

WhatWorksSC

expert series

An expert series building on the findings of the largest ever study of public education in South Carolina

Building Strong School Leadership

Simply put, great schools almost always have great leaders. Yet, it is easy to underestimate the importance of strong school leadership since a principal or superintendent oftentimes appears to be just one person in a sea of many. Nevertheless, time and again, evidence reveals that schools with improving student achievement, satisfied teachers, and engaged parents and community members have strong and committed school leaders.

While these strong leaders differ in their styles, one thing is certain: they make their mark on all of the school's stakeholders and thereby lift the school to higher levels. In the realm of essential elements of successful schools, strong school leadership ranks near the top. For, when economic times are tough, or an unexpected challenge presents itself, the group needs someone to look to.

This paper seeks to further explore the issue of school leadership. In order to frame the issue, the results of the recent Riley Institute study on public education-- a study that convincingly points to building strong school leadership as key to improving public education in South Carolina--will first be provided and discussed.

Next, Dr. Connie McDowell from Furman University will further introduce the issue and provide insight into why stakeholders from all over South Carolina have overwhelmingly identified the need to focus on building strong school leadership. Following, a sample of statewide initiatives will be highlighted, providing tangible examples of promising models already in place in South Carolina. Finally, Mark Bounds from the South Carolina State Department of Education will evaluate how the state is doing as a whole and will look at gaps between what research tells us needs to be done in South Carolina and what is actually taking place. Additionally, models that could be relevant for South Carolina will be discussed in his section.





I. Background Information: Riley Institute Study

How do we know that South Carolina's stakeholders believe that building strong public school leadership should be a priority? Results from the large-scale study conducted by the Riley Institute at Furman clearly show that various stakeholders from all over the state overwhelmingly support a focus on this issue.

Between May 2005 and November 2006, the Riley Institute project team spent more than 3,000 hours meeting with nearly 800 South Carolinians to gather their opinions on public education. The team met with businessmen and women, teachers of all levels, superintendents, parents, school board members, principals and students from every county and school district in the state - large and small, rural and urban, wealthy and poor.

Throughout the research, stakeholder groups across South Carolina voiced common support for a focus on building strong leadership in every school. Evidence for this is found in both the quantitative survey data and the qualitative discussion data. Listed below are the top recommendations from the greatest number of participants. What emerged from the research is a roadmap of detailed ideas and suggestions to build strong leadership for every public school:

“Throughout the research, stakeholder groups across South Carolina voiced common support for a focus on building strong leadership in every school.”

1. Create the time and expectation for teachers and administrators to collaborate to better meet student needs:
 - Ensuring that schools have sufficient staff to allow for collaborative planning time without increasing the duties or workload of staff members;
 - Ensuring that collaborative planning sessions are held regularly and are used for the proper purpose;
 - School-level training so teachers know how to effectively use their collaborative and planning time;
 - Vertical teaching teams that can collaborate;
 - Occasional late arrival/early dismissal times to create opportunities for teachers, staff, guidance personnel, and administrators to discuss student difficulties and other matters;
 - Developing grade-level learning communities within the school so that all teachers get to know all students and can help in their areas of need;
 - Teacher advocates for all students;
 - More time for administrators to spend time in classrooms getting to know teachers and students.
2. Facilitate better coordination and communication among all levels of education and among schools, districts, and state agencies/government:

One of the problems recognized by participants throughout the study is the lack of collaboration between grade levels, schools, districts, and state agencies. To remedy this, participants suggested:

- Laptop computer/email capabilities for all teachers, school personnel, and administration, as well as families and parents;
- State-wide or district-wide committees of education stakeholders to discuss area school concerns;
- Leadership committees at the school level to communicate with district, state, and federal government.



3. Create a system that allows administrators the ability to fire ineffective teachers:
 - Revise current teacher dismissal policies while concurrently raising teacher salaries;
 - Establish an appropriate teacher evaluation instrument that produces specific evaluation parameters, and ensure that it is properly implemented;
 - Establish a teacher evaluation system that is frank, focused, and frequently implemented, and ensure that it is carried out by competent professionals;
 - Establish a documentation procedure that allows for the necessary proof of teacher incompetence;
 - Provide a staff development coach in every content area in every school;
 - Provide frequent observation and feedback;
 - Create a step-by-step plan by which a poor teacher can be remediated and, if that fails, fired;
 - Create an appeals process before out-of-district educators;
 - Prevent teachers fired by one district from being hired to teach in another;
 - Extend evaluation systems to principals and superintendents;
 - Convince legislature of the need to change the current dismissal laws.

4. Increase salaries and create incentives for principals who take on more difficult assignments:

One of the problems recognized in education in South Carolina is the difficulty of attracting strong leadership to poor, rural school districts. To address that issue, participants recommended:

- Increased salaries;
 - Bonuses for successful principals in rural, high-poverty areas;
 - Incentives to recruit people into leadership roles early in their education careers;
5. Create alternative preparation programs for potential school leaders:
 - Create a program to recruit business leaders into school administration;
 - Create incentives for business leaders to be interested in the program;
 - Develop a rigorous school administrator education program;
 - Develop an apprentice-type program for new school leaders to train with successful school leaders, and a mentor program to give new leaders support, guidance, and help;
 - Develop an “effective school leader” list of qualifications and a test for certification and renewal.
 6. Work to change the negative public image of South Carolina’s schools:
 - Implement an accountability system that rewards improvement and gives schools and students real and helpful feedback;
 - Celebrate successes of schools and teachers;
 - Set realistic standards that students can meet;
 - Publicize good news;
 - Address the problems that make the public image negative.

7. Institute effective training for school board members:

School board qualifications have long been at the heart of discussions regarding the hiring and firing of teachers and superintendents, mismanagement in school districts, and the general educational tenor throughout the state. Participants in the study recommended the following:

 - Requiring board training, ongoing self-assessment, and assessment by local administration and teachers;



“Most principals were well-respected and held in high regard if they kept the parents happy, the building clean, and the discipline under control. However, as the accountability movement escalated, the expectations and job responsibilities for a principal began to change significantly.”

- Passing laws to remove school board members from the daily operations and personnel matters of the school district;
- Limiting school board member terms;
- Requiring state-level training for all entering board members (some participants advised recurring annual training for all) with lawyers, accountants, and educators, so they can learn about the matters of the district;
- Requiring that board members spend a certain amount of time each month visiting the schools and writing about their observations/conclusions;
- Developing an accountability system for school board members;
- Implementing exchange programs between members of different school boards to learn about other’s experiences and ways of solving problems.

Participants recognized that most of the strategies suggested to build leadership in every school require considerable money. Participants stressed the need to lobby state legislators to appropriate the needed funding.

II. Why Focus on Building Strong Public School Leadership **By Dr. Connie McDowell, Furman University**

The job responsibilities of a public school principal in South Carolina have changed dramatically over the last two decades. Prior to the accountability movement that gained momentum in the late 1990’s, a principal’s position was generally viewed as a school manager; one whose primary responsibilities included tasks such as handling the budget, maintaining the facility, overseeing public relations, and supervising discipline. Most principals were well-respected and held in high regard if they kept the parents happy, the building clean, and the discipline under control. However, as the accountability movement escalated, the expectations and job responsibilities for a principal began to change significantly.

