Alaska School Leadership Academy

Year 1 Outcomes Report
July 2019

Prepared by the Alaska Staff Development Network (ASDN), a division of the Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA), through a contract with Dale L. Nelson Cope, Ph.D. Program Evaluator
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Researchers and theorists have studied, quantified, tabulated, and written about qualities of effective leaders for many years. Business sectors and organizations have adapted and adopted the traits and made them specific. For example, leadership for public schools naturally has a focus on relationships with parents and students that is not applicable to leadership in the auto industry or finance.

Principals promote student achievement through their influence on classroom instruction, organizational conditions, community support, and setting the teaching and learning conditions in schools. School principals are second only to classroom teachers as the most influential school factor in student achievement. For the lowest-performing schools, strong leadership—including setting and maintaining direction—plays a key role in turning around schools’ performance and improving student outcomes. Federal and state policy has addressed the importance of the principal by setting standards for school leadership and requirements for performance assessment across a myriad of domains and tasks.

Principals’ roles have expanded significantly over the past decade and continue to grow. Faced with this expanded idea and responsibilities of leadership, many new principals feel unprepared to meet the new demands of their jobs. Often times good classroom teachers are promoted into positions of school leadership with little regard for the different skills needed for success. Many states and districts are implementing induction, coaching, and mentoring programs to help new school leaders develop the skills and capacities needed to create strong learning communities that function efficiently and effectively. These challenges are magnified in a state like Alaska where principals must also deal with a number of cultural and social challenges unique to rural and remote schools. Given Alaska’s extremely high principal turnover rate, providing this support have never been more important.

Principals affect student achievement through two pathways: the support and development of effective teachers and the implementation of effective organizational processes. Evidence indicates that effective programs are research-based, have curricular coherence, provide experience in authentic contexts, use cohort groupings and mentors, and are structured to enable collaborative activity between the program and area schools. Policy recommendations for a K-12 principal academy and transition support program for Alaska also include providing induction support for at least the first two years in the profession, embedding formal professional standards to guide design, implementation, and desired outcomes, foundational support and professional development for mentors, rigorous recruitment and assignment criteria for mentors, reasonable caseloads and minimum contact time, formative assessment, and an integrated link to state educator preparation programs. K-12 principal academy and transition support program for Alaska should also leverage existing educator induction programs at the local and state level.
There is no formal state policy mandating principal support in Alaska—however, up until the 2013-14 school year, for ten years, the state administered the Alaska Administrator Coaching Project (AACP) to support new principals. The AACP supported administrators’ development in four critical areas: interpersonal and facilitation skills, teacher observation and feedback, effective school-level practices and classroom-level practices and using data to improve instruction. Prior to 2014, the program served new-to-position principals for two years and new-to-position superintendents for one year. In 2014, legislative funding for the program was eliminated, leaving a significant gap in service and support. As a result, the Alaska Council of School Administrators, on behalf of and with direction from the Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals (AASSP) and the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals (AAESP), has worked to develop new programs and seek funding support to replace AACP. Now, under the new ESSA authorization there is a 3% set aside for principal professional learning. The approved Alaska ESSA Plan also includes this 3% set aside.

The support system for new school principals in Alaska is based on strong theory and state and national licensure standards as guidelines. For the purposes of the Alaska School Leadership Academy the Dispositions of Leadership framework developed by Whiteley, et al provides the theoretical basis for the action plan.

The Alaska School Leadership Academy is a sequenced two-year system of support that consists of the following components:

- Cohort collaborative community of practice among new principals in a given year that meet regularly (face-to-face at state principal meetings and virtually other times) to work together on problems of practice, share lessons learned and engage in collective professional development on shared issues

- A series of four to six new principal academies (two to three each year) designed around the concepts of the Leading for Learning Model along with Alaska specific issues

- Pairing new principals with a high-quality coach/mentor within their own district or in the case of smaller rural districts across a set of districts with similar characteristics and providing the mentors professional development, tools and resources to better support new principals

- Strand of professional development opportunities offered through the Alaska Staff Development Network for aspiring and assistant principals.

The program design is responsive to the ESEA grant funding requirements for professional development activities (Title IX, Section 9101(34). Allowable professional development activities are:

- Sustained, intensive, and classroom focused in order to have a positive impact on instruction.

- Increase instructional leadership skills of school administrators to serve as an effective school leader and work effectively with teachers.

