

DATA POINTS



48% OF PRINCIPALS COME FROM ASSISTANT PRINCIPALSHIP

Researchers from Oregon studied 14 years of administrative data from that state to understand public school principals' career paths. Principals had accrued most of their experience within the state but not necessarily in their current district. Just under half (48%) of new principals came from an assistant principal role, while 19% came from a classroom teaching position and 33% came from another role. The authors recommend differentiated support for principals based on their career paths, writing, "For instance, those coming through pathways other than the [assistant principal] may not gain access to the same degree of mentorship available to those who do." On the other hand, they point out, those principals may also bring other skills that could be valuable to share with colleagues. bit.ly/3HHU35B

2 WAYS STATES CAN CULTIVATE HIGH-QUALITY PRINCIPALS

In a synthesis of two principal improvement initiatives supported by The Wallace Foundation, Paul Manna found that states are uniquely positioned to enable principal success through two types of support: activation of state standards and fostering high-impact networked partnerships connecting districts, universities, and expert professional organizations. The report not only presents evidence that underscores the importance of state policymakers' support but also points to previous research showing that leadership is among the most important factors in student success. bit.ly/3DLva0D

12 WEEKS TO GREATER COMPASSION

Teachers from an urban Title I school engaged in 12 weeks of professional learning about trauma-informed practice and shared their perceptions of their attitudes, practices, classroom climate, and personal well-being. The professional learning included interactive presentations, live practice of learned strategies, in-classroom implementation support, and expert feedback on self-reflective journal entries. After 12 weeks, teachers reported significantly higher levels of compassion satisfaction and lower levels of secondary traumatic stress. Levels of burnout did not change significantly. Focus group data suggested that teachers felt they developed higher levels of empathy, patience, and calmness, and that they began to "depersonalize student behavior and alter their responses from discipline and punishment to ones of compassion and support." bit.ly/3RJzsCP

6 DOMAINS OF TEACHER EXPERTISE

Researchers from the United Kingdom and Turkey conducted what they call the "first systemic metasummary" of research on what makes for an expert teacher. Acknowledging a lack of clarity about the concept, they sought to create a prototype of an expert

teacher by looking at 106 studies from 16 countries that described some or all participants as experts. These studies described 73 characteristics of expert teachers, which the researchers categorized in six domains relating to cognition, personal attributes, professionalism, and pedagogical practices. Several of the characteristics relate to aspects of high-quality professional learning. For example, "Expert teachers reflect extensively and often critically on their practice, help their colleagues frequently, and are continuous learners throughout their careers." bit.ly/3RLGSp8

1 TOOL TO IMPROVE PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Researchers from multiple countries proposed a new research instrument, the In-Service Teacher Training Survey Instrument, to address a lack of consistent evaluation of professional development programs. Applying the instrument to 33 programs identified as effective in previous rigorous studies, they identified characteristics of effectiveness, including programs that link participation to financial or promotion incentives, have a specific focus, include opportunities for practice, and include a face-to-face aspect. Follow-up interviews also identified mentoring follow-up visits and materials to help teachers apply what they learned. The researchers then applied the instrument to 139 government-funded, at-scale programs across 14 countries to determine whether the professional learning most teachers experience embodies these characteristics. They found that very few programs provide incentives or follow-up support. The authors interpret the results as evidence of a troubling gap between typical programs and high-quality approaches. bit.ly/3IlyccB