improvement and incorporate promising strategies? Leaders need to balance execution and innovation. Education is all about execution—talented and committed teachers meeting the needs of students every day in every classroom. But just making the old model work better isn’t good enough anymore. We now have the opportunity to customize learning for every student. The trick is running a good organization while inventing the future. Managers deliver results. Leaders create the future. You need to be both—just find the right balance for your community.” Embracing Paradox Leads to Breakthroughs, Tom Vander Ark

“To effectively manage the instructional shifts driven by the digital transition and maximize the new technologies and resources available to educators and learners, school administrators need a cadre of empowered teacher leaders to support change. The Digital Leader Corps is a tremendous way to nurture the teacher leaders who can drive lasting systemic change.” Growing Leaders, Growing Capacity, Karen Beerer, vice president, professional development at Discovery Education

BLOG BOX

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Distributive Leaders

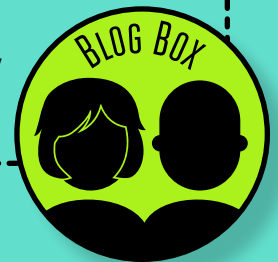
Leading toward deeper learning means sharing and distributing leadership roles and responsibilities across the system. It means moving beyond positional authority as “the leader” to creating a “system of leadership” that acknowledges leadership at the classroom, grade and school level. It means identifying and cultivating leadership among teachers, according to the strengths each person brings to the overall educational mission. In the true spirit of deeper learning, distributed leadership brings to life the principles of collaboration, cooperation, complex problem-solving and personal growth. Because leading towards deeper learning requires taking on additional roles beyond those traditionally required by school and district leaders, distributed leadership also disperses the load in a way that simultaneously builds the capacity of teachers as leaders.



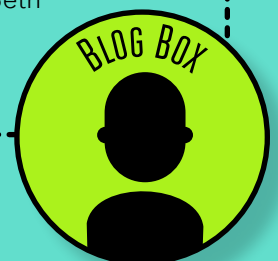
New Visions for Public Schools video on Teacher Collaboration in a Deeper Learning setting

In his book *Thank You for Your Leadership: Distributed Leadership in a Digital Conversion Model*, celebrated Mooresville Grade School District (MGSD) Superintendent Dr. Mark Edwards credits distributed leadership as a key component of success in leading one of the country's most significant digital transformations. Dr. Edwards discusses the concept of distributed leadership with regards to its impact on culture, alignment with vision and pathways that foster leadership throughout organizations. In a recent interview, Edwards explains how MGSD leverages teacher leadership in service of students: "We also focus a lot on teacher leadership at the grade-level and department-chair level, and we've seen substantial evidence that those leaders are having an impact ... Ultimately for any teacher, nothing can impact morale more than student success ... We see the [evolutionary] capacity of our teachers; they are much more adept at providing focused support and service to our students. They're more valuable than ever before. They have a more complex role; they're working with individual students, and things are constantly changing."

"Today's school model is essentially 'every teacher for herself.' Despite 'professional learning communities' and lip service to collaboration, teaching is largely a solo profession. What if, instead, schools organized around teams, with excellent teachers leading their peers and taking responsibility for the deeper learning of all the students served by the team? These 'multi-classroom leaders' could continue to teach, but extend their reach to more students and their peers." They go on to write about multi-school leadership: "Great school leaders could move up to lead multiple schools. We're not talking about 'leading' 30 or 40 schools the way many urban principals' supervisors do today. Instead, we mean leading two schools, then three, then five or more, expanding their impact but remaining close enough to interact deeply with individual school leaders and the multi-classroom leaders at the core of their schools. In short, multi-school leaders could continue doing what they've done best as school leaders, working with a small cadre of other leaders to make deeper learning happen daily for students and teachers." For Deeper Learning, Transform Schools into Leadership Machines, Emily and Bryan Hassel



"The key to transformation lies in nurturing and supporting teachers as learners and leaders. The very qualities, skills and characteristics that we seek to nurture and develop in our students are those we must first nurture and develop in our teachers. Creatively structuring time for professional development, including job-embedded learning, and focusing on leadership opportunities for teachers are essential if we are to transform our educational system." 10 Lessons Learned from Innovators and Ground Breakers featuring interview with Beth Havens, director of innovative projects, Horry County Schools



The concept of distributed leadership is gaining increased recognition as a critical factor in advancing education innovation. In coverage of EduCon 2015, Katrina Schwartz highlighted distributed leadership as a theme across sessions. Her insights include:

- “Through flexibility and distributed leadership, staff can work together to improve the teaching practices that help them reach those big goals.”
- “When done well, distributing leadership creates a community of people on the same page, working hard toward defined goals. And when teachers feel valued and trusted, they are more likely to trust and empower their students.”
- “Ultimately, as with so many things in education, the success of a leader comes down to the strength of relationships.”

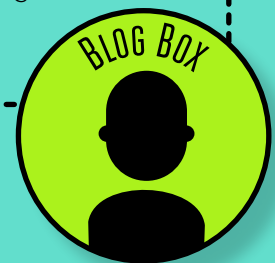
“The role of the principal has become vastly more complex and demanding—and principals, no matter how heroic, cannot do it all alone. Today’s principals are responsible for implementing a wide range of strategies aimed at improving teaching and learning—a new vision for the role that holds enormous promise for school improvement, but that also raises important questions about the feasibility of requiring a single individual to possess such sweeping expertise and to effectively execute so many responsibilities. Seventy percent of principals indicate their responsibilities have changed dramatically over the past five years, and 75 percent of principals now report the job is too complex. The most effective principals have strong leadership teams in place to help them implement school improvement strategies, and the best leadership teams include both administrators—such as assistant principals and deans—and teacher leaders—such as grade-level team leads, instructional coaches and mentor teachers. By sharing and distributing leadership, principals can focus their time and energy on their most important responsibilities while drawing on and strengthening the skills of their entire staff to support school improvement. To expand our reach and support sitting principals in their efforts to improve teacher effectiveness, accelerate student achievement and transform schools, New Leaders developed a program to strengthen the caliber of instructional leadership teams.” Leading from Every Seat: Empowering Principals to Cultivate Teacher Leadership for School Improvement, New Leaders.



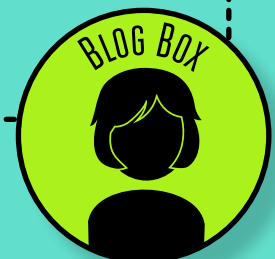
Advocates for All Students

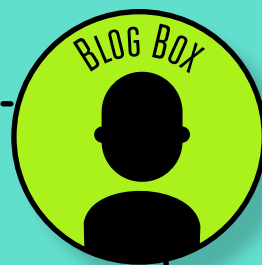
Leading towards deeper learning means building and sustaining a school culture and climate in support of deeper learning and working from the core belief that all students can learn. When leaders advocate for all students, they hold everyone accountable to the belief that each student can learn at much higher and deeper levels than in traditional settings. Leaders who know their students well—by name and by interest—and who also know their staff members well can help facilitate strong connections between students and staff members. Leaders who engage students by asking about their interests and passions further strengthen this advocacy. We see this demonstrated in schools, networks and districts where all students are encouraged to do their own best work, where assessments are personalized and individualized and where the feedback cycle between staff and students is formative and frequent.

