

FINDINGS

OF THE

PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROJECT

ADVISORY TEAM (PHASE 2)

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR THE

COMMISSIONER AND NYS BOARD OF REGENTS

April 6, 2018

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was prepared for the New York State Commissioner of Education and the New York State Board of Regents. The project was made possible by a pair of grants to the University of the State of New York Regents Research Fund from the Wallace Foundation.

This work was undertaken by a team of 50 individuals. Each accepted an invitation from Commissioner Elia. The effort was led by three members who collaborated with a facilitator to plan meetings, direct activity, and evaluate progress. They were Gladys Cruz (District Superintendent, Questar III BOCES in Hudson), Reginald Landeau Jr. (Principal, George J. Ryan JHS in Queens), and Suzanne Rosenblith (Dean, Graduate School of Education at the University at Buffalo).

To undertake this initiative, the team formed five subcommittees. Each focused on a different aspect of the project. Members of the team volunteered to lead these subcommittees. As subcommittee leaders, they coordinated the activity of their respective small groups, assessed progress, and guided the drafting of recommendations. Subcommittee leaders included Hazel Carter, Suzanne Rosenblith, Clarence Ellis, Margaret Boorady, Sister Remigia Kushner, Reginald Landeau Jr., Lynn Lisy-Macan, Zheadric Barbra, and Deborah Shanley.

Deputy Commissioner for Higher Education John D'Agati was the executive team sponsor. Facilitation and report-writing support was provided by Ken Turner.

Throughout the project, efforts were made to attribute referenced material to the proper and first author. Through public review and comment, the intent is to correct any oversight or omission if notice is provided.

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* Denotes ex officio members who were unable to attend at least three meetings. They participated up to the point of decision-making.

** Denotes an ex officio member that the Commissioner named as an at-large appointment.

*** Denotes ex officio members (due to their status as SED liaisons). They acted as full participants in all but the decision-making phase.

**** These are non-resident experts. When in attendance, they were full participants but refrained from decision-making.

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PREAMBLE

On January 17, 2018 a 50-member team convened in response to an invitation from Commissioner Elia. Known as the Principal Preparation Project Advisory Team for Phase 2, the team assembled to address a 5-part charge:

- Modernize regulations guiding university-based preparation programs (taking into account the forthcoming *National Educational Leadership Preparation Standards*).
- Develop standards for principal supervisors (and Superintendents) aligned to the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*.
- Recommend whether competency-based assessment should replace the current School Building Leader examination.
- Propose a way to issue micro-credentials in partial fulfillment of School Building Leader requirements.
- Establish a P20 partnership framework that better defines the relationship between university-based principal preparation programs and school districts that host internships for aspiring leaders.

This report presents the findings of the Principal Preparation Project Advisory Team for Phase 2. It describes work that led to the formation of the team. It explains how the team was organized into subcommittees that each addressed a different part of the charge. It presents consensus conclusions. And it includes collateral material that was developed by the team during the course of the project. This secondary material includes a logic model that shows how the five elements of the charge are related and how they work in combination to advance the goal of improving the preparation of school building leaders. The other supplemental item is a set of “first principles”. For the purpose of this project, the term “first principles” means design features. Because these were used by all five of the subcommittees working on this initiative, they provide a common thread that links the recommendations from all five areas.

VISION

This work arises from the conviction that students thrive in the presence of great teachers and great school leaders. Teachers are better equipped to promote student learning when they have the leadership, guidance, and support of a well-prepared and well-supported principal. Thus, enhancing school leader preparation and support contributes to greater student success.

HISTORY

The 50-member team that assembled to take on this work was known as the Phase 2 Advisory Team. It was called the Phase 2 Team because it was preceded by earlier efforts that also focused on principal preparation but which began in December, 2015. This earlier effort culminated in a report to the Commissioner and the NYS Board of Regents. Presented to the Regents on July 18, 2017, it provides a frame of reference and point of departure for the current Phase 2 work that is the focus of this report.ⁱ An excerpt from the July 18, 2017 report follows:

The topic of principal preparation in New York is situated within a larger landscape. Through the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* the federal government has focused educators and the country on one question.

How do we create conditions that are more conducive to teacher instruction and student learning in ways that contribute to better, more-equitable opportunities and outcomes for all students? ⁱⁱ

The predecessors to the Phase 2 Advisory Team saw fit to draw attention to the importance of preparing principals with the mindset and skillset that enable them to address the learning needs of all students. The schoolhouse today is marked by a rich and growing diversity. To prepare all students for success requires principals that students can relate to, trust, and respect. This means leaders who are committed to the success of every student, who value different learning styles, who promote instructional practices that capitalize on a range of cultural traditions, and who strive to eliminate prejudice, stereotype, bias, and favoritism. It means seeing diversity not as deficit or disability, but as asset. Students flourish when school leaders and a school staff make it their mission to care and provide for the well-being of every child. For all children to thrive requires principals who want and know how to fashion learning environments that support the learning needs of every student. That means doing what is needed so all students are valued, respected, and experience success regardless of difference (age, gender, socio-economic status, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, native language, national origin, and other characteristics).

In part, it also means preparation programs that recruit and produce aspiring leaders from varied backgrounds and historically-under-represented populations. For those who offer principal preparation programs, it means taking concerted action to identify, recruit, select, and develop aspiring school building leaders from historically-under-represented populations. This commitment to creating vibrant and welcoming learning environments extends to the engagement with families and community partners. This includes reaching out more-intentionally to non-profits in the community.

This also means that principals are themselves learners. This means principals who are encouraged to expand their knowledge and skill and are actively supported in their professional growth.

The barriers to entry into the ranks of principal take many forms. For some, it is the inability to accept an internship if it means stepping away from a paying job. For others it means wanting and needing a mentor or coach who can relate to and understand the challenges that some who seek to become principal have to face. The recommendations offered in this report by the Phase 2 Advisory Team are viewed by members as necessary but not sufficient. They represent a step in the right direction, a modest but needed step.

This sentiment was later echoed by a stakeholder in a listening tour stop conducted on October 25, 2017.