In the late 1990s, South Carolina policymakers and leaders became concerned about the economic future of the state and the state’s ability to compete in the global marketplace. Consequently in 1997, Governor David Beasley of South Carolina established the Performance of Accountability Standards for Schools (PASS) Commission (Exec. Order No. 97-05, 1997). This commission consisted of business and educational leaders, as well as legislators. The group’s task was to identify and recommend to the General Assembly internationally competitive academic standards, along with types of assessments to measures these standards. In 1998, the South Carolina Education Accountability Act was passed as a direct result of the work of the PASS Commission (Education Accountability Act, 1998). This statewide accountability system has had major implications on the role of a principal.

The Education Accountability Act (EAA), which was amended in 2008, contains five basics components: Curriculum Content Standards, Assessments, Professional Development, Public Reporting, and Rewards and Intervention. The Public Reporting component of the EAA includes School and School District Report Cards and evaluation of programs. The primary purpose of the School Report Card is to provide detailed information about a school’s academic performance in a comprehensive school profile for the parents and the community. The School Report Cards have enhanced public awareness over the plight of schools in South Carolina, but at the same time, the intense scrutiny in the media over test scores has increased pressure for principals.



School Report Cards have two ratings: an Absolute Rating and a Growth Rating (formerly called an Improvement Rating). A mathematical formula, using weighted values for criterion such as student performance on statewide tests and graduation rates, calculates an index to determine the school's ratings (Appendix A). The indices, constructed to propel schools and students toward higher performances, increase for each rating level every year (Appendix B).

Schools are recognized and rewarded for academic achievement and for closing the achievement gap. However, if a school receives a rating of Below Average or At-Risk (formerly Unsatisfactory), the principal, the faculty, and the School Improvement Council must develop strategic improvement plans to address the weaknesses. These schools qualify for Technical Assistance funds, which may be used for school improvement activities, such as professional development for teachers, instructional coaches, or mentors. The number of schools receiving Technical Assistance funds increased from 254 schools in 2006-07 to 462 schools in 2008-09. Over \$60,000,000 was budgeted for schools receiving Technical Assistance for the 2010-2011 school year (SCDE, January 2010).

The Education Accountability Act of 1998 also includes a provision for the state of South Carolina to assume management of individual schools that are found to be in "a state of emergency." If a school is rated At-Risk on its EAA School Report Card and does not implement the recommendations for improvement, it can be taken over by the state. Or, if a school is rated At-Risk and does not make expected progress in academic achievement over a three-year period, it can be taken over by the state.

In 2007 the State Superintendent of Education, Jim Rex, created the Palmetto Priority Schools initiative for 16 schools that had not met student learning goals as required by the EAA (SDE, 2007). This initiative was developed in order to provide the state with an alternative to a state takeover. These initial 16 Palmetto Priority Schools all have high poverty populations, a high teacher turnover rate, and low student achievement. The average poverty index for the 16 schools is 93 percent (SDE, 2007). Rex stated:

The challenges being posed here are significant and in some cases extraordinary. Success will be difficult to achieve. But the low levels of learning occurring in these schools today are unacceptable. Period. It should embarrass everyone in our state. South Carolina simply cannot afford to expect a high level of learning in the suburbs while simultaneously tolerating a low level in our inner cities and isolated rural areas. It's not the moral thing to do, and on top of that, it amounts to economic suicide (SCDE, 2007, ¶ 11).

The turnover rate for principals in these 16 schools has also been extremely high, with eight of the 16 schools having first year principals during the 2008-2009 school year. One school had five principals during the 2007-2008 school year (EOC, 2008).

After an extensive study on school leadership, Fuller reports:

Principal retention matters because teacher retention and qualifications are greater in schools where principals stay longer. Any school reform efforts are reliant on the principal creating a common school vision and staying in place to implement the level of reforms that are part of large-scale change. And, of course, there are financial costs to high principal turnover—the district has to spend money on recruiting, hiring and training a new principal as well as the new teachers that will inevitably need to be hired by the principal. Most important, the school loses the investment in capacity-building of the principal and teachers who leave. (cited in "A Matter of Principal", 2010)

"Any school reform efforts are reliant on the principal creating a common school vision and staying in place to implement the level of reforms that are part of large-scale change."

"Most important, the school loses the investment in capacity-building of the principal and teachers who leave."



In 2009 another 25 schools in South Carolina were identified as Palmetto Priority Schools. Three of these schools were closed by their school districts at the end of 2008-09 school year, so the number of Palmetto Priority Schools increased to 38 schools. Only two of the original Palmetto Priority Schools elevated their School Report Card ratings as of 2009. The Education Oversight Committee reported \$13,000,000 of the total state funds appropriated for Technical Assistance has been allocated for the Palmetto Priority Schools for the 2010-2011 school year (EOC, 2010). It is likely that the cost to the state for assisting these Palmetto Priority Schools will continue to grow if the number of schools in this initiative continues to increase.

Adding to the pressures of the Education Accountability Act, more accountability requirements were mandated on January 8, 2002, when President George Bush signed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, a major piece of legislation designed to close the achievement gap (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001). The NCLB Act contains President Bush's four basic educational reform principles: strong accountability, more flexibility and local control, options for parents, and an emphasis on using teaching methods that have proven to work. Some of the guidelines within this piece of legislation are similar to the EAA. This piece of legislation requires each state to develop standards for what students should learn in all grades, initially in reading and math with science added in 2005, statewide assessments for students' progress of these standards for grades 3-12, and, a public reporting (report cards) of the schools and school districts performances.

No Child Left Behind, currently up for reauthorization by President Barack Obama, also requires for each state that accepts Title I funding (currently every state) to develop and implement measurements for determining whether its schools are making adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward meeting the state standards in at least reading/language arts and math. States are responsible for setting incremental goals that show continuous and substantial improvement of each public school, with the ultimate outcome of all students meeting the state's standards for proficiency in language arts and math by the year 2014 (Appendix A).

AYP is measured by students in all demographic subgroups. These subgroups consist of economically disadvantaged students, special education students, limited English proficient students, and students from major racial/ethnic groups. All subgroups must show improvement each year. In addition to test scores, state AYP accountability systems must incorporate graduation rates for public high school students. NCLB sets the minimum level of proficiency that the states, its school districts, and schools must achieve every year. If one indicator is not met, then the school does not make AYP.

Principals of Title I schools face additional sanctions if their schools do not make AYP. Title I, Part A is a federal program that provides financial assistance to local school systems and schools with high percentages of low-economic children in order to support the academic achievement of disadvantaged students. If a Title I school does not make adequate yearly progress, as defined by the state, for two consecutive school years, the school will be identified as Needing Improvement. Principals must develop a two-year improvement plan. In addition, students must be offered the option of transferring to another public school in the district that has not been identified as needing school improvement. In South Carolina, 256 Title I schools were required to offer school transfer options for the 2010-2011 school year because they did not meet all of their federal AYP indicators for a second consecutive year (EOC, 2010). Transportation for students must be provided by the district.

Subsequent actions are more severe with each consecutive year of not making AYP. Actions might include supplemental educational services to low-income families, replacing cer-



tain staff members including the principal, implementing a new curriculum, or restructuring the school.