“Someone needs to take on the task of truly being responsible for a student’s success. To do this, authentic and healthy relationships with adults at a school need to be formed. [A student] Rosa had a social worker, a drug counselor, a probation officer, a therapist, an educational rights holder and a lawyer assigned to her. In the two years before attending New Village, they made little progress with her. It’s not particularly because they didn’t care, but because the design and support system couldn’t sustain a real relationship and partnership; no one knew her well. At meetings, the adults would talk incessantly and would accuse each other of not doing their jobs. Schools need to be designed in such a way that every student is known well. I could not mistake knowing her history with knowing the person who lives within that history.” One Student, Five Lessons on Leadership, Javier Guzman, regional director, Big Picture Learning



“Exemplary leaders model learning alongside staff members and have a staunch belief that all students can learn. The industrial model of school required leaders to manage. Although we still need managers, we need a reimagined role for leaders, and in those places where school is starting to look very different, leadership takes a different shape.” The Transformational Leader, Carmen Coleman, associate clinical professor in Educational Leadership, University of Kentucky





"Following protocols developed by the Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford to gather input from students, teachers and other stakeholders in the Bellingham School District, Pam Pottle and Dawn Christiana designed Promise Academy, a project that integrates teacher learning with expanded student support during critical transition years. While no decision has been reached about if and when the program might be implemented, Dawn and Pam are meeting with district leaders to further vet the design and explore next steps. Dr. Mike Copland, Bellingham's Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning and a former faculty in the Danforth program, shared this reflection: 'One of the most amazing conversations this year for me was to engage in the first debrief of the social justice and equity focus from the program that had totally shifted Pam and Dawn's perspectives on what it means to serve all kids, and how to think about leading that kind of effort at a school or school district. Very validating to see that the program has maintained, and maybe even strengthened, the centrality of shifting candidates' world views about race, poverty, language, equity that they enter with ... I'm seeing the whole experience through the eyes of my teachers as their personal/professional lenses are radically altered about all these issues, and in such an amazingly good way.'"

Update: Leadership For Equity in Washington State, Jeff Petty



Expeditionary Learning on Challenge at the Heart of Deeper Learning

Civic and Community Catalysts

Smart education leaders have viewed parent engagement and community involvement as critical for garnering advocacy as well as political and financial supports, and this rings especially true when learning looks different. Community members who fully understand and can articulate the broad outcome goals for the local education system serve as spokespeople with neighbors and colleagues. If engaged, local community and business organizations more readily welcome students into service learning and internship positions, which are crucial opportunities to apply developing deeper learning skills. Additionally, inviting parents and community leaders to participate in celebrations of new programs or initiatives—such as a rollout of “always available technology”—goes a long way towards ensuring support as challenges occur. Finally, engaging community members as panelists for the presentation of capstone projects provides authentic audiences for student work and deepens understanding of student capabilities.



Baltimore County Public Schools, Maryland, under the leadership of Superintendent Dallas Dance, launched a district-wide blueprint with the goal of every student accessing a digital learning device, becoming fluent in a second language and managing his or her own electronic portfolio. Throughout the 18-month strategic planning process, the community as well as teachers and students were involved with frequent opportunities for feedback.

Vista Unified Schools District in San Diego County, California, rolled out tablet devices with data plans to middle school students and invited parents and the community to join students and teachers in a celebration of the tremendous opportunities created by this investment in technology. Marco Torres, Digital Promise director of story, published a blog about how to make this celebration a success.

Samsung's Solve for Tomorrow contest challenged classrooms around the U.S. to use science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) to address a community problem. Frankie Woods McCullough Academy in Gary, Indiana, the winner of the 2015 Civic Engagement prize, launched a project that addresses an overlooked but important problem in America: the prevalence of "food deserts" in low-income communities. The school's winning video shows how students took steps towards change in their community, and their work is a powerful testament to a school's potential for supporting deeper learning experiences, in which students work not just for a grade, but to make a difference.

At Villa Maria Academy High School in Pennsylvania, seniors pursue capstone projects in areas of personal interest. The purpose of these projects is to develop research and critical thinking skills, as well as to apply acquired knowledge to real-life experiences. In Phase 2 of the capstone process, students engage in experiential learning by investigating essential questions in the context of job shadowing, service work or tangible creation of a work product. The project process is guided by a combination of mentors, parents and teachers.

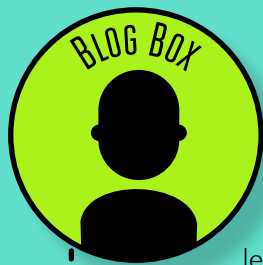
Parkland High School students in the ACE (Architecture, Construction and Engineering) Mentor Program are making a difference in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, through a community revitalization project. The program aims to inspire students to pursue engineering or construction careers after graduation by involving them in construction and design projects alongside professionals. Students design and present proposals for community gathering sites and landmarks such as coffee shops or parks, and selected projects involve students in every part of the planning process until construction.

Policy Advocates

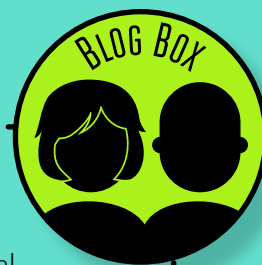
Creating next-gen learning environments often requires carving out the opportunity to do things differently. Doing so at scale requires new local and state policies. Education leaders should create possibilities to describe and advocate for the policy contexts required to create and sustain productive deeper learning environments. This may include freedom from restrictions regarding students' seat time, purchase of instructional materials, staffing patterns, etc. Part of this role also includes being acutely aware of real versus perceived policy barriers.



"Rules and regulations don't have to be barriers. Leaders can and should play a meaningful role in informing local, state and national policies to enable innovation." [12 Education Innovation Mindsets for Leaders](#), Carri Schneider



Each of these examples shows a new, innovative model changing education leaders' ideas about how schools might operate. The leaders of these initiatives readily admit that their programs are not complete solutions to every education challenge, and that putting their models into practice can be, at times, messy and frustrating. But even so, implementing each of their models has served as a clear call to action—by overcoming skepticism with tangible evidence of impact ... Looking ahead, innovative models are poised to pave the way for additional, dramatic policy shifts. Seat time, frequency and type of student assessment, and educator evaluation, for example, will become more malleable policy issues as the implementation of new models continues to demonstrate promising, workable alternatives in these areas that lead to improved recruitment and retention of excellent teachers and strong student learning outcomes." [Innovative Models Pave the Way for Changes in Policy and Practice](#), Joe Ableidinger, executive director, World Class Schools



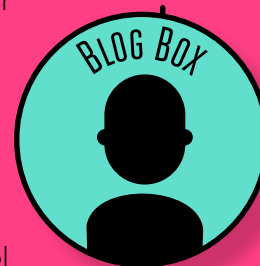
"[In terms of policy] I think a real investment in professional development is key. My whole life's work is professional development—renewal and continuous improvement; to be the best in front of the students is critical. I would be for any policy shift that supported professional development." [On School Leadership: Mindsets for Visionary Leaders](#), Bonnie Latham featuring an interview with Michael Soguero

RECOMMENDATIONS:

What Would a System of Preparation and Development Need to Include in Order to Prepare Deeper Learning Leaders?

The description of roles in the previous section and the recommendations that follow describe a vision for “leading toward deeper learning.” However, these early steps are just the beginning of what will need to be a long-term process involving schools and districts, colleges and universities, communities, philanthropists, business, policymakers and the public at large. The results of our exploratory research led to the following recommendations, which describe a vision for what preparation and development programs will need to include in order to equip leaders with the competencies to lead towards deeper learning. The recommendations suggest a broader, dynamic and complex set of pathways to leadership that form a robust talent development strategy built on the principles of deeper learning.