I want to return to the topic of standards and standardization. I ask us all to think about and commit to making sure that we keep a clear focus on one thing. That is equity. Through the transition [to the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*], will or how will these standards and/or standardization impact equity? It is easy to say that implementation matters. What really matters though is that equity is advanced.

Both the earlier work and the current effort have been funded through the University of the State of New York Regent Research Fund by a pair of grants to the Fund from the Wallace Foundation.

With the support of these generous grants, a public engagement campaign was conducted in New York State. The outreach began in August 2016 and ended in April 2017. This engagement campaign helped marshal public support for efforts to improve principal preparation and practice. To steer this initial work, a 37-member advisory team was appointed by Commissioner Elia. Relying on input from the public engagement campaign, this 37-member team worked from September, 2016 until June, 2017 to produce nine belief statements and 11 recommendations all designed to improve principal preparation. Taken together, these beliefs and recommendations created a road map for the improvement of principal preparation in NYS.

All nine consensus recommendations from the July 18, 2017 report to the Commissioner and the Board of Regents were included (verbatim) in the ESSA plan for NYS that the federal government later approved.ⁱⁱⁱ In December, 2017, the NYS Board of Regents acted on the first recommendation and amended state regulations. The action of the Board of Regents shifts the basis of principal preparation and practice to the 2015 *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*. Notably, as mentioned in the NYS ESSA plan, planning is underway for NYS to devote a portion of the federal Title IIA funds that NYS receives to advance school leadership development.^{iv}

It is against this backdrop that the work of the 50-member team took place. Called the Principal Preparation Project Advisory Team for Phase 2, this 50-member team convened for four daylong meetings in 2018 (January 17, January 31, February 28, and March 21).

CONSENSUS FINDINGS: FIRST PRINCIPLES

The “first principles” that follow represent commonalities that link the recommendations from the five areas of the charge.

Foundation: Realizing educational excellence and equity throughout NY requires well trained leaders who have a convincing command of competencies associated with *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*.

Purpose and Effect: The intent is to create a P20 educational system that learns to get better at getting better. Improving principal preparation contributes to school and student success.

Feedback and Data: Feedback and reflection are at the heart of learning to get better; data collection, analysis, and reporting are vital because they make it possible to gauge whether activity translates into improvement.

P20 Partnership: Districts and universities are partners in training, planning, and placing school leaders; so close and ongoing feedback between field-based practitioners and university-based programs is an essential element of principal preparation.

Mentoring and Coaching: Because continuous learning is a necessity, principals need ongoing support in the form of high-quality mentoring and coaching up to and beyond the first full year on the job.

Quality is the Driver: The ability of program graduates to assume a leadership role and lead schools to higher ground is not just the aim and purpose of preparation programs but the driver of program success.

Competency Matters Most: Candidates enrolled in prep programs demonstrate certification readiness by demonstrating competency in leading school-based projects that impact staff, student or school performance.

Residency: During a fully-integrative, immersive, school-based internship, candidates identify problems of practice and design and lead interventions that help improve opportunities and outcomes for staff and students.

COLLATERAL MATERIAL: A CONSENSUS LOGIC MODEL

A logic model describes a strategy used to address a problem and accomplish a desired outcome. It identifies important components of the strategy. It hypothesizes how these components are related in a way that leads to the anticipated outcome.^v

In part, the rationale for including a logic model stems from a requirement under the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA).^{vi} That is to say, if a state plans to use Title IIA funds for the purpose of leadership development, then it is obliged to prepare a logic model and to organize and conduct a program evaluation.

LOGIC MODEL FOR PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROJECT

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite earnest effort, NYS has not yet achieved its mission “to ensure every student has equitable access to the highest quality educational opportunities, services, and support.” When it comes to principal preparation, many are certified but not enough have what it takes to be effective in the job. “What is needed” includes: (1) expectations for preparation programs that are aligned to the most current national standards (*PSEL* and *NELP*); (2) standards for candidate preparation that are aligned to the most current national standards (*PSEL*); (3) clinically-rich internship experiences that enable candidates to design and lead efforts aimed at improving schools; and (4) ongoing support in the form of high-quality coaching/mentoring that extends to and through the first year on the job

Inputs: What do we invest?	Activities: What do we do?	Participants: Who do we reach?	Short-Term Outcomes * Candidate effects	Medium-Term * * School effects	Long-Term *** Student effects
People Time Money Technology Partners Research Data	<p>Principal Preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommend that expectations for aspiring principals are aligned to current nat’l standards. - Recommend that prep program guidelines are aligned to national standards (<i>PSELs</i> and <i>NELP</i>). - Recommend incentives are used to strengthen the collaboration between P12 and Higher Ed. - Recommend changes to the internship so that candidates demonstrate certification readiness by applying acquired knowledge/skill in a P12 setting to address a real problem of practice. - Provide early guidance on the meaning of culturally responsive practices and the implications for principal preparation <p>Recruitment, Selection, and Placement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create expectations for districts & prep programs to recruit, select, & place candidates from under-represented populations <p>Supervision and Evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommend that expectations for supervisors are aligned to most current national standards <p>Professional Learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recommend use of resources (Title IIA) and structures (microcredential) that give principals access to hi-quality coaching, mentoring, & PD. <p>School Improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alter how certification readiness is determined by shifting from School Building Leader exam to a series of competency-based performance assessments that call upon candidates to: (a) identify a problem of practice in a P12 school; (b) design and lead an intervention to address the problem; and (c) document whether and how the intervention led to an improvement in school, staff, or student performance. 	<p>Aspiring principal candidates</p> <p>Programs to prepare principals</p> <p>Districts/higher ed institutions</p> <p>Students/staff/schools in districts</p> <p>Prep programs & participants</p> <p>Aspiring principal candidates</p> <p>Current school principals</p> <p>Students/staff/schools in districts Aspiring principal candidates</p>	<p>Improvement in candidate competencies associated with principal effectiveness. This means patterns of thinking, feeling, acting, and speaking that cause a person to be successful in a job or role (Kowal, J., & Hassel, E. <i>Turnarounds with new leaders</i> (2005) DC: Center for Comprehensive School Reform) Spencer, L. M., & Spencer, S. M. <i>Competence at work: Models for superior performance.</i> (1993) NY, Wiley</p> <p>Turnaround examples (Hassel):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Press for results for all - Motivating staff to perform - Problem solving - Confidence to face adversity <p>Massachusetts examples (Orr):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vision for high achievement - Fostering staff prof’l growth - Supporting teacher learning - Engaging community 	<p>Impact: School functioning improves in variety of ways because candidates enter principal positions equipped to effectively lead.</p> <p>Satisfaction: Greater sense of belonging among parents, staff, and students.</p> <p>Efficiency: Gains in use of scarce resources and matching of resources to highest priorities</p> <p>Distributed Leadership: Growing evidence exists within a school that decision-making is shared in a meaningful and effective way</p> <p>Greater program continuity</p>	<p>Achievement up overall</p> <p>Subgroup gaps narrow</p> <p>Yearly growth increasing</p> <p>Improvements in student uptake and performance on more-rigorous academic programs (e.g., in HS, AP, IB, honors, concurrent college enrollment, etc.)</p> <p>Attendance improves</p> <p>HS grad rate improves</p> <p>Satisfaction: Improved student voice and agency</p> <p>Student engagement improves (decline in exclusionary practices)</p>
<p>* The most-immediate beneficiaries of preparation programs are those enrolled in the programs. Thus, proximal or short-term outcomes are called “candidate effects.”</p> <p>** This logic model is rooted in the claim that well-prepared principals have a positive impact on school functioning. Thus, short-term outcomes (candidate effects) pave the way for and lead to medium-term benefits (or “school effects”).</p> <p>*** Just as it is assumed that better-prepared principals contribute to better school functioning, the claim here is that better-functioning schools contribute to improved performance of students who attend the school. While the benefits that matter most are those that accrue to students, student effects are distal effects (meaning downstream).</p>					