According to the United States Department of Education, South Carolina had 265 schools in Needs Improvement and 118 schools in Restructuring for the 2009-10 school year. These principals face major school reform responsibilities (USDE, 2009).

SOUTH CAROLINA SCHOOLS

	South Carolina	United States
Total Number of Schools: 2008-09	1,119	92,334
Total Number of Public Schools Making AYP: 2008-09	562	61,225
Total Number of Schools in Need of Improvement: 2009-10	265	14,561
Total Number of Schools in Restructuring: 2009-10	118	5,776

EDFacts/Consolidated State Performance Report, 2008-09

The combined ramifications of the No Child Left Behind Act and the Education Accountability Act have created dramatic changes to the job responsibilities and expectations of a public school principal. Instructional leadership has evolved into a critical role for principals; a responsibility that requires a deep understanding of curriculum, data analysis, and learning theory. For the most part, principals are held solely responsible for implementing school reform measurements, and this massive responsibility places enormous pressure on principals, while creating a whole new dimension to the qualifications necessary for becoming an effective principal.

In a recent study on the effects of the accountability movement on urban principals, West, Peck, and Reitzug (2010) found the job responsibilities for principals have become extensive.

[The pressures of accountability measures] situate the principal as the person held publicly responsible for a school's success or failure, especially in regard to performance on standardized tests. Such a numbers-focused management orientation can generate significant tensions within the educators charged with leading institutions that serve diverse constituents and multiple goals (West et al, 2010. p.239).

The negative implications associated with these pressures ultimately impact school reform. Many South Carolina principals operate under this duress. The State Department of Education's Deputy Superintendent, Mark Bounds (personal communication, November 2, 2010), reported an average turnover rate of 9.8 percent during the last three years. This turnover rate only includes first year principals, not experienced principals moving to another school or school district.

In addition to the multifaceted tasks of improving student achievement as required by these accountability measures, principals are also faced with an array of other complex issues. Budget cuts have had a major impact on principals and schools. During the 2009-2019 and 2010-2011 school years, South Carolina schools had to cope with more than \$700 million in budget cuts. The state lost over 1,400 teachers during this same period (SDE, 2010). Principals have to find ways to cope with these drastic cuts, while at the same time continuing to improve student achievement.

The poverty level in South Carolina has also continued to rise significantly. The poverty level is determined by an index calculation based on the percentage of students receiving Medicaid and/or free and reduced meal plans. "Average poverty levels increased from 73.6 percent to

“For the most part, principals are held solely responsible for implementing school reform measurements, and this massive responsibility places enormous pressure on principals, while creating a whole new dimension to the qualifications necessary for becoming an effective principal.”



74.7 percent between 2008 and 2009. The percentage of schools considered in extreme poverty (poverty indices greater than 90 percent) has jumped from 19 percent to 24 percent in the last three years.” (SDE, 2010. ¶ 12)

Unfortunately, poverty is a fact of life in many South Carolina classrooms. In 2010, South Carolina’s then Superintendent of Education, Jim Rex reported:

Three of every five schools have at least 70 percent of their students living in poverty. One in every four schools has more than 90 percent of its students in poverty. While we have high learning expectations for all students, and we have shown that it’s possible to reduce achievement gaps, the obstacles are pretty daunting. High-poverty schools face more difficult challenges and require more help. For one thing, they generally have less experienced and lower-paid teachers dealing with students who often are struggling academically (SDE, 2010. ¶ 13).

This chart illustrates the School Report Card ratings and the corresponding poverty index percentages (EOC 2009).

Absolute Rating	Average 2008 Poverty Index	Average 2009 Poverty Index
Excellent	49.9% (n=97)	47.7% (n=188)
Good	53.1% (n=182)	62.8% (n=185)
Average	66.6% (n=402)	74.4% (n=532)
Below Average	82.1% (n=281)	90.2% (n=168)
At-risk	92.2% (n=185)	93.9% (n=82)

A report released by New Leaders for New Schools (2009) makes recommendations that support a refined definition of principal effectiveness.

In order for students to have high quality learning gains year after year, whole schools must be high-functioning led by effective principals with effective teachers across the school. This is especially vital for turnaround schools, where studies find no examples of success without effective principal leadership (¶ 2).

This study by the RAND Corporation underscores the fundamental role a highly effective principal has in producing a school culture that fosters high expectations, high student achievement, and a high level of professional development training for teachers. Ben Fenton, Co-Founder and Chief Strategy and Knowledge Officer at New Leaders states:

With research indicating that nearly 60% of student achievement can be attributed to principal and teacher quality, our schools not only need principal training and hiring to be highly selective, but also need school systems, states, and the federal government to redefine the principalship to focus on teachers and students. (cited in New Report Shows Crucial Impact of Principals on Student Achievement, 2009)

How does South Carolina’s State Department of Education support school administrators? The Office of School Leadership (OSL), within the State Department of Education, provides the support system for school leaders in South Carolina. The OSL operates within a leadership curriculum and a comprehensive continuum that serves as a framework for professional development and provides a range of programs for all stages of leadership. This leadership continuum will be described in-depth later in this paper.

The Southeast Comprehensive Center (SECC) at SEDL (2009) completed an on-site review of the leadership curriculum, based on a request for technical assistance by the State Department of Education’s (SDE) Deputy Superintendent, Mark Bounds. This request came after a loss of staff due to severe budget cuts and a restructuring of the Office of School Leadership.



The SECC made recommendations to the SDE after an in-depth review. Will the OSL have the financial support in place to implement these recommendations to strengthen the state's leadership curriculum?

In a recent report called the *Learning from Leadership Project* (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson, 2010) researchers continue to link school leadership to student achievement. The results of this six-year study, commissioned by The Wallace Foundation, offer compelling new perspectives on what effective leadership involves, providing educators and legislators with indispensable recommendations for policies and practices.

The Director of Research and Evaluation at the Wallace Foundation, Edward Pauly reported:

In Learning from Leadership — the largest study of school leadership to date — researchers found the strongest evidence yet of principals' significant effects on student achievement. With current constraints on state and district budgets, this research is all the more timely; the case is stronger than ever for investing in better leadership to improve schools and bring benefits to all students (cited in "Large National Study Strongly Links Educational Leadership to Student Achievement." 2010).

The report also highlights the negative impact principal turnover has on student achievement and recommends extensive professional development and support for principals in disadvantaged schools. Another recommendation emphasized redesigning the job responsibilities of principals in order to allow school leaders more time for instructional supervision, which is an idea South Carolina is currently considering. (Louis et al. 2010) "Schools and districts that don't have good leaders will struggle," said Kyla Wahlstrom, Project Director. "So leadership absolutely makes a difference. I can't say that strongly enough: Good leadership is critical to good education" (cited in "Large National Study..." 2010).

A key issue for the South Carolina General Assembly and the State Department of Education to address is the growing number of schools in South Carolina with a Needs Improvement and At-Risk rating, as well as schools not making AYP and being placed under sanctions of NCLB. Renewed attention must be paid not only to the hiring practices and training programs for principals, but also to the state's support system for principals, especially ones leading high poverty schools and schools at-risk. It is vital for South Carolina to reexamine the job responsibilities of public school principals; they must be equipped with the skills and strategies necessary to focus on improving teaching and learning. South Carolina's economic future is at stake.