- Improve and increase principal subject-matter knowledge in the academic subjects that the teachers teach; and

- Advance understanding of effective instructional strategies that are evidence-based.
Alaska’s Education Challenge is a guiding strategic document for education and leadership in Alaska, adopted by the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development. The Challenge document spells out shared commitments, measurable goals, and strategies to improve education across the state. The Alaska School Leadership Academy is in direct response to the call to “Prepare, attract, and retain effective education professionals”. There are two prioritized strategies related to school leadership associated with this objective:

- Provide induction programs for educators new to Alaska and/or the profession; and
- Add supports for new and veteran administrators.

The design of the Alaska School Leadership Academy is also aligned with the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders, Standard 6:

‘Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity and practice of school personnel to promote each student’s academic success and well-being.’ Within this standard (i) speaks to the actions of a school leader to grow his or her own skill set: **‘Effective leaders tend to their own learning and effectiveness through reflection, study, and improvement, maintaining a healthy work-life balance.’**

The first year of the Alaska School Leadership Academy was focused on design and building the program. A cohort of new principals (“Cohort 1”) was recruited from urban and rural districts across the state. The first cohort had 16 rural principals and 9 new principals from urban schools in 15 different school districts. By the conclusion of the first year, seven principals were dropped from the cohort for reasons of termination or resignation. Tragically, one participant passed away.

Lead by ACSA/ASDN, a design and project leadership team was formed with representation from all partner organizations. The Design Team met bi-weekly throughout the summer of 2018 to develop meaningful content for the Principal Academies, establish criteria for participation, develop a needs assessment instrument, develop the mentoring component of the project, and discuss feedback from the academies as they occurred. The project leadership team meet quarterly during the year.

Another activity during the first year of the project was advocacy and creation of awareness of the project and its value to K-12 education in Alaska. Advocacy efforts included seeking ongoing funding from Alaska Department of Education and Early Education and the Rasmuson Foundation. Awareness of the Alaska School Leadership Academy was featured at the Alaska Principals Conference, July Superintendent's Fly-in, Rti/MTSS Effective Instruction Conference and targeted social media.

Three Principal Academies were held during the year. All three were in conjunction with regularly scheduled professional development. The first Academy was held during the Alaska Principals Conference in October. The second Academy occurred at the Rti/MTSS Conference in January, and the third Academy was in May during the Alaska School Leadership Conference. Offering the Academy sessions during other conferences often attended by school principals was a way to introduce new principals to their peers and expand the programming and content available to the new principals.

Fall Principals Conference sessions included: Context for Learning (Bernie Sorenson); Problems of Practice (Lexie Domaradzki); Resources (Michael Webb and Tammy Morris); ECHO Project (Mark Stock); Veteran Principals Panel; Critical Friends Protocol; and Trauma Informed/Engaged Practice (Sharon Fishel).

Conference sessions earmarked for attendance by the New Principal Cohort but open to other attendees as well were: Using Data to Inform Decisions (Lexi Domaradzki); New to Rti/MTSS (Bobbi Jo Erb and Dean Richards); and Effective Teaming (Lexie Domaradzki). Sessions specific to the Principal Cohort at the Rti/MTSS conference included time with Dr. Steve Atwater, Executive Dean of the UA College of Education and a reception for networking.

The Alaska School Leadership Conference in May 2019 featured sessions on Communicating to Influence (Gary Whiteley and Lexi Domaradzki) and sessions related to staff retention and school walkthroughs (Education Northwest).
Other content available to the new principals included synchronous webinars and the ECHO project. Over the course of the school year, 35 30-minute webinars were offered focused on problems of practice through the Alaska Education Network – Project ECHO. Through Project ECHO, cohort members were also able to participate in 75-minute video conferences that explored topics in more depth. Topics in the Leadership and Equity strand included Building Equity (Doug Fisher); Why, What, How of the TSI Designation?; Family Engagement; Handling Difficult Conversations; The Role of Social & Emotional Learning (SEL); The Leadership Process – Sluicing for Gold in a Sea of Silver Bullets; Coaching 4 Equity – Overcoming Barriers of Inequity; Essential Elements of a Culturally Proficient Leader; and a Legislative Update (in May 2019). Other ECHO network strands available to New Principal Cohort members included Leading to Increase Graduation Rates; Leading with an Early Childhood Focus; Leading to Improve Student Reading Achievement; and Leadership Development with Behavior, Safety, and Well-Being.