“It’s conceivable that these attributes could be incorporated into degree programs, but it is clear that preparation and licensure could also occur on alternative routes. What is clear is a focus on intentional design of a personalized sequence of learning opportunities and work experiences to effectively prepare school leaders—whether within or outside the context of a degree program.” [Preparing School Leaders](#), Tom Vander Ark



Cultivate Teacher Leaders



Prioritize Competency-Based, Job-Embedded Experiences



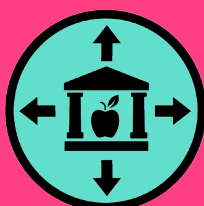
Develop Micro-credentials for Leadership



Integrate Preparation with Professional Development



Build a Regional Talent Development Strategy



Expand Beyond the College of Education



Address Policy Barriers

Cultivate Teacher Leaders

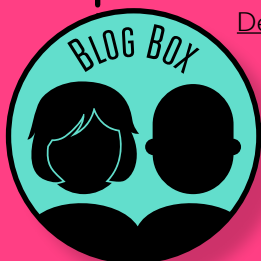
School districts and networks have to be more proactive about cultivating leaders within the pool of their current teachers to better tap into the resources of existing talent and to provide leadership opportunities to teachers who reflect community diversity . Our research shows that awakening the “sleeping giant” of teacher leadership would address problems with the traditional leadership pipeline, improve teaching conditions and careers and build a cadre of leaders better equipped with the competencies necessary to lead toward deeper learning.



Key factors in effective teacher leadership development systems include:

- ▶ Proactive identification of teachers with leadership interest and potential;
- ▶ Sequence of varied and valuable developmental experiences that target leadership competencies;
- ▶ Individual professional growth plans mapped to personalized, blended and competency-based professional development opportunities;
- ▶ Competency-based progressions based on current and aspirational job requirements;
- ▶ Differentiated pathways with opportunities to specialize;
- ▶ Strong tracking systems for individual learning plans;
- ▶ Opportunities to learn individually and as a member of a cohort or leadership development team/cluster.

“If we’re serious about school leadership for deeper learning, we need a new model. That model needs two key components: a model for within-school leadership that fosters deeper learning and creates a pipeline of school leaders and instructional team leaders to support them, and a model for multi-school leadership that enables the best school leaders to expand their impact. For Deeper Learning, Transform Schools Into Leadership Machines, Bryan Hassel and Emily Ayscue Hassel

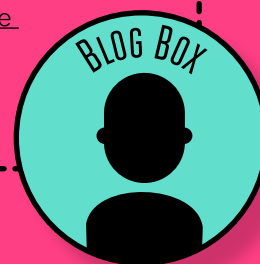


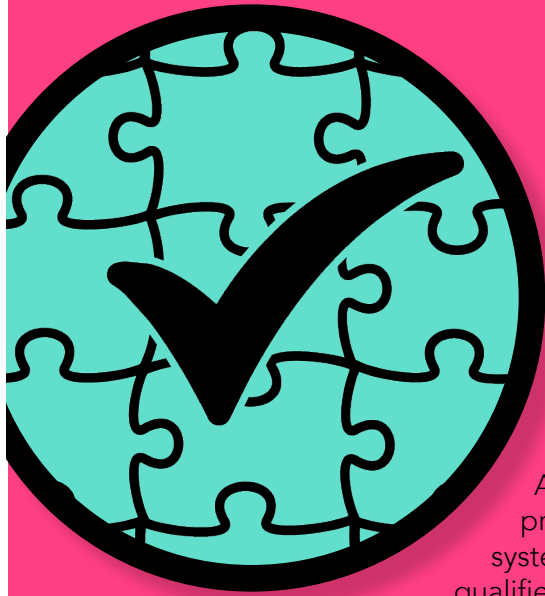
New Leaders, an organization with a strong history of developing transformational leaders, recently released Leading From Every Seat—a white paper designed to identify best practices that principals can employ to cultivate teacher leaders. The paper, organized as a series of five briefs, recommends the following process: 1) Identify teachers ready to lead; 2) Distribute leadership school-wide; 3) Provide high-quality leadership training; 4) Set teacher leader goals for growth and results; 5) Allocate school resources for teacher leadership.

Our recent overview of Race to the Top-District (RTT-D) progress shows that grantees are creating new teacher roles. Examples of new school and district leadership roles include:

- Content-focused Instructional Coaches, most typically in math and literacy;
- Strategy-focused Instructional Coaches such as Personalized Learning, Data or Digital Learning Coaches;
- Instructional Technology Coaches, focused on the use of personalized learning or instructional technology;
- Master Educators such as those on special assignment or otherwise serving as mentors to their peers; Individualized Learning Specialists that are hybrid teacher-leaders;
- Teacher Assistants and other part-time educators that are necessary to accommodate larger classes in technology-rich environments.

Districts Racing to Personalize Learning, Tom Vander Ark





Prioritize Competency-Based, Job-Embedded Experiences

A competency-based, job-embedded approach to leader preparation and development would improve the current outdated system of professional development and expand the pool of qualified leaders. The pathway to principalship should be a sequence of competency-based work experiences linked to learning opportunities.

Serving as an assistant principal—with a typical focus on student discipline and reporting—often proves completely inadequate training for the principalship. Then assistant principals become principals, suddenly being thrust into their first supervisory and full-leadership roles—without much experience in either. The transition from school-level leadership to district-level leadership positions is often just as disconnected.

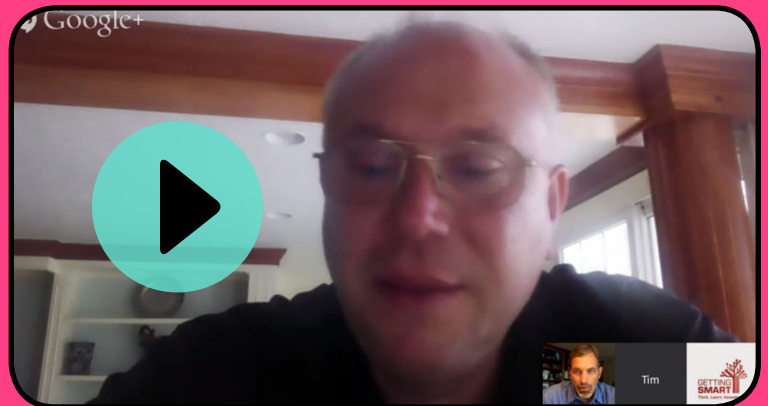
A job-embedded, work-based approach to talent development ensures a highly-relevant, just-in-time support for real challenges and quality preparation for extended impact. An intentional and supported sequence of work experiences is more important to educator development than the accumulation of credits and degrees. As recently noted, districts and networks should identify teacher-leaders and provide broadening experiences, on-the-job training and more constructive feedback. Leading school or districtwide innovation as well as improvement projects can provide a relevant growth experience and a chance for the teacher to consider other full- or part-time roles.

For example, in order to work towards mastery within a set of job-embedded experiences, a teacher leader could lead:

- ▶ A grade span reading improvement plan;
- ▶ A school committee to review and select a grade span blended learning model;
- ▶ A faculty conversation about extended reach strategies;
- ▶ A community conversation about social emotional learning;
- ▶ A district conversation about competency-based progressions;
- ▶ A chamber of commerce partnership to secure student internships;
- ▶ A grant-writing team to secure digital conversion funding; or
- ▶ An effort to expand affordable home access to broadband.

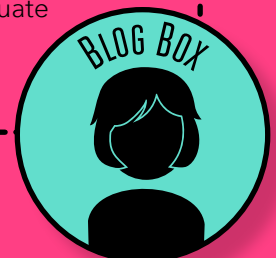
New Leaders preparation programs focus on 15 leadership actions. New Leaders candidates spend a year as a resident administrator in a school with a master principal. Leaders-in-training submit videos on these actions and receive rapid feedback. A similar approach could be used for more general principal evaluation—frequent reviews of practice and actionable feedback in short cycles that is rolled up into an overall evaluation.

Leadership Public Schools distributes innovation projects among schools, giving a large number of teacher-leaders valuable, project-based, collaborative leadership experiences. As noted in Improving Conditions & Careers, blended learning environments, extended reach strategies and a more dynamic education sector all provide expanded leadership development opportunities and pathways. High-quality, on-the-job training (online and blended) should be available from experts and with talented peers.