III. Strategies in South Carolina: What Is South Carolina Doing to Build Strong Public School Leadership?

A growing number of studies from across America provide evidence about what needs to be done to address the issue of school leadership. The question then becomes whether or not South Carolina is taking the steps necessary to address this important statewide issue. In order to begin answering this question, a number of statewide initiatives designed specifically to address school leadership in South Carolina will be analyzed.

The initiatives highlighted below have been identified based on information gathered from meetings throughout the state with education leaders and groups; phone calls, electronic mail and other correspondence with a variety of education and community leaders throughout the state; and from a survey sent to superintendents, principals, and education leaders statewide.

"Researchers found the strongest evidence yet of principals' significant effects on student achievement. The case is stronger than ever for investing in better leadership to improve schools and bring benefits to all students."

"Renewed attention must be paid not only to the hiring practices and training programs for principals, but also to the state's support system for principals, especially ones leading high poverty schools and schools at-risk."



A larger list of these initiatives can be found in the WhatWorksSC clearinghouse, which can be found on the Center for Education Policy and Leadership's web site: <http://riley.furman.edu/education/projects/whatworkssc>

Initiative #1:

SOUTH CAROLINA LEADERSHIP EXECUTIVE INSTITUTE (SLEI)

Summary: The South Carolina Leadership Executive Institute (SLEI) focuses on the nurturing and development of this essential component of school and student success. The goal of SLEI, which is run through the Office of School Leadership in the South Carolina Department of Education, is to provide principals from diverse districts across the state the insight, knowledge, and competencies necessary to lead their schools to success. Established in 2000, the Institute challenges principals to enhance their leadership and management skills while reviewing their schools' educational practices.

Demographics:

- Target Groups: Veteran Principals
- School Districts Served: All districts in state
- SES of schools/districts served: Varies
- School Level Focus: All levels/ Building level principals
- Program Resources:
- Annual Cost: Varies due to state budget
- Funding Source: Taxpayers of South Carolina
- Staffing Needs: Office of School Leadership – 7 staff people
- Infrastructure/Equipment Needs: Office Space/OSL Classroom
- Partner Organizations: None

Evaluation: A Center for Creative Leadership (CLC) study performed in 2007 reported the following findings by alumni:

- 94% report that the SLEI program prepared them to lead effective school change to a great or very great extent.
- 96% report that there has been a change in their school's culture as a result of their participation in the SLEI program.
- 88% agreed or strongly agreed that the SLEI program taught them what they needed to know to positively impact student achievement.
- 87% report that their SLEI experience will accelerate their attainment of desired improvement results in the school to a great or very great extent.

Contact Information: Bruce Moseley; bmoseley@leadership.ed.sc.gov; 803-734-8429

Initiative #2

VENTURE IN LEADERSHIP

Summary: The goal of Ventures in Leadership is to provide research-based professional development opportunities for future and current school leaders in Richland School District Two. Created in 2001, the program utilizes a three-tier model for recruiting, training, and retraining



school leaders. The program has resulted in a large pool of interested applicants for leadership roles in the district or school setting, and the cultivation and development of leadership skills among existing school leaders. Tier One of the program consists of the recruitment and development of teachers aspiring to leadership roles. Tier 2 seeks to improve the leadership skills of a cadre of existing school administrators in order to prepare them for principalships. Tier three seeks to increase the retention rate of effective, experienced principals and to assist them in achieving and sustaining excellence in leadership.

Demographics:

- Target Groups Served: Teachers, existing school administrators, and principals
- Districts Served: Richland School District Two

Resources

- Annual Cost: Varies from year to year. Average approximately \$2000 per year.
- Funding Sources: Grant funds for two years, Deputy Superintendent's budget
- Staffing Needs: Deputy Superintendent conducted training, in-district principals
- Infrastructure/Equipment Needs: In-district conference area, PowerPoint, computer
- Partner Organizations: University of South Carolina, Dale Carnegie

Evaluation: All participants undergo an evaluation that shows the program is effective within the district in terms of leadership recruitment and leadership development.

To date, 73 (50.7%) of 144 "Ventures in Leadership" participants have participated in Tier 1 of the program. Of these, 11 (15%) became certified in administration. Of those receiving certification, 8 accepted leadership positions within the district. Two others took leadership positions without achieving certification. Participants were afforded the opportunity to complete a survey related to the effectiveness of the training received in the program. Results are overwhelmingly positive and indicate effectiveness of the training in the Tier 1 programs.

Tier 2 initiatives further develop the skills of existing administrators. Since the leadership skills of individual administrators differ widely and their strengths and weaknesses lie in different areas. Evaluation of this goal was conducted via the responses to interview questions on preparation for current leadership positions. 61.9% of 21 respondents were very positive about their experience. The remainder indicated that there is very little that can prepare a person for the true experience of a principalship. There were no overtly negative responses. Additionally, participants were asked about areas in which they felt most prepared and areas in which they felt as though they were still lacking. The top three areas in which administrators felt most prepared were organizational/management skills (23.8%), team building (14.3%), and becoming more student-centered (14.3%). The top areas in which the participants felt least prepared were very clear. Participants felt weaker in the areas of finance (23.8%) and personnel decisions (19%). Three respondents (14.4%) indicated no area of weakness.

This professional development program is paying off in the form of "home-grown" entry-level administrators. Almost 37% of participants in the "Ventures in Leadership" program have accepted leadership positions within the district.

Based on participation data of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 survey respondents, program participants



are actively pursuing training that would qualify them for district level leadership positions. The majority of the Tier 1 and Tier 2 participants responding to the survey (67.27%) are pursuing further education in Educational Leadership or a related field. Of those pursuing further education, 70.27% are pursuing a degree program. 68% of those seeking degrees are seeking a doctoral degree, and 28% are seeking either a master's degree or an educational specialist degree. 92% of the participants seeking degrees are in a program that includes Educational Leadership as at least one of their primary areas of study. Also, program records show that of the 144 participants in "Ventures in Leadership" to date, 48 (33.3%) of the participants have achieved certification in educational administration.

Contact Information: Dr. Cheryl Washington; cwashing@richland2.org; (803) 738.3206

Initiative #3 PRINCIPAL INDUCTION PROGRAM (PIP)

Goal: The goal of the PIP is to provide professional development for first year principals, which will aid in their transition year as beginning level school leaders.

Summary: During this program, participants receive a leadership coach who is a highly valued member of the leadership team the inductee creates. The professional development in this program consists of self-knowledge assessments, leadership development, and legal and ethical educational components. An online leadership skills assessment also is given, which allows the participants to develop an awareness of their future growth potential. First year principals utilize this opportunity to network with other first year principals and to develop crucial leadership skills.

Demographics:

- Target Settings: Statewide
- Target Groups: First Year Principals
- School Districts Served: All Districts in SC
- SES of schools/districts served: Varies
- School Level Focus: Building level principals

Resources:

- Annual Cost: Varies due to state budget and number of participants
- Funding Source: State Budget
- Staffing Needs: Office of School Leadership – 7
- Infrastructure/Equipment Needs: Office Space/OSL Classroom
- Partner Organizations: None

Evaluation: Each PIP Cohort participates in a survey of the program upon completion. Participants in the program who were surveyed agreed that networking was a valuable part of the program.