The mentoring component of the project was formalized by mid-year with 9 mentors and piloted during the second semester. Throughout the year, discussion topics (threads) were posted to the Alaska Learning Place (AKLPN) and cohort members were expected to respond to the topics with their own comments. Cohort members could also start topics of their own. A popular, timely topic in the spring was the question, “Are you coming back to your school?” and “Have you signed a contract for next year?”
The evaluation of the Alaska School Leadership Academy has a mixed-methods, developmental approach. The evaluation design calls for the collection and use of both quantitative (results that can be tabulated and reported numerically) and qualitative data (perceptions about value and satisfaction). A developmental evaluation approach is an attempt to understand the activities of a program as it operates in a dynamic, unique environment with complex interactions. The focus of a developmental evaluation is on strategic learning, and application of the learning in a continuous improvement cycle.

The evaluation is participatory in that the evaluator is working closely with project team. The project team is involved in the decision making about instrument selection and survey design. The team helps to make decisions about the timing and communication with participants for evaluation purposes. Finally, the project team is involved in creating meaning and conclusions from the evaluation data.

The evaluation design is culturally responsive. An evaluation is considered culturally responsive if it fully considers the culture of the program being evaluated. In other words, the evaluation is based on an examination of impacts through lenses in which the culture of the participants is considered an important factor. Moreover, a culturally responsive evaluation attempts to fully describe and explain the context of the program or project being evaluated. Cultural sensitivity to the program environment will ensure that cultural nuances—large and small—will be captured and used for interpreting progress and outcome data.

Last, the evaluation meets the definition for a Tier 4 evidence-based intervention. The evaluation is supported by a Logic Model and theory of action, supported by research, and includes efforts to gather information about the effectiveness of the interventions for achieving stated outcomes.
Objective 1: Recruit and provide leadership training to 51 new principals over two cohorts.

Performance Measures:

1.a. Recruitment targets are fully met according to the stratification table (elementary, secondary, urban, rural).
1.b. Aggregate data from mentor reports shows regular, ongoing contact between mentors and new principals.
1.c. 95% of participants in each cohort satisfactorily complete all components of the training.

Objective 2: Program participants will demonstrate positive leadership skills.

Performance Measures:

2.a The mean score on the Leadership Scale of the School Climate and Connectedness Survey will demonstrate increasing staff satisfaction with school leaders year to year.
2.b 95% of Superintendents of program participants will agree or strongly agree that participants became more effective leaders as a result of the program.
2.c Reports from mentors will indicate that 100% of program participants increased his or her leadership skill from start to finish of the training.
2.d Program participants will self-report via survey and interviews an increase in their school leadership skills and confidence.
2.e Pre- to post-test mean differences for each cohort on the three dimensions of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) will be statistically significant and positive.

Objective 3: Provide stability and quality in leadership for Alaska schools.

Performance Measures:

3.a 100% of program completers will continue their career in a school leadership role.
3.b 100% of program completers will remain in Alaska as school leaders.
3.c Where program participants remain in the same school for 3 or more years, there will be measurable growth in school-level student achievement on PEAKS.
Objective 4: The components of the program will function as intended to produce the stated summative measures.

Performance Measures:

4.a. Survey feedback from participants at the end of each learning strand will be 80% or higher related to questions about value of the training and applicability for individuals.
4.b. The program leadership team meets quarterly to discuss progress and suggest improvements to achieve outcomes.
# Alaska School Leadership Academy

## Logic Model

### Program Inputs/Activities
- Recruitment of new principals for cohort, application and selection to meet target stratification
- Principal cohort completes Needs Assessment and PIMRS
- Principal cohorts participate in 3 face-to-face meetings (AK Principal’s Conf., ASU, and RTI/MTSS Conf.)
- Experienced principals are recruited and trained as mentors for new principals
- Principal cohort members receive 9 hours (1 hr/mo) of mentoring
- Monthly guided reflection topics for discussion within the AKLPN platform
- Principals participate in 3 required online training webinars

### Short-Term Outcomes
- Recruitment of new principals for cohort, application and selection to meet target demographics
- Increase in new principals’ knowledge, understanding and self-awareness of personal skills and abilities related to dispositions of leadership
- Increased self-efficacy related to decision-making as a result of mentoring reported by mentors and principals
- Principal cohort members complete monthly required reflections based on “Dispositions of Leadership” and using the AKLPN platform
- Participants indicate satisfaction with training content and activities measured by end-of-activity surveys
- The project leadership team makes adjustments and improvements based on participant feedback