Smart Cities Tim Hilborn Google Hangout

"The belief that leaders, like teachers, will grow through focused observation and practice of core leadership actions is at the core of the Relay Graduate School of Education's theory of principal education. Most sitting principals have few opportunities to get this type of coaching. With that in mind, Relay, in conjunction with Uncommon Schools, set out to develop a high-impact leadership training program for principals: The National Principals Academy Fellowship (NPAF). The NPAF curriculum "focuses on a principal's most important role: to serve as an instructional leader. Within instructional leadership, we focus on three 'super levers' of activity: Data-Driven Instruction, School Culture and Observation and Feedback." Instructional Leadership through Focused Observation and Feedback, Sarah-Jane Caban, director of marketing and communications, Relay Graduate School of Education



Leading a rich series of projects with aligned learning experiences could be incorporated into a competency-based sequence like the teacher development system at [Summit Public Schools](#). The program covers seven dimensions of teaching—Assessment, Content, Curriculum, Instruction, Knowing Learners and Learning, Leadership and Mentoring—spanning four levels: basic, proficient, highly proficient and expert.

In [Building a Principal from Start to Finish](#), EdWeek published an in-depth overview, supported by the Wallace Foundation, describing the Denver Public Schools' actions to mitigate leadership challenges. DPS has greatly expanded and strengthened their leadership programs by implementing a new process for training, selecting and supporting school leaders. "Aspiring principals can earn their certification from three different university pathways. The district also runs an alternate-route program that caters to individuals who may already be assistant principals or teacher-leaders, or have served in the private sector but have the skill sets to take on the principal's job." All candidates go through the same process to become principal leaders:

- **First-Year Assistant Principals:** First-year APs participate in a New Leader Academy;
- **Assistant Principal Leadership Cohort:** APs receive extensive coaching and mentoring;
- **Principal Residency Program:** Principals serve in a co-principal role;
- **Principal Selection Process:** Those who are top-performing may apply to become principals after rigorous evaluation and feedback loop;
- **Principals:** Principals receive ongoing mentorship and executive coaching;
- **Succession Planning:** The district carefully plans for successions and attempts to fill any vacancies proactively and with careful matching of skill sets and abilities.

Founded in 1979 as an IT support center for 36 school districts in north central Ohio, the [TRECA](#) staff also provide back office and instructional support. The learning opportunities that Tim Hilborn and his team create for superintendents are really remarkable. Tim works hard to create powerful learning experiences for education leaders. The TRECA PD team is made up of former administrators, teachers and digital natives who focus on supporting the entire system in a year-long project to establish personalized learning models. They recently took a group of central Ohio superintendents to Boston for a three-day retreat. By leaving town, they were able to build long, uninterrupted days that included both fun and reflective time. The superintendents meet quarterly to evaluate progress and identify additional learning opportunities; they will soon be joined by their Leadership Team to define and expand the initiative. Team TRECA will provide the same learning opportunities to building principals as they lead the movement to personalization at the building level. See [TRECA: Supporting Schools, Developing Leaders](#) for more information.

Develop Micro-credentials for Leaders

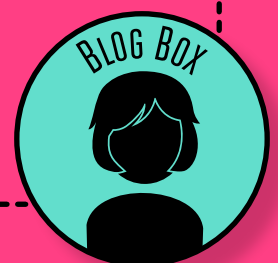
It's a given that teachers must hone these skills so they can orchestrate deeper learning experiences. To support them, Digital Promise is building a system of micro-credentials based on deeper learning skills as a new way of identifying competencies and providing recognition for teachers who demonstrate evidence of application with students. Micro-credentials are more focused and granular than diplomas, degrees or certificates. As such, they are more flexible and support educators with many options for both formal and informal learning throughout their careers.

Like teachers, education leaders learn and develop their knowledge and skills throughout their careers, not only through formal classes, but also through reading and consuming videos and digital artifacts, engaging a mentor, being active participants in communities such as the Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools, joining challenge workshops and more. Leadership skills like those identified in this paper can be articulated and published along with best practices, research and resources, as well as an explanation of the evidence required to earn the associated micro-credential. A system of micro-credentials will support varying levels of education leadership and provide recognition for skills learned through such programs as New Teacher Center's mentoring program or the Center for Teaching Quality's teacher leadership collaboratory.

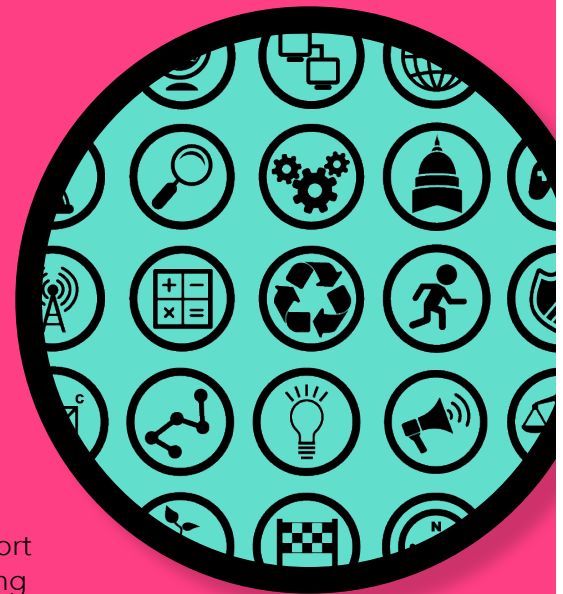
Each of the leadership skills outlined throughout this paper are ripe for a richer articulation, identification of the research basis as well as the evidence requirement and scoring guide for earning a specific credential. This type of system would signal to the market that these skills are not only important; they are attainable in a variety of ways, and an education leader could be recognized or "badged" for the competency.

"Digital Promise's League of Innovative Schools convenes K-12 school district leaders, working to tackle challenges alongside researchers and entrepreneurs, spotlighting the innovations that have been making a difference with student engagement and achievement. These associations provide one way to observe and validate important competencies. And, through a partnership with Verizon, Digital Promise has begun to foster a deep collaboration with leaders and teachers in 20 U.S. middle schools. As an integral part of the multi-year, technology-rich project, we are fully documenting the process and experiences in words, images and video. This will result in a 'behind-the-scenes' guidebook for leaders, teachers and others interested in learning more about designing and developing deeper learning opportunities."

4 Lessons for Today's Education Leaders, Karen Cator, president and CEO, Digital Promise



Matthew Pittinsky, CEO of Parchment, explains in his recent article Making Credentials Matter: "We need to move beyond one-dimensional, paper certificates toward more functional, portable descriptions of what one knows. And we need to do this while preserving the integrity and reliability of credentials for employers, institutions and peers that must use them to make critical, informed decisions."