Contact Information: Morgan Lee; mlee@leaders.ed.sc.gov; 803-734-8313



IV. Looking Forward: What Else Should South Carolina Do to Build Strong Public School Leadership?

By Mark Bounds, South Carolina State Department of Education

Strong, insightful leadership tied to exciting innovation creates successful schools and inspired students. Studies repeatedly reaffirm, without exception, that high performing schools are those that are led by highly effective school leaders. As highlighted in Dr. McDowell's section, the responsibilities and demands on each school principal are significant. Indeed, it is the principal's mission to ensure that his or her school provides the environment, resources, instruction and support that will ultimately optimize every student's chance for success.

Assuming the mantle of principal is a difficult assignment. If I were writing a movie script, this would be the place to insert a few bars from the Mission Impossible theme song. Why? Being a principal requires relentless determination as well as ongoing personal sacrifice, compassion, competence and an eye for excellence. This administrator sets the bar by expecting and achieving high standards. She knows excellent instruction and also insists that her team of educators is effective, caring, and enthusiastic. She knows how to analyze mountains of data and uses that analysis as a catalyst for change. A highly organized principal effectively manages resources; knows how to listen carefully; and hears not only what is said, but what is unsaid. He is able to counsel adults and children; and works with community leaders while also communicating effectively with press and parents. This administrator also sets the tone for the school by serving as an exemplary role model. Sound challenging?

Can South Carolina establish conditions where a leader of this caliber is actually "home grown" and deployed into each public school? Absolutely. Let's look at the numbers. Currently the Palmetto State has approximately twelve hundred public schools. Each of these schools has a principal. If we do the quick math, that means we should have twelve hundred school leaders. Consequently, if our efforts are centered on developing and supporting these twelve hundred exceptional leaders, our schools will be transformed, our communities will be invigorated, and our students will succeed.

It is true that the Great Recession has had a withering impact on education within our state. Over the past two years, South Carolina has lost approximately 4,000 teaching positions while adding 15,000 students to the rolls. For an administrator, this not only means larger classes but also the elimination of beloved courses such as music and foreign language. It also means additional work for the remaining staff. In addition, administrators must tackle poverty's alarming reach. For example: last year, the number of homeless students in South Carolina topped 1,100. Even for students who do have a home to return to after school, many find an empty pantry. Educators tell us that students are living in homes without beds or blankets and/or experience extended periods without electricity. Every administrator and teacher knows that a child who is hungry, or cold, or does not get a good night's rest cannot learn. Poverty affects us all and cannot be ignored.

As the needs and the demands multiply, principals find that resources continue to diminish. Principals are being given fewer professional development days to work on teacher competency. Educator morale is challenged daily by furloughs, the elimination of salary increases, larger classes, less instruction preparation time, and students with growing challenges. Until the economic crisis abates, these challenges are not going away.

In spite of a struggling economy, South Carolina has had some safeguards in place. In fact, the Riley Institute study clearly demonstrates the state's ongoing commitment to reform and to

"Can South Carolina establish conditions where a leader of this caliber is actually 'home grown' and deployed into each public school? Absolutely."



improving our schools. The Riley Institute study provides key insights into our current status as well as our expectations for the future. It gives critical feedback as well as innovative suggestions from all sectors of our state. The study affirms our focus on improving school leadership and provides some concrete ideas for developing and supporting exceptional principals. Many of the suggestions that emerged from the study were already in progress, others have been implemented. However, as Robert Frost so aptly wrote, “We have miles to go before we sleep.”

South Carolina: Ahead of the Curve

The Palmetto state has eleven Education Leadership Preparation programs. These programs provide the foundation for aspiring school leaders. University and college education deans meet regularly as members of the Education Leaders Round Table. Just as Arthur and his knights of old, they meet to discuss challenges, strategies, successes and misfires. They work together to ensure that educator graduates are ready to assume leadership positions in our schools. The Round Table promotes a common understanding of what success actually is while giving each college of education the flexibility to tailor their programs for the students that they serve.

Once the state’s newly minted administrators have graduated, leadership training and professional development continue. I served for twenty years as an infantry officer in the United States’ Army. Once commissioned as a second lieutenant, I was ready to take charge of a platoon. However, I knew that I needed to continue developing as a leader. Throughout my military career, I was required to complete additional leadership training, which helped me improve my leadership skills. South Carolina has taken a similar approach with the Office of School Leadership (OSL), Leadership Continuum.

The Leadership Continuum provides professional development opportunities and experiences for educational leaders in South Carolina. It centers on improving school and student achievement. The goal is to provide a range of high quality programs for educational leaders. All OSL programs are built on a foundation of state and national standards for educational leaders. Each program contributes towards achieving those skills and competencies needed to succeed in each phase of the educational leader’s development. The OSL programs help build exceptional schools and district leaders who will lead the way in creating positive change in both school and community.

The programs include:

- **Foundations in School Leadership (FSL)** - designed to provide leadership skills and competencies to teachers serving in leadership positions. Many times teachers are asked to lead other educators through a program or process. Quite often they have not had the opportunity to develop and refine their leadership skills. FSL gives them that opportunity.
- **Assistant Principal Program for Leadership Excellence (APPLE)** – designed specifically for newly assigned assistant principals. The transition from the classroom to administration is difficult. APPLE assists participants in developing and enhancing their leadership, management and instructional leadership skills. This important initiative helps establish a pool of competent and confident school leaders for the future.
- **Developing Aspiring Principals Program (DAPP)** – designed to provide an intensive curriculum for veteran assistant principals aspiring to become principals. Participants enhance their skills in areas such as self-knowledge, leadership development, instructional leadership, self-improvement, media relations, and legal and policy issues.