COLLATERAL MATERIAL: A GRAPHIC IDENTIFYING INTERVENTIONS AND THEIR INTER-RELATIONSHIP

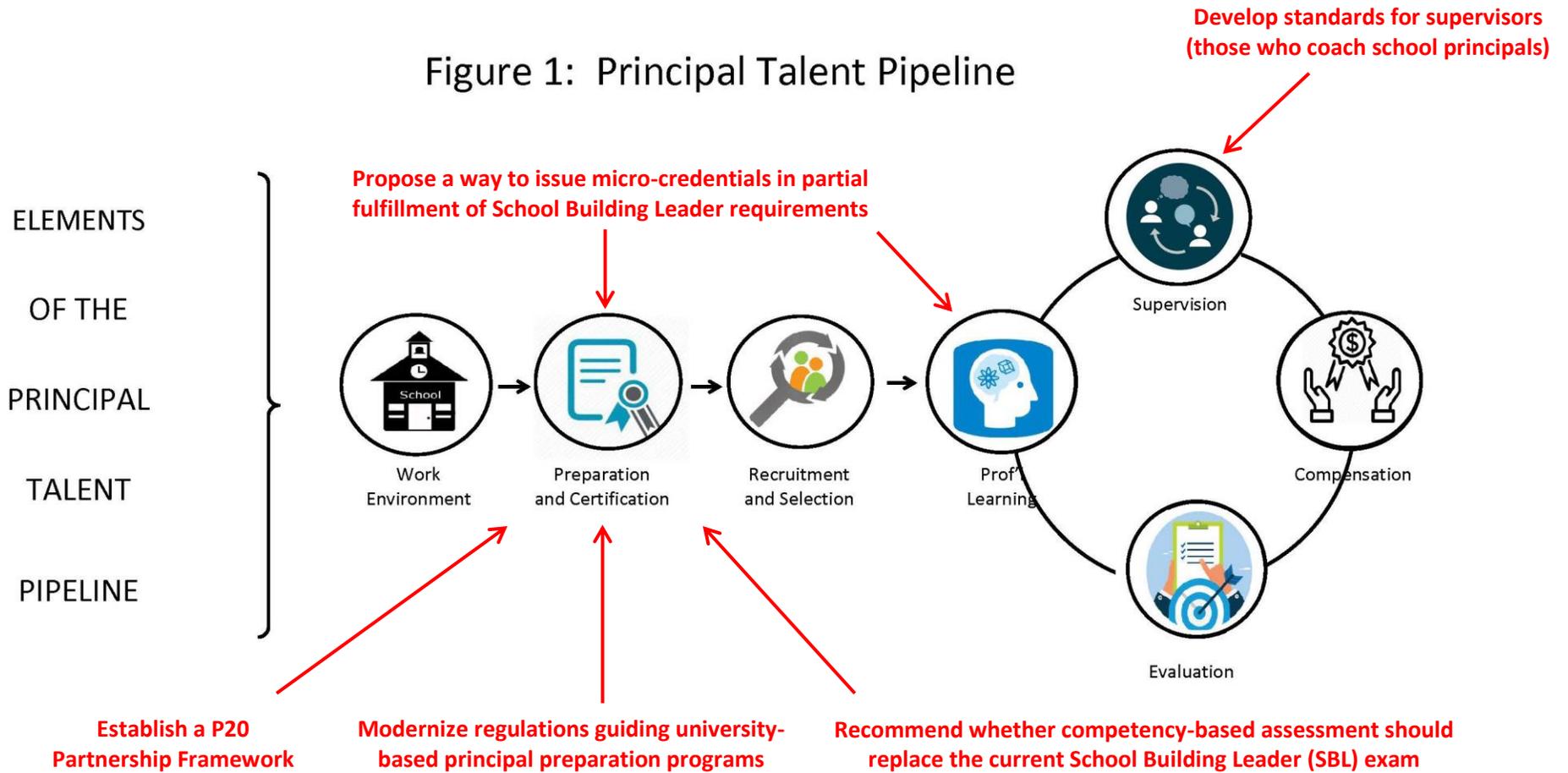
Unpacking a logic model reveals a combination of approaches. In this case, these approaches are designed to work together to improve the quality and quantity of school building leaders.

These approaches appear below in Figure 1. The display illustrates how these approaches or components are related.^{vii} Arrows are used to show how recommendations emerging from this Phase 2 work appear in this pipeline.