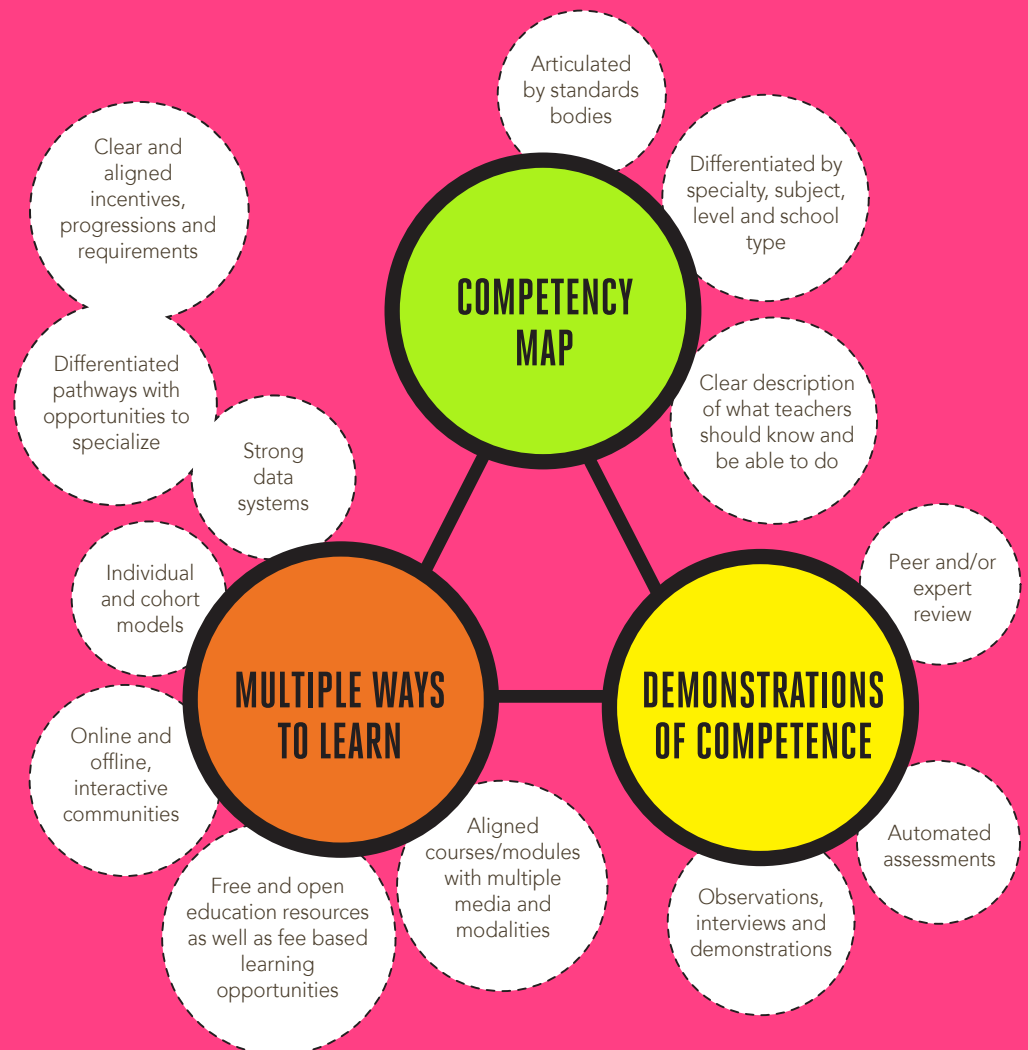


Integrate Preparation with Professional Development

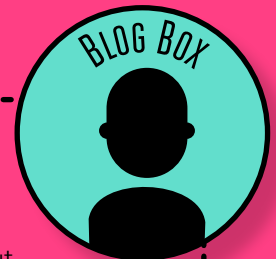
What if leader development was an ongoing and integrated part of every teacher's personal and professional growth? Technology plays a key role in bringing this vision into reality, because a blended approach to talent development supports much more personalized learning. With the proliferation of blended models (see [Blended Learning Universe](#) for examples), it's more important than ever to continuously evolve preparation that is linked to specific pedagogies and emerging school models. Because the sector is in the early years of incorporating learning technology, preparation and ongoing development must remain dynamic with frequently-updated competency maps that reflect new tools and school models.

As described in [Preparing Teachers for Deeper Learning](#), it's possible with:

- ▶ **A competency map:** what teachers need to know and be able to do with some specialty variations (e.g., elementary, blended, online, special needs)
- ▶ **Multiple ways to learn:** formal and informal, online and blended, individual and cohort learning opportunities
- ▶ **Demonstration opportunities:** pre-service and practicing teachers should have frequent opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skill within a competency recognition system (micro-credentialing or badging).

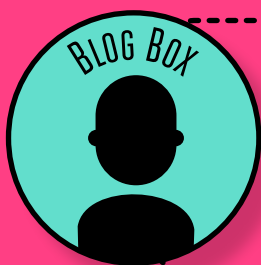


Imagine if each time a teacher gets assigned a project management role, he or she receives a digital playlist of learning experiences to support that new role (both content knowledge and process skills) and an experienced mentor to provide real-time support and reflective learning guidance. Imagine if teachers and teacher leaders were engaged in online professional learning communities to share resources and problem solve inside a dynamic set of homogenous (same content area and grade level) and heterogeneous (across content areas and grade levels) working groups.

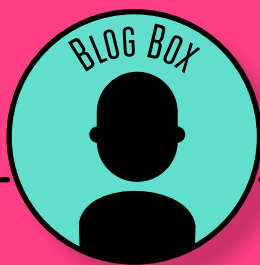


Generic, theory-based preparation and development is becoming less relevant. Platforms like [BloomBoard](#) connect learning plans to a marketplace of resources. BloomBoard also represents the next generation of teacher observations by leveraging technology. Teacher Alison Anderson explains, "To truly take teacher observations to the next level, videos taken of the observed lesson can also be uploaded into BloomBoard and the administrator can comment and tag the video within the account. With all the data collected, the admin can then recommend certain PD resources directly from the BloomBoard library. Once the observation is completed, BloomBoard morphs into the role of instructional coach, taking the burden off both the administrator and the teacher at the same time. All the results are shared with the teacher in [his/her] own BloomBoard account. With the teacher account, BloomBoard functions more as a goal-setting/journal-like app for professional development. It becomes a great place to record and track professional goals, while also discovering and integrating recommended professional development resources. See [BloomBoard: Empowering Teachers to Grow](#) for more information.

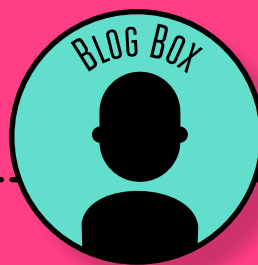
"Professional development is not about gurus preaching, it's about teachers teaching. Personalized professional development is helping educators become deeper thinkers in their practice. It's not the role of leaders to change people. Leaders are in a position to empower by providing learning teams the autonomy of self-directed professional growth. The leadership goal is to provide teachers with choices that can enhance deeper thinking and instructional design. Leaders should encourage teachers to become the experts of their professional development. The use of pictures, videos and 140 characters has become a powerful professional development tool for educators. Educators are able to create more vivid content that demonstrate the various aspects of [personalized learning](#)." [Capture-Curate-Share: Building a Personalized PD Culture](#), Randall Sampson



"Systemic changes to teaching and learning will not be realized unless district leaders redefine their roles in this work. This is the guiding message in a [white paper](#) from [The Highlander Institute](#) that investigates the role of district staff in creating personalized and blended learning classrooms." [Whose Role is it Anyway?](#), Shawn Rubin, director of blended learning, The Highlander Institute



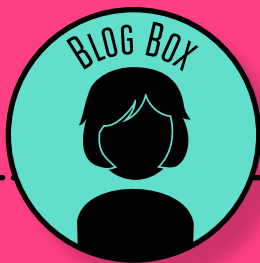
"It's becoming apparent that Edmodo is a great place for adults to learn. Walled Lake School District administrators used Edmodo to stay connected over the summer and continuing their professional discussions online. Mark Hess, executive director of Instruction, Technology & Assessment, implemented a book club on Edmodo as a way to keep administrators engaged during the summer and to come up with ideas for promoting student achievement. That initial project proved so successful that he decided to set up groups for other professional development projects, including one for new principals. These professional learning networks (PLNs) allow principals to share ideas in a supportive environment in which they can feel more comfortable getting acclimated to new concepts. In addition, Hess is creating a video library that will be shared before the district's regular face-to-face professional development sessions in an effort to provide greater access to materials and enable more productive sessions. They found that Edmodo encouraged more discussion and openness to ask questions, plus it freed up more face-to-face time with teachers." Professional Development Powered by Edmodo, Tom Vander Ark



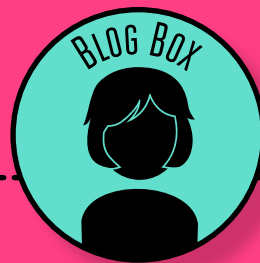
"Our future depends on getting PD right—preparing and supporting education leaders and teachers with the best research and tools we have today instead of tweaking around the edges. But what is truly transformative PD that will effectively train superintendents, principals and teachers?