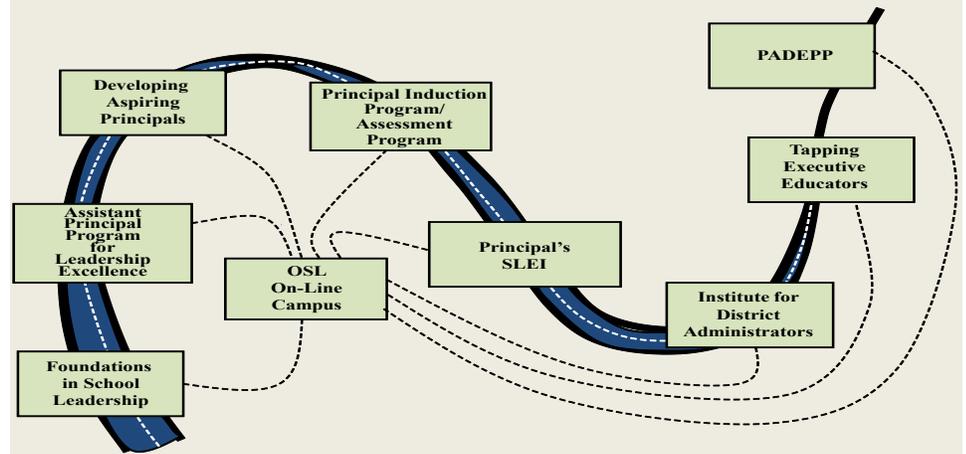


- **Principal Induction Program (PIP)** – a mandated program for all newly appointed principals. The rigorous research-based curriculum provides substantive, ongoing professional development that new principals will deem helpful in their first year of orientation as building administrators. The course goals and objectives are aligned at the state level with the South Carolina Department of Education’s Strategic Plan, state standards, and the Program for Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Principal Performance (PADEPP), and at the national level with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. PIP is designed to embody the tenants of adult learning via independent study, fieldwork and practical job-embedded activities.
- **School Leadership Executive Institute (SLEI)** – a world-class initiative designed to give veteran principals the insights, knowledge, and competencies to lead South Carolina schools to success. The South Carolina Department of Education has developed and implemented a rigorous, one-year institute for principals. The curriculum focuses on enhancing principal’s skills in three areas: leadership, management, and educational best practices. Each SLEI cohort has approximately twenty educators from diverse backgrounds and schools. These cohorts develop a strong network of expertise and support.
- **Institute for District Administrators** – a six-day professional development opportunity for Assistant and Associate Superintendents, Program Directors, and District Officers. The curriculum is designed for high levels of participant involvement, self-analysis, research-based practices, current professional literature, and opportunities to apply learning to local districts. Topics include leadership skills and styles, critical communication skills, marketing strategies, dynamics of change, capacity building, effective use of technology, and organizational management.
- **Tapping Executive Educators (TEE)** – designed to enhance and foster the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively perform the duties of a school superintendent. TEE is a long-term, in-depth program that requires high levels of participant involvement. Instructional activities and assignments are based on adult learning theory and focus on skills and traits necessary to succeed as a school superintendent. The year-long program is built around learning strands that are aligned with ISLLC, ELCC, and AASA standards.
- **OSL On-Line Campus (OLC)**- supports the continuum of the Office of School Leadership’s professional development opportunities for all educational leaders by providing a technology-rich, online learning environment where participants have the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues anytime, anywhere to develop professional learning communities. Educational leaders have the opportunity to participate in professional development programs designed specifically for school/district leaders to help them plan, implement and support their educational technology infrastructure and pedagogical techniques and strategies.

“It is essential that principal-leaders be given the opportunity to reflect, recharge, and become renewed with energy, excitement, and the motivation to move the student body forward.”



Leadership Continuum



While these programs are essential to honing the instructional and leadership skills for principals, it is also essential that these principal-leaders be given the opportunity to reflect, recharge, and become renewed with energy, excitement, and the motivation to move the student body forward. A recent partnership between the Youth Learning Institute (YLI) at Clemson University, the Center for Courage and Renewal, and the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership centers on renewing and reinvigorating educational leaders.

For three consecutive years, school leaders have been invited to participate in leader renewal retreats and professional growth opportunities. The retreats combine the expertise of YLI with Parker Palmer's work at the Center for Courage and Renewal. Participants are able to reconnect to their passion as an educator and recommit this passion to their students and schools.

In addition to creating strong external systems for professional development and support, it is important that school leaders have the opportunity to create positive change inside their schools as well. An excellent example is the TAP System schools, where South Carolina is a national leader with nearly 70 schools participating.

TAP provides the delivery system for making significant improvements to school performance and student achievement. While the performance-based pay aspect of TAP garners the most press attention, its success has more to do with the comprehensive approach to school reform. TAP is an incubator in South Carolina where all have an opportunity to watch schools as they are transformed.





TAP focuses school leaders on the students, making each leader accountable for teacher and student success. This accountability system provides teachers, principals, community leaders, and parents with real data regarding student progress each year. This value-added information informs education systems and professional development providers how effective and impactful their programs actually are.

In 2010, the Division of Educator Quality and Leadership began a pilot program called Higher Education Assessment of Teaching or Project HEAT. This initiative provides value-added data regarding graduates to their colleges of education, representing a shift from subjective to objective measures of educator success. This project will be expanded as it is refined and as funding becomes available.

The implementation of TAP and Project Heat, as well as other emerging educator evaluation systems is informing changes for South Carolina's Program for Assisting, Developing and Evaluating Principal Performance (PADEPP). PADEPP is the framework for principal evaluation in South Carolina. The office of School Leadership conducts awareness sessions for new principals as well as training sessions in which superintendents and their designees are trained as principal evaluators. For the past two years, the framework for PADEPP has improved. For the first time, districts are now required to conduct annual principal evaluations and report the evaluation results to the South Carolina Department of Education via an online data application. This summary data is then provided to education leadership preparation programs to inform program changes and is used internally in OSL to refine and improve program curriculum and services.

In an effort to give districts more options as they select leaders for their schools, the South Carolina Board of Education recently passed a new alternative route certification for school administrators. This new pathway, designed for career-changers, gives districts flexibility when recruiting and hiring school administrators. The intent of the alternative route to principal certification is to allow talented, experienced leaders to enter school administration via the assistant principal's position. Individuals certified through this process must have a master's degree, verification of at least three years of successful experience in leadership, supervision, upper-level management, or other positions in a business, corporation, agency, or the military (with responsibilities similar to those of a principal), and the recommendation of the superintendent of a South Carolina public school district interested in employing the individual as an assistant principal. Once employed, the candidate must pass the Praxis, conclude three successful years as an assistant principal, and complete tailored professional development program. Alternatively certified administrators who successfully fulfill all program requirements will receive a professional certificate.

Future considerations:

Even in tough economic times, additional focus is needed to build exceptional school leaders. As stated, South Carolina has approximately twelve hundred school principals. Imagine the statewide impact if we had twelve hundred highly motivated, effective, caring and innovative principals.

With limited funding available for educators, the best return on investment is recruiting, developing, and deploying great leaders for our schools. This requires a positive collaboration between school districts, education leader preparation programs, and the SC Department of Education. Working as a team, we can leverage the strengths of each partner to build a leadership development program that provides exceptional service to both our principal-leaders and our students.

“Imagine the statewide impact if we had twelve hundred highly motivated, effective, caring and innovative principals.”

“With limited funding available for educators, the best return on investment is recruiting, developing, and deploying great leaders for our schools.”



“We must do a better job preparing educators before they are selected as principals, particularly for the state’s most challenged schools.”

“The SAM project is a strategy designed to change the role of the principal from the managerial leader to the instructional leader, resulting in an increase in time spent on instructional support and student achievement.”

This new focus on leadership must include internships and apprenticeships for aspiring school leaders. While class work and case studies provide a good foundation for leadership, it is in the actual hands-on experiences—where leadership tenets are implemented and practiced—that essential learning occurs. Educator preparation programs need to shift program time from an academic environment to practical in-school experience. School districts can also do a better job of succession planning. Potential school leaders must experience varied, on-the-job opportunities as well as that essential professional development with seasoned and effective school leaders. The Office of School Leadership must also include opportunities for mentoring as well as school-based professional development within their programs.

I am convinced that we must do a better job preparing educators before they are selected as principals, particularly for the state’s most challenged schools. Our least experienced or our least successful principals are too often assigned to the most challenged schools. This is a sure recipe for failure. District superintendents need to put their best principals in their most challenged schools. Several school districts throughout the United States are implementing innovative incentives to fill these positions. Some principals are given salary increases, bonus opportunities, full hiring and firing authority, and even the ability to bring a core group of teachers with him or her to the challenged school. All of these methods provide a strong foundation for immediate and enduring change.