The approaches or components include:

- Principal preparation programs
- Recruitment, selection, and placement
- Supervision and evaluation
- Professional learning
- Working conditions
- School improvement

Figure 1: Principal Talent Pipeline



This display is adapted from one created by Matt Clifford and Catherine Barbour (American Institute for Research) for use in a February 2018 webinar titled "Recruiting and Selecting Turnaround Leaders" for the Wallace Foundation. March 21, 2018

A SET OF CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS

At the outset of work, members agreed to forward only those recommendations that enjoyed the consensus support of all members. Throughout their work, members used a consensus-building process. This process was used to finalize “first principles”, the logic model, and the recommendations that follow. As a result, each recommendation that follows earned the consensus support from all members of the Phase 2 Advisory Team.

While plans called for consensus to be reached during the final face-to-face meeting of the team on March 21, 2018, unseasonably harsh weather conditions conspired and forced the team to adapt.

The first three meetings of the Phase 2 Advisory Team each drew between 65 and 75 percent turnout; however turnout for the final meeting was substantially lower (40 percent). In the days leading to the final meeting, a nor’easter entered the forecast. In response, team members conferred and agreed to alter plans. As a result, a two-stage approach was taken to gaining final consensus.

First, during the final face-to-face meeting on March 21, 2018, those in attendance were polled on each component of the proposed recommendations; all in attendance endorsed all elements under consideration.

Second, members agreed that consensus could not be fully reached until every member had an opportunity to weigh in on the proposed recommendations. Using an online survey tool, all Phase 2 Team members (including those members not in attendance on March 21 as well as those in attendance on March 21) could signal their level of support for each proposed element. The response rate to this online survey was 84 percent.

While the Phase 2 Advisory Team included 50 members, seven served in an ex office capacity; these members participated in all but the consensus-building or decision-making phase of the work. Of these 36 who responded to the online survey, with just one single exception, all respondents supported all of the elements in the proposed recommendations. The exception was a single respondent who took issue with a proposed “first principle” (the topic was the “Aim of Principal Preparation Programs”). Because that “first principle” lacked the consensus support of all members, it does not appear in this report.

Articulating a set of “first principles” creates common ground for the recommendations. The logic model describes the intent of the system as a whole. When coupled with the recommendations, this describes what New York State can do to improve the quality and quantity of principals (by improving the preparation for future principals, the support for existing school principals, and the retention of effective building leaders).

What follows are the recommendations that address each of the five-part charge from the Commissioner.

PART 1: MODERNIZING REGULATIONS FOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Charge: Modernize regulations guiding university-based preparation programs (taking into account the forthcoming *National Educational Leadership Preparation Standards or NELP*)

Note: With its action in December, 2017, the NYS Board of Regents established that the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSELs)* will guide principal preparation and practice. For various reasons, the *PSELs* represent an improvement over the 2008 *ISLLC Standards*. Chiefly it is because the *PSELs* place greater emphasis on equity and cultural responsiveness as well as family and community engagement. Yet, because the *PSELs* are “career-spanning”, the field of principal preparation will benefit from the development of companion documents that build on and extend the *PSELs*. The reference to “career spanning” means that the *PSELs* identify expectations both for aspiring principals who seek certification as well as experienced principals who have been in the role for some time. What will be helpful to those in the field of principal preparation (such as university faculty within institutions that offer principal preparation programs) is a document that provides a set of expectations for aspiring principals and another set of guideposts for experienced principals. The *NELP* are expected to serve in that role.

Similarly, because *PSELs* apply both to school building leaders (principals) as well as school district leaders (superintendents), it will be useful to the field to have one set of expectations that are drawn from the *PSELs* but which apply to the preparation and practice of school building leaders and then another set of expectations (again, drawn from the *PSELs*) but this time that apply to the preparation and practice of school district leaders. Finally, it is the expressed intention of the *NELP* development team to harmonize the expectations in *PSELs* and the expectations of the *Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)*. For these reasons, those in the field of education administration have been eagerly awaiting and looking forward to the final release of the *National Educational Leadership Preparation* standards.

Given the delay in *NELP* release, subcommittee members adapted accordingly. The recommendation follows.

In Fall, 2017, when a charge to the Phase 2 Advisory Team was created, a national organization that is developing the *National Educational Leadership Preparation* standards said that *NELP* standards would be final by January, 2018.^{viii} However, the rollout was unexpectedly delayed. This complicated matters for the Phase 2 Team because it is widely thought it is premature to modernize regulations in advance of *NELP* completion. Helpfully, the *Metropolitan Council for Educational Administration Programs (MCEAP)* identified ways to better align *NELP* and *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSELs)*.^{ix}

- **Meet stakeholders in the field and ask, “Beyond the ideas that have been proposed by *MCEAP*, what else can be done to better align *NELP* to the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSELs)*?”^x**
- **Better align certification, preparation program standards, and university-based principal prep programs.**
- **Consider including micro-credentials as a component of principal preparation programs.**
- **Create an advisory team (from P12 and post-secondary institutions) to:**
 - **Ensure *PSELs* are the North Star (with respect to university-based principal preparation programs)**
 - **Modernize regulations guiding university-based prep programs (once *NELP* are official)**
 - **Offer NYSED ongoing guidance on internships (duration, content, supervision)**
 - **Offer NYSED ongoing guidance on re-registration of School Building Leader preparation programs**

PART 2: STANDARDS FOR PRINCIPAL SUPERVISORS

Charge: Develop standards for principal supervisors (and Superintendents) aligned to the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*.

Note: For reasons explained earlier, a delay in the final form of the *NELP* standards prompted the members of this subcommittee to reflect on the proper course of action. These members were well served by a companion document that was developed at the same time that the *PSELs* were developed. Developed by the *Council for Chief State School Officers*, it was called the *2015 Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards*.^{xi} Reasoning that it would be premature to recommend set of standards for superintendent in advance of the release of *NELP*, these subcommittee members instead focused attention on identifying ways that principals could be better supported in their work as school building leaders. This is what drew the members to consider and focus on the *Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards*. While the group outlined a full set of standards (that appear as Appendix A), the group members weighed shifting entirely away from language of supervision and instead calling these coaching standards. Although the recommendation did not reach that point, it is mentioned here because it was strongly considered.