- **Follow the research.** We know a great deal about what actually works in PD. To be transformative, strategic professional development needs to be intense, continuous and sustained to have a lasting impact.
- **Go online.** Taking PD at least partially online isn't something nice—the math tells us it's essential. There simply aren't enough PD hours available to teach all of America's teachers the new skills and standards they will be expected to master. The type of scaling that online PD offers, reaching thousands instead of dozens at a time—is the only way.
- **But not online exclusively.** Some people will want to use the efficiency of online PD to move the old PowerPoints and lectures online and call it a day. That sort of "check the box" PD that we've been clinging to for decades won't work. Face-to-face common planning time and online support communities are both essential—a true blended approach. To learn a skill, it's also been proven that essential factors include coaching, modeling, observation, feedback and time for teachers to reflect on what they've learned.
- **Allow self-pacing and collaboration.** We know not every student learns the same way or at the same pace, yet we expect teachers to do so. Good PD courses should be paced by the teacher, allowing him or her time to absorb and practice what's been learned at his or her own speed. In addition, ongoing interaction and peer engagement are needed to refine skills and model successes consistently over time.
- **Start Right Now.** No one believes an overhaul or update of PD practices will be easy or fast; implementing new standards won't be either. But because we know PD needs an update and we know what to do, there's no reason to wait.

5 Steps to Effective and Transformative Professional Development, Alvin Crawford, CEO, Knowledge Delivery Systems

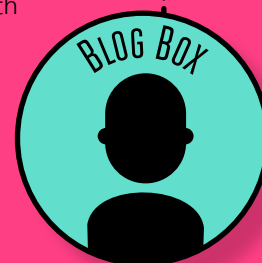


"At The Learning Accelerator (TLA), we believe that effective principal leadership is absolutely critical for creating and sustaining schools that foster deeper and personalized learning. Given this, as part of TLA's next human capital initiative, we're running two experiments aimed at supporting and increasing the capacity of these leaders as they engage in school redesign and transformation. While these programs are focused on leadership at different levels—and with different levers for authority and change—they both share key elements we believe are essential to effective, deeper learning for adults: networking and collaboration, personalization through blended modalities, competency-based learning and authentic assessment. Taken together, TLA expects these two programs will build a cadre of leaders who can step up to lead school change, at many levels. We also hope that the deeper learning elements they are piloting will serve as exemplars for other leadership programs across the country." Leaders Learning Deeply with the Leadership in Blended Learning and Fuse RI, Beth Rabbitt, partner, The Learning Accelerator



"Principals watch video exemplars of leadership best practices and then record hours of video footage of their own meetings with teachers. Then, they submit the video through an online digital platform. During in-person sessions, principals review video excerpts with a diverse group of peers. The [National Principals Academy Fellowship (NPAF)] cohort includes leaders spanning different types of schools—50 percent charter and 50 percent district—with varying experience from 0-15 years. The group's diversity is carefully designed to create an intentional dialogue around what it means to be a great school—regardless of context or label. Feedback from peers is then combined with feedback from NPAF instructors, including Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, Doug LeMov and Julie Jackson—each of whom is a leader in the field with a strong track record of results and has collaborated to design the NPAF curriculum. Through video analysis and on-site school visits, professors closely observe principals to help them identify specific areas of opportunity for growth ... Principals graduate from the NPAF program with a broad arsenal of techniques at their disposal and a personalized list of actions to implement right away as they work toward becoming stronger instructional leaders. Instructional Leadership through Focused Observation and Feedback, Sarah-Jane Caban

"Airing on Mondays, the MCDPEL Innovations Lab posts a short educational leadership scenario in podcast form (shared via our Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+ channels and email subscription). Each narrative is drafted by a real educational leader working in the field. Most stories use 'guest voices' from the field, but some leaders choose to share their challenge with full transparency. Regardless of who is sharing their "challenge," real leaders in the field can now benefit from 'the backchannel' of perspectives that discuss real challenges for today's educational leaders. At some point during the podcast around the 10-15 minute mark, the leadership scenario ends abruptly. Listeners being provided an opportunity to continue to 'backchannel' potential next steps using social media ... This #backchannelEDU hashtag is populated throughout the week until the next episode is released on the following Monday. Participants are encouraged to share the scenario locally and globally as a means of crowdsourcing solutions across a variety of unique perspectives. A concerted effort to connect research to practice using research studies are infused into episodes and conversation where applicable. Leaders might also innovate here and infuse an #eduvoxers grade-level team, all-faculty, all-committee or all-district group to tackle the scenario asynchronously." Behind MCDPEL's New & Interactive Scenario Podcast for EdLeaders, Joe Mazza



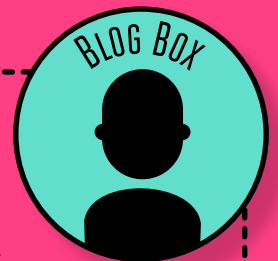


Build a Regional Talent Development Strategy

A regional approach to talent development can address concerns that the current system of preparation cannot possibly prepare leaders for the individual and unique contexts of the diversity of schools and districts across

a state. A regional approach also distributes the load on individual schools and districts, while creating an ecosystem built around common goals and continuous improvement. Regional approaches also create the opportunity for communities to cultivate leaders that reflect community diversity.

Regional talent development is one of the seven keys discussed in [Smart Cities That Work for Everyone](#). For school districts and networks, talent development remains a critical success factor. Given the emerging opportunity set, talent development should be regional, blended and work-based. Districts and networks can and should be more demanding about the demonstrated competence of aspiring principals. Groups or regions of districts working together could provide clear signals to providers about priorities. Rather than the coursework being disconnected from work experience, new providers demonstrate the benefit of close partnerships between hiring entities and leaders. As a variety of blended models proliferate, generic preparation will become less valuable, and model specific partnerships will grow in importance.

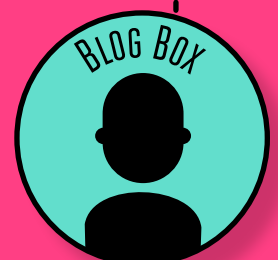


Given a mobile workforce, talent is a regional issue—one where strong, focused partnerships can quickly make an enormous difference in the level of initial preparation of teachers and leaders.

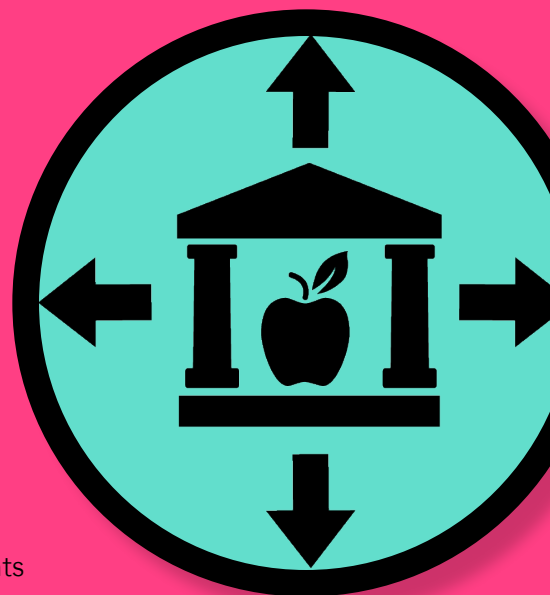
- Hiring entity (districts and networks) partnerships between to define required competencies;
- Hiring entity compacts with traditional and alternative preparation programs based on delivering required competencies;
- Teacher recruitment partnerships (e.g., [Teach For America](#), [Teach Louisiana](#), [California Teacher Recruitment Program](#));
- Developing teacher leaders (e.g., [Leading Educators](#), [CityBridge Innovation Fellows](#) in Washington D.C., see [feature](#));
- Developing central office talent (e.g., [Broad Residency](#), [Education Pioneers](#)); and
- Providing teacher housing incentives (several states and regions offer housing assistance, tax credits, loan forgiveness, etc. to attract and retain teachers).