The creation of a Transformational Leadership Academy would provide South Carolina with a pool of motivated and ready-to-serve leaders for challenged schools. The concept is to recruit individuals who aspire to lead challenged schools and will be willing to relocate to the school for at least three years. Candidates would undergo a rigorous selection process to ensure that they possess the skills, abilities, disposition, and motivation to succeed in the toughest schools. Once selected, the candidates would participate in a one-year program of study centered on turning the school around. Graduates from the Transformational Leaders Academy would be recommended for placement in struggling schools statewide. Once in place, the Office of School Leadership would provide ongoing support for each new principal. This approach mirrors the work of the Broad Superintendents’ Academy (<http://www.broadacademy.org/>) that identifies and prepares prominent leaders—executives who have experience successfully leading large organizations and who have a passion for public service—then places them in urban school districts to dramatically improve the quality of education.

The creation of a School Administration Manager (SAM) project in South Carolina would assist beleaguered principals in turning their primary focus to instructional issues during school hours. Initially funded by the Wallace Foundation, the SAM project is a strategy designed to change the role of the principal from the managerial leader to the instructional leader, resulting in an increase in time spent on instructional support and student achievement. Thus schools have both a principal instructional leader and a SAM. A SAM’s duties include school operations (such as ordering textbooks, overseeing fire drills and filing reports on compliance with regulations), as well as parent meetings, student due process, bus and community issues, etc. Time-use studies showed that once principals were given guidance on how to shift their priorities away from more accustomed non-instructional routines, the new SAM position did, in fact, result in a dramatic shift in the amount of time principals spent on instruction. The Office of School Leadership would provide the professional development to help principals learn how to work with SAMs effectively, distribute management responsibilities and work with classified, or support staff, keep routine management administration work from pulling the principal away from instructional leadership work, and how to support instruction.



Ensuring success for our 21st century students will require teams of educators working in harmony. School and district leaders must know how to develop and sustain strong learning communities. With dwindling resources it is essential that principals can leverage internal talent and energy to improve teaching and learning. The South Carolina Race to the Top application recommended the creation of Communities Advancing Professional Practices in every school. Despite not being selected for Race to the Top, we must continue to expand the CAPP concept in South Carolina. Although the names differ (e.g., professional learning communities, cluster groups, communities of professional practice), such teams are already in place in many schools throughout the State. In essence, the Communities Advancing Professional Practices (CAPPs) concept refers to any organized group of practitioners dedicated to learning with and from one another in pursuit of promising instructional, organizational, and/or leadership practices that support student learning. Full integration of CAPPs across the state would re-imagine how professional development is delivered and would ensure that every South Carolina educator is a productive member of a team engaged in designing or discovering practices that are congruent with theory, principles, and learner needs; implementing these practices; determining the impact of these practices on student learning; and sharing the findings with the larger professional community. Whether formed at the building level, within an LEA, or across the State, CAPPs connect teachers, administrators, and professionals who are advancing their field of practice or solving highly contextual problems. CAPPs may focus on a specific practice or problem for each member educator, or they may involve an entire systemic change process.

The work of CAPPs, whether at the individual or at the systemic level, follows the same iterative process: (1) identifying the specific need or problem (i.e., an obstacle to student learning and achievement); (2) developing a plan to address the need or problem; (3) implementing the plan; (4) collecting and analyzing the data, and modifying the plan, as needed; and (5) sharing the findings and sustaining the improvements. This process is depicted as follows:



Although this model is universally applicable, its success depends on the ability of its members to adapt the model to accommodate contextual needs and circumstances and to ensure that its application is dynamic and responsive to ever-changing variables and needs. This can only be accomplished with the support and encouragement of school and district leaders.

Principals must know how to create a supportive CAPP environment which provides a platform for distributed leadership and decision-making. This concept honors teacher’s knowledge and skills, builds stronger more collaborative teams and enhances the leadership skills of administrators throughout the system.

We also need to expand our efforts to renew and reinvigate school leaders. I have seen first-hand the difference a few days of reflection and inspiration can make for a school leader.

“With dwindling resources it is essential that principals can leverage internal talent and energy to improve teaching and learning.”



“Teachers will be inspired, instruction will be student-centered and aligned to the state standards, and, most importantly, students will be engaged, parents will be involved, and communities will be transformed.”

An investment in renewal will keep talented and effective leaders in our schools. As the economy rebounds, it is my hope that South Carolina will be able to work with our business partners to revive our plans for an Educator Renewal Center in the upstate. North Carolina has two centers as part of their North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT). These centers have a demonstrated positive impact on educator retention. NCCAT reports a 96.9 percent average annual retention rate as compared to 87.9 percent statewide and 83.2 percent nationally for participants attending during 2004–2007.

Finally, we need to infuse a value-added component into our principal evaluation process. For the past two years, the PADEPP system has been refined and improved. Simultaneously, data on school performance has become more stable and reliable. The conditions are set to create a fair, equitable, and manageable principal evaluation system that includes a school value-added score into all principal evaluations.

If South Carolina refines and improves the leadership programs and services currently provided, takes on new leadership training opportunities with enthusiasm, and creates a principal evaluation system that is accountable, school leadership will be significantly enhanced. Teachers will be inspired, instruction will be student-centered and aligned to the state standards, and, most importantly, students will be engaged, parents will be involved, and communities will be transformed.

References

Exec. Order No. 97-05, (1997), South Carolina Legislature Online. Retrieved October 15, 2010, from <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/archives/executiveorders/exor9705.htm>

Education Accountability Act, Title 59 Chapter 18 (1998), South Carolina Legislature Online. Retrieved October 15, 2010, from <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/CODE/t59c018.htm>

Louis, K.S., Leithwood, K., Wahlstrom, K.L., & Anderson, S.E. (2010, July). Learning from Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning: Final Report of Research Findings. University of Minnesota, The Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement and University of Toronto Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. (2010, July). Retrieved October 15, 2010, from the Wallace Foundation Web site: <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/EducationLeadership/Documents/Learning-from-Leadership-Investigating-Links-Final-Report.pdf>

New Leaders for New Schools. (2009). Principal effectiveness: A new principalship to drive student achievement, teacher effectiveness and school turnarounds. (Executive Summary). Retrieved October 20, 2010, from http://www.nlns.org/documents/uef/principal_effectiveness_executive_summary_nlns.pdf

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Pub Law No. 107-110, 115 Stat. 1425. Retrieved October 15, 2010, from <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/107-110.pdf>

PRNewswire – US Newswire. (2009, October 15). New report shows crucial impact



of principals on student achievement. Retrieved October 20, 2010, from <http://www.pnnewswire.com/news-releases/new-report-shows-crucial-impact-of-principals-on-student-achievement-64431552.html>

Randall, K. (2010) A matter of principal: Researchers untangle “why” behind exodus of principals from public schools. Retrieved October 20, 2010, from University of Texas at Austin, What Starts Here Changes the World Web Site: <http://www.utexas.edu/features/2010/02/15/principals/>

South Carolina Department of Education. (2004). School and District Report Card Communications Tool Kit. SCEOC.