Given *NELP* standards are not yet final, the subcommittee members adapted. The recommendation follows.

Postpone development of standards for superintendent until the *NELP* standards are final; at that point, convene a team to review *NELP* and recommend standards for superintendent preparation and practice that are based on *NELP*. The standards proposed below do not apply to superintendents but instead are intended to guide actions of those who do not serve as the principal evaluator. These standards are meant to enhance principal performance by focusing on coaching within the supervision process (apart from evaluation).

- **Adopt the *Proposed Standards for Principal Supervisors* that are adapted from the *2015 Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards* (See Appendix A).**

PART 3: COMPETENCY-BASED ASSESSMENT

Charge: Recommend whether competency-based assessment should replace the current School Building Leader examination (SBL exam).

Note: Members of this subcommittee were squarely focused on the question before them. Should we recommend shifting from the SBL exam to a competency-based system? Knowing the flaws of the current SBL exam was not enough to persuade them to recommend a shift to competency-based performance assessment. Members sought evidence that competency-based assessment (that is used for the purpose of initial principal certification) is a demonstrably better approach.

To that end, the members heard first-hand from the consultant of record (Margaret Terry Orr) to the state that shifted three years ago from an exam to a competency based approach (Massachusetts). Members reviewed articles published in refereed journals documenting the benefits of the *Performance Assessment for Leaders (PALs)* approach used in Massachusetts.^{xii} Likewise, the team reviewed a March 2018 publication that also examined and sought to quantify the impact of Massachusetts' competency based approach to initial principal certification on the effectiveness of university-based principal preparation programs.^{xiii}

Though the members had a single-minded focus on the question before them, they also recognized that the shift underway in NYS to the *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders* brings with it new expectations especially as they relate to cultural responsiveness, equity, and engagement of communities and families. It is for these reasons that the members advanced a recommendation that can be described as a “yes” but with some non-trivial qualifications.

Given this background, the recommendation follows.

The subcommittee working on this embraced the idea of exploring new ways to move in the direction of revisiting current certification tests and replacing them with competency-based tools. It is recommended that under the right conditions, with a gradual and thoughtful roll out, and co-developed within our framework of P-20 partnerships, New York State can develop an assessment framework that provides the opportunity for emerging principals to demonstrate their readiness to lead.

- **Determine if scholarly research supports the educative benefit of competency-based assessment (for the purpose of initial school building leader certification)**
- **If evidence supports the claim that a competency-based approach to assessing candidate readiness for initial certification is valid for its purpose, reliable in its scoring, and positive in preparing aspiring principal, then shift as a state from the current school building leader (SBL) exam to a competency-based performance assessment for initial certification.**
- **Take steps to see that a pilot is included in plans to transition to competency-based initial principal certification.**
- **Base competency-based assessment around competencies (and performances to be measured) that are appropriate for New York State.**
- **If the SBL exam is not altogether replaced by a competency-based approach, then replace multiple choice items on the SBL exam with competency-based performance tasks.**

PART 4: MICRO-CREDENTIALS

Charge: Propose a way to issue micro-credentials in partial fulfillment of School Building Leader requirements

Note: Early in their work, members addressing this topic recognized that a pathway leading to micro-credentials could most easily be established for practicing principals seeking additional professional development. Establishing a pathway leading to certification was a larger undertaking.

Recognizing that the charge statement called for the latter (specifying a role for micro-credentials within the a framework of coursework leading to certification), the members chose initially to understand where and how micro-credentials are now used -- both in NYS and elsewhere – by practicing administrators who are seeking additional professional development. The work of these members was informed by several resources. The first was a January 23, 2018 memorandum from the SUNY Chancellor to the SUNY Board of Trustees directing staff to pursue a strategy that would support and advance the implementation recommendations of a “SUNY-wide Micro-Credentialing Task Force”. The second was a firsthand account from a micro-credential provider (*Teaching Matters*) that has issued 1,500 micro-credentials to 500 educators in NYCDOE. The third was a set of perspectives on micro-credentials from various entities in the United States. Included were states (Tennessee and Arkansas) and school districts (Baltimore and NYC) in the vanguard when it comes to micro-credential use.

Members from other subcommittees quickly saw the potential for micro-credentials. This included the subcommittee focused on modernizing regulations for university-based principal preparation programs, the subcommittee focused on P20 Partnerships, and the subcommittee focused on competency-based assessment. Members concluded that developing a micro-credential system offered promising and useful opportunities. Looking ahead to next steps, there was widespread agreement among members that NYS would benefit from sustained attention to micro-credentials. Members agreed that more work is needed in this area.

Given this background, the recommendation follows.

Micro-credential construction can and should be driven and informed by School Building Leader (SBL) performance indicators. Take steps to ensure that competencies are based on and aligned with *PSELS/NELP* and that higher education institutions assess competencies and issue micro-credentials. Arrange so micro-credentials meet Continuing Teacher and Leader Education requirements and take steps to help ensure that districts play a role in assessing micro-credentials for practicing principals.

- **Once *NELP* standards become official, align competencies to them and then create a corresponding set of micro-credentials (aligned to these competencies).**
- **Create a pathway to initial principal certification that includes micro-credentials as a component.**
- **Guided by the performance of their districts, make it possible for principals and superintendents to recommend the need for future micro-credentials. In other words, current and future leaders will be able to acquire additional micro-credentials in order to enhance their skills based on district, school, and/or community needs (for example, a micro-credential may be developed for model schools such as career and technical education schools or for international/common language schools).**
- **Base micro-credential performance standards on standards/competencies/assessment frameworks for School Building Leader certification.**

PART 5: P20 PARTNERSHIPS

Charge: Establish a P20 partnership framework that better defines the relationship between university-based principal preparation programs and school districts that host internships for aspiring leaders.