[How Smart Cities Develop Teachers & Leaders](#), Tom Vander Ark

"[Lead Connecticut](#) (Lead CT) is a unique partnership established through a competitive RFP process launched by the Talent Office of the Connecticut State Department of Education. LEAD CT partners include: the [Connecticut Center for School Change](#) (the managing partner), [Connecticut Association of Boards of Education](#), [Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents](#), [Connecticut Association of Schools](#), [Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut](#) and [New Leaders](#) ... Our theory of action is quite clear: If we provide the highest-quality programs and services to build the capacity of school and district leaders, then these leaders will have the skills and knowledge to provide the necessary conditions for high-quality instruction in every classroom and, most importantly, the capacity to create the conditions for improving learning opportunities and results for every child." [Why Leaders Matter](#), Robert Villanova, director of the Executive Leadership Program, University of Connecticut, Neag School of Education and director, LEAD CT



Expand Beyond the College of Education



"So what's an Ed school to do? The first question to address is, 'What do educators need to know and be able to do?' Ed schools should work with local districts and national partners to build a competency map for teachers, leaders and related positions. As [EdFuel](#) notes in [Mind the Gap](#), there are a growing number of supporting leadership roles in technology, advocacy and network operations. Given the breadth of roles in the education sector, it would be useful to invite the B school to join the competency mapping project. With a customer-defined competency map, Ed schools should pilot competency-based progressions—perhaps an alternative teacher certification program or a professional learning program in a developing category. The third project Ed schools should consider encompasses ways to model and inculcate an [innovation mindset](#)—a combination of growth, maker and team mindsets. If we want learning environments that encourage effort, initiative and collaboration, we need to create learning environments and experiences for aspiring teachers where we develop the same dispositions. Education schools could encourage entrepreneurial thinking across the curriculum by encouraging aspiring teachers to consider ways a startup (.org or .com) would address opportunities and challenges associated with a class. Students could blog answers, and the best ideas could earn a prize or a slot in a university based incubator—another great place for the Ed schools and B

school to partner." [8 Ways B Schools are Different than Ed Schools](#), Tom Vander Ark

As we described, leaders charged with creating or supporting deeper learning environments will need to shift

nimbly between a number

of roles—from change managers to design thinkers and vision builders. For these roles, many of the skills and dispositions below the surface go beyond those traditionally taught in leadership preparation and development. Our research suggests a new approach that builds upon best practices outside colleges of education to recognize the broader set of leadership skills required.

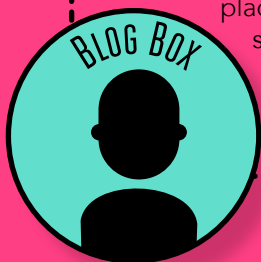
Art Levine, current president of the [Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation](#) and the former president of [Teachers College, Columbia University](#), describes the challenge this way:

"The current model of school-leader preparation is ill-equipped to provide long-term answers to [the problem of international and domestic achievement gaps]. With an emphasis on seat time and a goal of graduating as many M.Ed. seekers as possible, as quickly as possible, many current programs lack a rigorous clinical experience and strong mentoring support. We need a new, more rigorous terminal degree to prepare school leaders."⁵

Levine describes the diverse and increasingly complex set of skills necessary to master for current and future principals and shares a business school perspective:

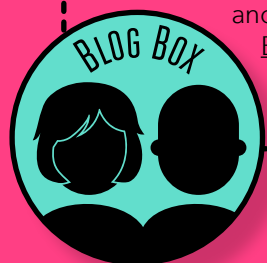
"Our education schools do not hold all the solutions in isolation. They need to look to the answers found in other academic pursuits, particularly in business administration."

5. Levine, A. "School Principals Should Be Trained Like MBAs." Real Clear Education. February 4, 2015.http://www.realcleareducation.com/articles/2015/02/04/school_principals_should_be_trained_like_mbas_1153.html





The Rice Education Entrepreneurship Program (REEP) at Rice University—the first and only U.S. institution to permit aspiring principals to receive a state certification to serve as a school leader through a business school—is getting results by better equipping school leaders to thrive. Their white paper School Leaders as CEOs provides empirical evidence that the focus on CEO mindset enables principals to better lead change, lead people, drive results, build coalitions and build the business. In “Preparing Principals Like CEOs,” Lawrence Kohn, former school principal and REEP’s current director of programs and evaluation explains, “REEP believes that preparing principals to run their schools like CEOs will enable them to solve problems, manage resources and transform their schools. To instill this CEO mindset, we developed a creative and complex set of learning experiences for both current and aspiring leaders. In short, REEP is a new approach to education leadership development that equips school leaders to tackle new challenges in new ways.” See Preparing Principals Like CEOs by Lawrence Kohn and How Should Principals Be Trained? by Carri Schneider for more.



With a mission driven by attention to closing educational achievement gaps, the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation seeks to develop “a new gold standard” for preparing education leaders through its MBA program. Building off its success with the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship, the MBA Fellowship in Educational Leadership details include:

- *Fellows will receive a stipend to cover tuition for the MBA program and other expenses;*
- *Fellows must be nominated by a local education leader/colleague before they are eligible to apply;*
- *They attend a designated campus in participating states (currently Indiana and Wisconsin) and pursue their preparation in school districts partnering with those campuses;*
- *Fellows commit to serving three years in approved school or district leadership positions within their states;*
- *The Fellowship program will provide specialized preparation in areas such as leadership, finance, human resources, organizational change—all focusing on education; and*

The program will require 13 to 15 months of full-time study, depending on the institution—two summers and an academic year.



Address Policy Barriers

A vision for blended, competency-based teacher and leader preparation and development suggests the potential for more efficient and effective replacements to the current system of courses, credits and credentials. However, enacting these attributes at scale would require new and updated state policies.

In “Preparing Teachers for Deeper Learning,” we offered the following policy recommendations to support the next generation of teacher training and development:

- ▶ Use an outcome-focused accreditation/authorization process to approve traditional and alternative preparation programs (for a period not to exceed five years), based on design adherence to best practices and the demonstrated effectiveness of graduates;
- ▶ Require accredited/authorized programs to use demonstrated competence rather than courses and credits to certify teachers;
- ▶ Require teachers and programs that prepare them to renew licensure based on demonstrated performance;
- ▶ States should encourage (with grant-supported requests for proposals) alternative district/network-linked preparation programs; and
- ▶ If states require pre-service tests like edTPA, they should set minimum requirements as well as require teachers to demonstrate effectiveness in the classroom.

Our research suggests three possible state policy approaches:

Performance-based: Digital Learning Now suggests that teachers should be granted certification after several years of demonstrated performance; principal certification could work the same way. Schools, districts and networks should have the ability to work with any organization they choose to craft leadership development pathways to meet clear certification competencies. School leaders should earn reciprocal certification based on demonstrated performance.

New Leaders has been training leaders for high performing schools for 13 years. In Improving Principal Preparation with their blended Leadership Practice Improvement (LPI) program, they outlined their rationale for an authorization-based approach, stating, “States have the opportunity to rethink the approval process for these programs, the criteria for approval and the monitoring systems to guarantee that programs continue to deliver highly-prepared school leaders.”

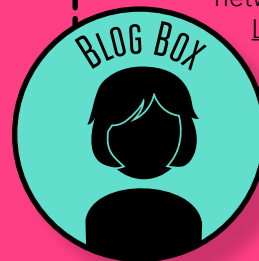
Competency-based: Another option is a “show what you know” system. Accounting, law and real estate are licensed by exam. Doctors and pilots must pass multiple assessments and demonstrate proficiency under supervision. More dynamic job clusters are beginning to use other competency-signaling strategies including badges, references and portfolios.