South Carolina Department of Education. (2007, April). State Board approves Rex plan to team up 16 schools not meeting expected goals. Retrieved October 14, 2010, from <http://www.ed.sc.gov/news/more.cfm?articleID=760>

South Carolina Department of Education. (2008, August). Minutes of meeting. Retrieved October 27, 2010, from <http://eoc.sc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/7AD65D3E-20F4-4CE0-95D1-B0F63079BBCD/20887/Minutes711122008.pdf>

South Carolina Department of Education. (2010, January). Report to the South Carolina General Assembly and the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee on Provisio 1A.42, SDE-EIA: Technical Assistance. Retrieved October 27, 2010, from [http://ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Federal-and-State Accountability/Accreditation/documents/2010Annual ReportProviso1A42.pdf](http://ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Federal-and-State%20Accountability/Accreditation/documents/2010AnnualReportProviso1A42.pdf)

South Carolina Department of Education. (2010, April). Education Department releases annual school and district report card ratings. Retrieved October 20, from <http://ed.sc.gov/news/more.cfm?articleID=1489>

South Carolina Education Oversight Committee. (2009). The 2020 Vision. Retrieved October 26, 2010, from <http://www.eoc.sc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/45EF3801-945A-4348-B568-C34B927B93A4/32632/WAWN1109redoCard2.pdf>

South Carolina Education Oversight Committee. (2010). 2009 Annual school and district ratings discussion points. Retrieved October 15, 2010, from <http://eoc.sc.gov/NR/rdonlyres/E7E90A06-9CAC-4184-985A-F356DDF9A295/34856/DiscussionPts200941910.pdf>

Southeast Comprehensive Center at SEDL. (2009, April 7). Leadership Program Review: South Carolina Department of Education Office of School Leadership Programs. Austin, TX: Brown, D.M., Harris- Madison, R. Retrieved October 18, 2010, from <http://www.scteachers.org/leadership/docs/sedlrpt.pdf>

The Wallace Foundation. (2010, July 20). Large national study strongly links educational leadership to student achievement. The Wallace Foundation press release. Retrieved October 18, 2010, from <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/NewsRoom/PressRelease/Pages/large-national-study-strongly-links-educational-leadership-to-student-achievement.aspx>

Written by:

Connie McDowell Ph.D.
Clinical Faculty, School
Leadership
Furman University

Brooke Culclasure, Ph.D.
Research Director, Center for
Education Policy and Leadership
The Riley Institute

Mark Bounds
Deputy Superintendent for
Educator Quality and Leadership
South Carolina Department of
Education

Edited by:

Courtenay Williams
Project Director, Center for
Education Policy and Leadership
The Riley Institute

Designed by:

Jacki Martin
Associate Director
The Riley Institute

Alexis Sprogis
Research Specialist
The Riley Institute



U.S. Department of Education. (2009). South Carolina State Snapshot. Retrieved October 20, 2010, from <http://www.eddataexpress.ed.gov/state-report.cfm?state=SC>

West, D.L., Peck, C., & Reitzug, U.C. (2010, March). Limited control and relentless accountability: examining historical changes in urban school principal pressure [Electronic version]. *The Journal of School Leadership*, 20, 238-266.

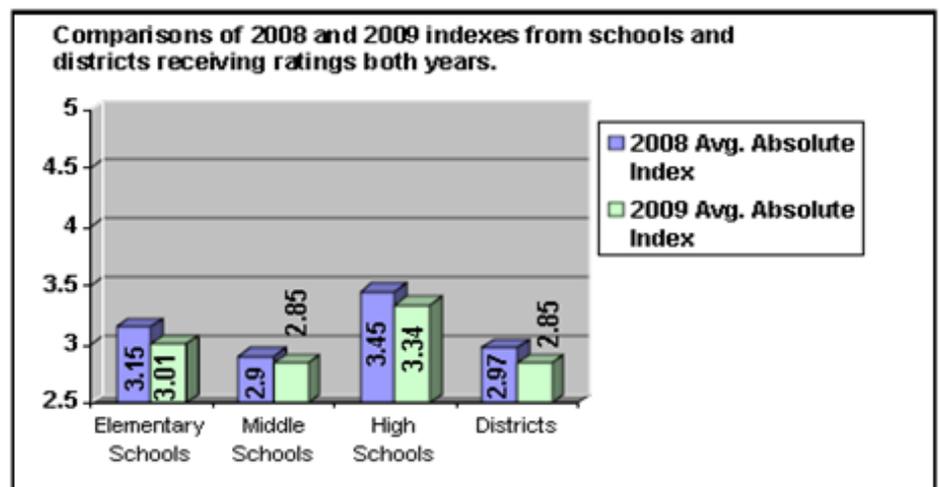
Appendices

Appendix A

The number and percentages of schools in each category for Absolute Ratings on the 2009 School Report Card as reported by South Carolina's Education Oversight Committee (EOC 2010.)

Schools rated Excellent	188 (16%)	Primary schools: 26 Elementary schools: 111	Middle schools: 26 High Schools: 25
Schools rated Good	185 (16%)	Primary schools: 3 Elementary schools: 105	Middle schools: 41 High Schools: 36
Schools rated Average	536 (46%)	Primary schools: 0 Elementary schools: 301	Middle schools: 142 High Schools: 93
Schools rated Below Average	169 (15%)	Primary schools: 0 Elementary schools: 85	Middle schools: 62 High Schools: 22
Schools rated At-Risk (Unsatisfactory)	83 (7%)	Primary schools: 0 Elementary schools: 33	Middle schools: 29 High Schools: 21

Table does not include ratings for career and technology centers or special schools. Percentages calculated using total number of schools receiving a report card in 2009. Additionally, ratings were not reported for 29 schools. (EOC, 2010)



The index, calculated by student performance, determines a school's Absolute rating. The average student performance as measured by indexes went down from 2008 to 2009 among elementary, middle, high schools, and school districts. (EOC, 2010)



Appendix B

Rating Indices

Year	Range of Indices Corresponding to Absolute Rating				
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average	Unsatisfactory
2004	3.5 and above*	3.1-3.4*	2.7-3.0	2.3-2.6	Below 2.3
2005	3.6 and above*	3.2-3.5*	2.8-3.1	2.4-2.7	Below 2.4
2006	3.7 and above*	3.3-3.6*	2.9-3.2	2.5-2.8	Below 2.5
2007	3.8 and above*	3.4-3.7*	3.0-3.3	2.6-2.9	Below 2.6
2008	3.9 and above*	3.5-3.8*	3.1-3.4	2.7-3.0	Below 2.7
2009	4.0 and above*	3.6-3.9*	3.2-3.5	2.8-3.1	Below 2.8
2010	4.1 and above*	3.7-4.0*	3.3-3.6	2.9-3.2	Below 2.9
2011	4.2 and above*	3.8-4.1*	3.4-3.7	3.0-3.3	Below 3.0
2012	4.3 and above*	3.9-4.2*	3.5-3.8	3.1-3.4	Below 3.1
2013	4.4 and above*	4.0-4.3*	3.6-3.9	3.2-3.5	Below 3.2
2014	4.5 and above*	4.1-4.4*	3.7-4.0	3.3-3.6	Below 3.3

* School must meet AYP criteria for *all* students and percent tested.

School and District Report Cards Communication Tool Kit (2004)