Note: Members of this subcommittee received and considered a proposed “straw man.” A draft three-page concept paper was presented to the subcommittee. Essentially, members were asked, “if not this, then what?” Invigorating the work was the prospect of an infusion of federal funding (3 percent set-aside of Title IIA funds). A commitment by NYS to incentivize leadership development and to establish a network of regional P20 Partnerships made the work of this subcommittee more than an academic exercise.

The recommendation follows.

The purpose of this work is to articulate the criteria and principles that should be addressed in an application for state funds to create a P20 partnership whose chief purpose is to prepare a diverse group of principals to work successfully in chronically-struggling schools under a turnaround model. Questions that guided this work include – Does each criterion provide clear direction to applicants, while allowing for maximum innovation in the proposal? Are all essential categories that one would want to see in an application included within the criteria?

At its most basic level, guided by state and national standards, we want partnerships to share with reviewers their best, most innovative, ideas for preparing principals who are able to effectively lead persistently challenged schools.

- **Adopt proposed revisions to the language of a three-page concept paper (see Appendix B)**

Appendix A: Proposed Standards for Principal Supervisors

Standard 1:

Principal coaches focus a substantial portion of their time on developing instructional leadership capacity when working with individual principals as well as groups of principals.

Dispositions principal coaches exemplify:

- Innovative
- Systems focused

Narrative description of embedded concepts:

- Principal supervisors focus a substantial portion of their time on developing instructional leadership capacity when working with individual principals as well as groups of principals. They develop efficient approaches and connections with other central office functions to minimize their time spent on activities unrelated to principal development

Actions of principal coaches:

- Spend time in schools observing principals and the effects of their leadership efforts
- Focus their time on supporting principals' efforts to improve teacher effectiveness, student learning and achievement.
- Identify operational and other central office supports for principals that allow principal supervisors to focus on instructional leadership

Standard 2:

Principal coaches support individual principals and engage in effective professional learning strategies to help principals grow as instructional leaders.

Dispositions principal coaches exemplify:

- Growth oriented
- Ethical
- Reflective
- Equity minded

Narrative description of embedded concepts:

- Principal coaches model the leadership behaviors that they expect principals to exhibit, offer timely and actionable feedback, and provide differentiated learning opportunities to build principals' capacity as instructional leaders. Essential to this coaching role is the ability to build strong relationships with principals that result in trust, candid communication, innovative thinking, and continuous improvement of leadership practice

Actions of principal coaches:

- Communicate effectively with principals and explain reasoning and research behind decisions and actions
- Model culturally responsive best practices and effective leadership behavior such as self-awareness, reflective practice, transparency, and ethical behavior
- Build relationships with principals based on the knowledge of adult learning theory, common goals, trust, support and mutual accountability
- Differentiate the support given to each principal through balancing the learning needs of the principal and the instructional needs of the school
- Establish and sustain safe and supportive learning communities that provide peer feedback and promote innovative thinking
- Utilize professional learning strategies that are supported by research and know to be effective with principals
- Ensure the principals' communities of practice stay focused on instructional leadership.

Standard 3:

Principal coaches use evidence of principals' effectiveness to determine necessary improvements in principals' practice to foster a positive educational environment that supports the diverse cultural and learning needs of students

Dispositions principal coaches exemplify:

- Growth oriented
- Analytical
- Equity minded

Narrative description of embedded concepts:

- Principal supervisors effectively focus principals' learning by gathering and examining a wide variety of evidence from the school, district, and community. In addition to information about achievement, evidence might include teacher, student and parent perception surveys, climate surveys, evaluations from colleagues, and the principals' personal reflections. By analyzing evidence, the principal coach can make stronger inferences about principals' current level of knowledge and skills, provide differentiated feedback to principals about their work and target areas for professional learning both for individual principals and the principal learning community

Actions of principal coaches:

- Gather qualitative, quantitative and observational evidence about principals' capacity for instructional leadership and serving the needs of diverse learners
- Use evidence from a variety of sources to assess current levels of principals' proficiency and to target areas for professional learning
- Formatively assess principals' implementation of new practices through on-site observations and other sources of evidence
- Provide purposeful, timely, goal-aligned, and actionable feedback to principals.
- Monitor the effects of principals' implementation of prescribed actions.

Standard 4:

Principal coaches engage principals in the professional learning process in ways that help them grow as instructional leaders.

Dispositions principal coaches exemplify:

- Growth oriented
- Collaborative
- Reflective

Narrative description of embedded concepts:

- Through the formal evaluation processes, principal supervisors work collaboratively with principals to identify their leadership strengths and specific areas they need to develop. The principal supervisor uses a professional learning plan to support and hold principals accountable for continuous improvement in their practice, which results in higher levels of student learning and achievement

Actions of principal coaches:

- Collaborate with principals to articulate and refine a district-wide shared vision and understanding of effective principal instructional leadership and how the evaluation system supports the vision.
- Gather qualitative, quantitative and observational evidence about principals' capacity for instructional leadership
- Ensure principals clearly understand district's expectations for instructional leadership and associated terminology
- Communicate and model how the evaluation process supports principal's growth as instructional leaders

- Collaborate with principals to identify leadership strengths and weaknesses, determine actions and supports needed to improve their practice, and develop a professional plan for achieving their goals
- Support principals in reaching their goals by monitoring progress, conducting formative assessments, providing feedback, and revising elements of the professional learning plan as needed.

Standard 5:

Principal coaches advocate for and inform the coherence of organizational vision, policies and strategies to support schools and student learning.

Dispositions; Principal coaches believe in, value, and are committed to being

- Analytical
- Perseverant
- System-focused

Narrative description of embedded concepts:

- Principal coaches serve as an important conduit for two-way communication between the central office and individual principals. They translate and communicate the district vision, policies, and strategies to school leaders to help ensure that school-level goals and strategies align with those pursued by the district. Additionally, principal coaches share feedback and data from schools to inform district vision, policies, and strategies so that they support schools and student learning. Principal supervisors also assist districts in the development and support of a strong leadership pipeline.