Authorization-based: Today, state-accredited institutions of higher education grant licensure, but states could require existing providers to re-apply for accreditation under a new system of time-bound performance contracts tied to specific outcomes. A system of authorized/accredited providers could use a variety of competency-based strategies to award licensure.


Specifically, if states continue to license school leaders they could follow similar steps as described for teachers:

- 1 Use an outcome-focused accreditation/ authorization process to approve preparation programs (for a period not to exceed five years) based on design adherence to best practices and the demonstrated effectiveness of graduates. (AREL recommends, “States should monitor principal preparation program outcome data and hold programs accountable for producing effective principals.” That means program approval must be outcome-based, and providers with weak outcomes lose the ability to license principals.)
- 2 Require accredited/authorized programs to use demonstrated competence rather than courses and credits to certify school leaders.
- 3 Require school leaders and programs that prepare them to renew licensure based on demonstrated performance.
- 4 Subsidize preparation for turnaround leaders, next-gen school leaders and other priority categories.

“The Alliance to Reform Education Leadership (AREL) has built a network of principal training programs that currently totals 28 in 15 states and the District of Columbia. AREL has developed nine principal preparation competencies for redefining school leadership that programs must meet in order to qualify. The competencies address: Program Purpose, Competency Framework, Recruitment, Candidate Selection, Coursework, Clinical Leadership Experiences, Postgraduate Support, Context and Evaluation. Exemplary programs have a track record of success and are among the best principal training programs in the country. They are collecting data that can be used to improve principal training and share it with programs in the AREL network.” 5 Exemplary Leadership Programs, Bonnie Lathram



CALL TO ACTION



Today, with the proliferation of new education models that better address the knowledge, skills and mindsets students need for a life of learning, we have a tremendous opportunity to affect change. In order to move the field, we need leaders who demonstrate both courage and conviction, as well as a logical and action-oriented mindset.

Specifically, leading toward deeper learning requires:

- ▶ Recognizing the need for a broader set of student learning goals (beyond traditional academic state standards and tests);
- ▶ Actively developing student learning objectives based on deeper learning goals;
- ▶ Helping communities know why it is important, building community support for broader measures and reporting on outcomes;
- ▶ Creating metrics and tools for those skills that are harder to measure;
- ▶ Supporting the development of learning environments and experiences aimed at broader objectives;
- ▶ Building aggregated demand for new competencies (e.g., groups of schools or districts agreeing on what teachers and leaders need to thrive in their settings, and working with preparation programs to align programs to those outcomes);
- ▶ Creating preparation and services partnerships around deeper learning objectives that provide deeper learning experiences; and
- ▶ Reallocating resources around deeper learning objectives.

The bottom line is that today, we can more clearly align the goals, measures, incentives, recognitions and roles to reflect deeper learning objectives, and if we don't, the system will continue to deliver the results it always has.



NEXT STEPS.

We've reviewed the emerging consensus among experts in leader preparation and development. One possible path forward for next-gen leadership development programs includes these developmental steps:

COMPILE

a detailed competency map of what teacher leaders, school leaders, principal supervisors and system leaders **need to know and be able to do**.

UPDATE

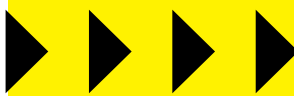
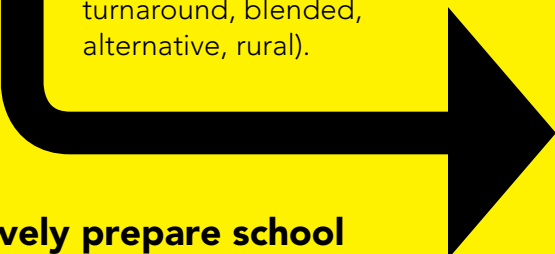
the map for **new roles**, paying particular attention to the leadership implications of new school models and supporting organizations.

TAG

existing organizations/institutions, instructional content (open and proprietary) and resources to the competency map and identify gaps.

IDENTIFY/DEVELOP

a platform that **facilitates** assessment/observation of knowledge, skills and dispositions of aspiring leaders; **supports** individual learning plans; **delivers** playlists of content; **suggests and tracks** leadership development experiences; **provides** cohort collaboration features; and **links** to a professional portfolio and list of references. The maps and experiences could be **tailored** by specialization (e.g., startup, turnaround, blended, alternative, rural).



An opportunity exists to more effectively prepare school leaders at lower expense (to the educator and state) with better outcomes than the degree-focused licensing system currently common in all 50 states. Making the shift will require philanthropic investment, political courage on the part of state policy makers and intentional partnerships between school leaders and training providers. With higher expectations and the shift to digital learning, improving the preparation of school leaders offers a great chance to boost the achievement of American students.

Author Bios

Karen Cator is President and CEO of Digital Promise. From 2009-2013, Karen was Director of the Office of Educational Technology at the U.S. Department of Education, where she led the development of the 2010 National Education Technology Plan and focused the Office's efforts on teacher and leader support. She also was a leading voice for transforming American education through technology innovation and research. Prior to joining the department, Cator directed Apple's leadership and advocacy efforts in education. In this role, she focused on the intersection of education policy and research, emerging technologies, and the reality faced by teachers students and administrators. She began her education career in Alaska as a teacher, ultimately leading technology planning and implementation. She also served as Special Assistant for Telecommunications for the Governor of Alaska. Cator holds a Master's in school administration from the University of Oregon and a Bachelor's in early childhood education from Springfield College. She is a past chair for the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and has served on boards including the Software & Information Industry Association-Education.

Bonnie Lathram is a Project Manager and Contributing Author at Getting Smart. She has taught elementary, middle and high school students in the United States and Tanzania. She honed her skills working with students, mentors, and families at an innovative public high school near Seattle. She has also led professional development for school-based teams in the US and internationally. As a school design coach, Bonnie has extensive experience in the development of engagement-driven schools. Bonnie has also co-authored several publications including Big Picture Learning's guide on metacognitive factors related to student success in college and career.

Carri Schneider is the Director of Publications at Getting Smart. With a background in both policy and practice, she has taught in classrooms from elementary schools to college campuses. Carri served as an online educator from 2005-2012 in a fully online Master's program in educational leadership and has authored several pieces on the future of education. In addition to Getting Smart's publication portfolio, she co-edited the book Building a 21st Century U.S. Education System published by NCTAF and worked on a number of state-level education policy briefs and reports. Over the past several years, Carri has been actively engaged in supporting education policy efforts to advance personalized and competency-based blended learning opportunities. She holds an M.Ed. in educational administration and an Ed.D. in urban educational leadership.

Tom Vander Ark is CEO of Getting Smart. Tom Vander Ark is author of "Getting Smart: How Digital Learning is Changing the World" and "Smart Cities That Work for Everyone: 7 Keys to Education & Employment". He is CEO of Getting Smart, an education advocacy firm and a partner at Learn Capital an education venture fund. Tom advocates for innovations that customize and motivate learning and extend access. Previously he served as the first Executive Director of Education for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Tom served as a public school superintendent in Washington State and has extensive private sector experience. Tom is Director for the International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL), Imagination Foundation, Strive for College, and Charter Board Partners, and serves on several other non-profit boards.

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"In Preparing Teachers for Deeper Learning, we explained that blended, competency-based approaches to teacher preparation and development yield deeper learning outcomes for educators by 'promoting active inquiry, critical thinking and collaborative problem solving, as well as content mastery.' Similarly, programs that prepare and develop school and district leaders who will create or sustain deeper learning environments should embody and model deeper learning in a way that produces future leaders with experience in such settings themselves. Teachers and leaders need to experience this kind of environment before they create them for students. In turn, school leaders committed to deeper learning principles for students should also create deeper learning experiences for their teachers, staff, parents and community."