Actions of principal coaches:

- Examine school-level goals and strategies to promote equity for students and ensure alignment with district vision, policies, and strategies.
- Communicate the vision, goals and strategies of the district with all internal and external stakeholders.
- Connect principals to central office resources and personnel to support the principals' work.
- Assist principals in learning to allocate school resources in ways that best support staff and meet their school's needs.
- Help principals create distributed leadership systems and structures that support teaching and learning.
- Gather and provide feedback to district leaders regarding district goals, policies, and strategies to support the work of principals and student learning.
- Strategically buffer principals from distractions and maintain their focus on instructional leadership.
- Assist with the development of a strong pipeline of future school leaders.
- Lead processes to select and induct principals ready to serve as successful instructional leaders.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the district's systems to support schools and student learning.

Standard 6:

Principal coaches assist the principal in ensuring their school is culturally/socially responsive and have equitable access to resources necessary for the success of each student.

Dispositions; Principal coaches believe in, value, and are committed to being

- Analytical
- Ethical
- Perseverant
- Equity-Minded
- Systems-Focused

Narrative description of embedded concepts:

- Principal coaches work with principals to promote the understanding, appreciation, and use of the school and community's diverse cultural, linguistic, social, political, and intellectual resources. They ensure that issues of student marginalization, deficit-based schooling, and limiting assumptions about gender, sexual orientation, race, class, disability, and special status are recognized and effectively addressed.

Actions of principal coaches:

- Ensure that each student is treated fairly and equitably and has physical access to the learning environment and academic access to excellent teachers.
- Ensure that teachers and staff are treated fairly and equitably and have physical access to a positive and collaborative environment.
- Ensure that the school community has access to the full range of integrated services to meet the diverse cultural and learning needs of each student.
- Exhibit cultural competency in interactions and decision-making with colleagues and community.
- Protect students' equitable access to social capital within the school and to high-quality instructional practices.
- Monitor schools as affirming and inclusive places.

Standard 7:

Principal coaches engage in their own development and continuous improvement to help principals grow as instructional leaders.

Dispositions; Principal coaches believe in, value, and are committed to being

- Growth-oriented
- Analytical
- Reflective

Narrative description of embedded concepts:

- Principal coaches, as members of a professional community, seek to continuously improve their own leadership practice. By engaging in professional learning, they keep abreast of changes in laws and regulations that affect schools as well as district policies and practices. They also model the value of reflective practice for others and gain first-hand experience about the challenges of assessing professional practices through reflection and feedback, setting goals, and designing and implementing professional learning plans to meet those goals.

Actions of principal coaches:

- Understand the dimensions and challenges of professional growth.
- Use relationships and experiences to inform and improve their leadership practice.
- Remain current on latest laws, regulations and required data.
- Use feedback and data from multiple sources (e.g. principals, supervisor, and principal coach colleagues) to reflect upon personal strengths and weaknesses and determine needed professional learning.
- Set pertinent and measurable professional learning goals to improve their leadership practice.
- Share professional learning goals with supervisors and principals to garner support and accountability.
- Engage in individual and collective professional learning activities to meet professional learning goals.
- Reflect upon progress in achieving professional learning goals and adjust as necessary to reach them.
- Engage in professional learning alongside their principals.

Standard 8:

Principal coaches assist principals to lead strategic change that continuously supports the performance of schools and sustains high-quality educational programs and opportunities across the district. With sensitivity to community values and interests, they work with principals to identify needs, determine strategy, and enact change that results in increasing performance. By sharing feedback and data from schools, they also identify possible changes to the district vision, strategies and policies so that they better support schools, student learning, and continuous improvement.

Dispositions; Principal coaches believe in, value, and are committed to being

- Growth-oriented
- Collaborative
- Innovative
- Perseverant
- System-focused

Narrative description of embedded concepts:

- Principal coaches accept responsibility for continuously improving the performance of students, teachers, principals and schools. With sensitivity to community values and interests, they work with principals to identify needs, determine strategy, and enact change that results in ever increasing performance. By sharing feedback and data from schools, they also drive changes to the district vision, strategies and policies so that they better support principals to support student learning and continuous improvement.

Actions of principal coaches:

- Use evidence from a variety of data sources to assist principals in identifying areas that need improvement in their school, as well as use evidence and data across schools to inform district responses.
- Assist principals in determining situationally-appropriate strategies for improvement, including transformational and incremental approaches, in response to identified principal and school performance needs.
- Assist principals to employ innovative thinking and strategic planning to create change in response to identified school performance need.
- Communicate to principals and district the needs and means for effecting and embracing change.
- Identify operational and other central office supports to enable principals to implement change.
- Provide feedback to central office staff about ways to improve services that support principals, schools and student learning.
- Assist principals to use data to assess the impact of change on the determined need.
- Assist principals to assess their effectiveness in leading change at the school level

Appendix B: 3-Page Concept Paper



P20 Partnership for Principal Preparation

“Equipping School Building Leaders to Successfully Turn Around Schools”

This initiative seeks to develop a program that will bring together leaders from school districts that have a successful record of preparing aspiring principals, scholars from university-based graduate programs with national expertise in school leadership development, and potentially other entities with leadership development expertise (possibly Boards of Cooperative Educational Services, etc.) to collaborate on the re-design of preparation programs so that leaders who emerge are better equipped to turn around schools that struggle most.

Using Title IIA funds that the federal government provides to NYS, we are proposing to establish models that can be used to spur and support a growing statewide network of Regional P20 Partnership Programs in New York State that share the aim of improving principal preparation and thereby enhancing staff and school performance and contributing to improved student academic success.

We are exploring opportunities to develop innovative partnerships that will provide aspiring principals with the knowledge, skill, and experiences to lead, guide, and support schools to higher levels of performance with special attention to preparing candidates to successfully turn around chronically-struggling, high-need schools.

Committed to advancing educational excellence and enhancing equity of opportunity, federal funds provide seed resources to underwrite the design and launch of model P20 Partnership Programs that are sustainable over time. These will:

- a. Provide fully-integrated, immersive internship learning experiences for aspiring principals that are grounded in a clinically-rich, and well-supervised set of practical experiences aligned to state and national standards.
- b. Develop a funding model that encourages and supports the recruitment of high quality candidates with special attention to candidates from historically underrepresented groups.
- c. Develop competencies aligned to the 2015 *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders* and use those as the focal point for competency-based determination of candidate readiness for certification.

- d. Provide an evidence-based, strategic model for the recruitment, selection, and placement of school leaders that aims to attract and retain effective leaders who are placed in optimal settings.
- e. In collaboration with NYSED, communicate findings, results, and processes in order to develop a repository of best practices to improve P20 school partnerships.
- f. Couple existing capabilities that a district has to monitor the identification, development, and placement of school leaders (capabilities presently exist or are currently being pilot tested) with data analysis and reporting abilities to provide a foundation for a credible third party evaluation that will monitor and quantify model impact thereby helping NYS to meet the evidence requirements of *Every Student Succeeds Act*.
- g. Specify the expectations and professional responsibilities of mentors and coaches of aspiring principals.
- h. Ensure that decisions are shared by university-based scholars and field-based practitioners regarding candidate readiness for certification.
- i. Design and implement an internship experience that ensures a knowledgeable in-district expert will observe, supervise, mentor, coach, and attest that a candidate has demonstrated competency with respect to a particular certification standard.
- j. In lieu of School Building Leader (SBL) examinations, design competency-based assessments that call upon candidates to identify a problem of practice for a school, to design and lead the implementation of the intervention, and then to evaluate and document in what way and how well the intervention improved staff functioning, student learning, or school performance.
- k. Culminate in issuance of a micro-credential that is recognized by NYS as partial fulfillment of the requirements for School Building Leader (SBL) certification in competencies related to school turnaround.
- l. Establish for each Partnership Program a written agreement between the district and the university that stipulates how revenue collected during an internship benefits the organization(s) and individual(s) that bear responsibility for supervising candidate internship.
- m. Design and implement a process whereby judgments of candidate readiness for certification that are made by each program are comparable across individual, program, and year and that these judgments are educationally sound, credible, defensible, reliable and valid for their intended purpose.
- n. Set and meet goals, targets, and milestones (and then report success in efforts) to recruit, select, develop, and place in school leadership roles individuals from historically under-represented populations and subsequently to annually increase the number and percent of candidates from these historically-under-represented student populations who assume school building leader responsibilities

- o. Pair internship with high-quality coaching and mentoring support that extends through first full year that a candidate is in the principal job (enumerating what the university, district, and school will do to assure quality mentoring/coaching).
- p. Implement ways to build sustainability and progressively shift financial responsibility from the state to the P20 partnership.
- q. Develop a plan to sustain the partnership.

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- i The report from the Principal Preparation Project Advisory Team can be found at the following link:
<http://www.regents.nysed.gov/common/regents/files/718Findings%20of%20the%20Principal%20Project%20Advisory%20Team.pdf>
- ii Reference here to “all students” involves providing the access and services needed for students to acquire the knowledge and skills to successfully pursue their chosen path in life. This may involve customized opportunities and individualized support. The understanding that “all means all” explains the moral obligation of educators and especially school building leaders to advocate for and take action to promote the success of every student, regardless of a student’s disability or circumstance. This contemporary view of a social covenant that includes a duty to advance the welfare of others has been articulated by many including NYU scholar Kwame Anthony Appiah. Paraphrasing Appiah’s view of commonness plus difference, he says, “Two things are true. We are all alike. We are all different.” (*Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*).
- iii See pages 170-172 in the NYS plan at <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/essa/documents/nys-essa-plan-final-1-16-2018.pdf>
- iv “The Department proposes to use its Title IIA funding to promote initiatives that similarly focus educational improvement efforts in New York State on the cornerstone belief that students thrive in the presence of great teachers and great school leaders.” Source: See page 145 in the NYS ESSA plan and “the Department will set aside a portion of its Title IIA funds, including the newly available set-aside to support school leaders, to support leadership development programs for principals of these [highest need] schools.” See page 151 in the NYS ESSA plan <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/accountability/essa/documents/nys-essa-plan-final-1-16-2018.pdf>
- v L. Daugherty, R. Herman, F. Unlu, *Logic Models for Selecting, Designing, and Implementing Evidence-Based School Leadership Interventions*, RAND, 2017. See also, R. Herman et alia, *School Leadership Interventions Under the Every Student Succeeds Act: Evidence Review*, January, 2017, RAND, pages 9-12
- vi R. Herman et alia, *School Leadership Interventions Under the Every Student Succeeds Act: Evidence Review*, January, 2017, RAND, page 6-9
- vii This display is adapted from one created by Matt Clifford and Catherine Barbour from the American Institute for Research. It appeared in a February 2018 webinar titled “Recruiting and Selecting Turnaround Leaders.”
- viii Michelle Young has chaired a national team that has worked to develop the NELP. She is the Executive Director of the University Council for Educational Administration and a Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy at the University of Virginia. She served as an external non-resident expert to the 37-member Principal Preparation Project Advisory Team. More detailed information about the NELP can be found at:
<http://npbea.org/nelp/>
<http://www.ucea.org/2016/05/01/comment-on-the-new-nelp-standards-for-leadership-preparation-today/>
<http://aasa.org/content.aspx?id=36826>
- ix The suggestions from MCEAP can be found at the following web site (go to the folder marked “Phase 2 Readings, Find the file titled “MCEAP Feedback on Draft NELP Standards” Source is <http://www.nysed.gov/principal-project-advisory-team/principal-project-advisory-team>)
- x See the file titled “Crosswalk of PSEL, NELP, and MCEAP Color Coded”. To locate it go to the folder marked “Phase 2 Readings”. There find the file titled “MCEAP Feedback on Draft NELP Standards.” The source is <http://www.nysed.gov/principal-project-advisory-team/principal-project-advisory-team>
- xi Found at <https://www.ccsso.org/resource-library/model-principal-supervisor-professional-standards>
- xii See the file titled “PAL Construct Validity and Reliability”. See also the file titled “Construct Validation and Bias Review”. Both are found in the folder marked “Phase 2 Readings”. Source is <http://www.nysed.gov/principal-project-advisory-team/principal-project-advisory-team>
- xiii This piece was titled “How Performance Assessment for Leaders (PALs) Influences Preparation Program Quality and Effectiveness” by Margaret Terry Orr and Liz Hollingworth (with School Leadership and Management, <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cslm20>)