### Intermediate Outcomes
- Participants report satisfaction with the program and high value gained by participating
- All cohort members fully participate and complete the program
- Pre- to post-test mean differences for each cohort on the three dimensions of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) will be statistically significant and positive
- Increase in each of the 10 PIMRS aggregate subscale scores by cohort from pre- to post-measure
- Increased student and staff satisfaction with school leadership, measured by the SCCS results

### Impacts
- Superintendents of program participants will agree that participants became more effective leaders as a result of the program
- School-wide student achievement on the PEAKS assessment will increase under the leadership of principals trained through the program
- There will be a positive impact on teacher retention at the schools where the new principals are assigned

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**Potential mediators:** Time, other district initiatives, access to technology, weather impacting travel, difficulties with the mentor relationship, composition and experience of the teachers at the school, school climate, teacher turnover
Data for the project evaluation comes from surveys, interviews, observations, participation in Project Team meetings, and analysis of documents and artifacts.

**Observation:** The evaluator participates as an observer in the three face-to-face meetings to record processes and informal feedback from participants. This helps to build the context for a culturally appropriate interpretation of data.

**Participation in Project Team meetings:** In keeping with the philosophy of participatory evaluation, the evaluator participates in project meetings to ask questions, present information, discuss potential interpretations, and involve the team in evaluation decisions such as survey design and instrument selection.

**Interviews:** Beginning in year 2 the evaluation will include scripted interviews with all new principal mentors. The scripted interview protocol will be designed by the evaluator with the project team. The evaluator will conduct the interviews. Results will be coded thematically and presented anonymously.

**Responses to Reflection Prompts:** This information is tabulated to determine participation on a regular basis, as well as participant-initiated conversation threads. The responses will be coded by theme.

**Other document review:** Meeting attendance logs and mentor contact logs will be used to document participation.

**Surveys:** Surveys will be used to gather process information at the completion of each face-to-face event. All cohort members who just completed a face-to-face event will be asked to complete the survey designed to gauge satisfaction with the content, current applicability to the principal’s work, and self-perception of new learning. An end-of-year survey has been designed to gather satisfaction information and suggestions for improvement. All participants take the end-of-year survey. All results from the surveys will be aggregated for analysis and reported anonymously. Survey items will be a combination of Likert-scale items and responses to questions.

To answer the question about new principal growth related to the dispositions of leadership, two well-known and reliable instruments were examined by the evaluator. The instruments are the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) developed by Hallinger and the Val-Ed instrument developed by researchers at Vanderbilt University. Both instruments have documented reliability from numerous studies and subscales that align to the dispositions of leadership. Both surveys are administered online and result in a dataset that can be exported for individual project use. Both instruments use a 5-point Likert scale for self-reported responses. Following discussion with the Project Team, the PIMRS was selected to measure self-reported change along three dimensions.
**Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale instrument:** The PIMRS instrument has 3 dimensions (Defining the School Mission, Managing the Instructional Program, and Developing the School Learning Climate). The dimensions are supported by ten scales that have five items each. The PIMSR has been reported in use for over 250 studies in the literature as of 2017. Using meta-analysis procedures, the author of the study conducted cross-study reliability analysis using 2508 principal surveys completed in 48 independent studies.

Using Cronbach’s alpha, the whole scale alpha reliability of the PIMRS is .96. Reliability estimates for the three dimensions is .88 for Defines the School Mission; .91 for Manages the Instructional Program; and .93 for Develops a Positive School Learning Climate. Reliability scores for the individual subscales range from .74 on Creates Incentives for Teachers up to .85 r Frames the School Goals. In conversations with our evaluator, the PIMRS author rightfully reminded us that features of the school culture may shape or moderate the leadership behavior of principals. Hallinger suggested we repeat the reliability analysis with our own sample.

Further, Hallinger suggests analysis of the PIMRS at multiple levels. For each principal cohort we will use the instrument at the end of the first year of principalship (pre) and again at the end of the second year of principalship (post). Mean scores for each individual will be calculated at the scale and dimension level. The individual means will be averaged to report cohort means by dimension and scale. Individual means for scales will be anonymized and plotted to examine program features and to see if and where content adjustments might be useful.

**Needs Assessment:** During the initial design phase of the project, an Needs Assessment was developed. The needs assessment has 9 categories and 21 indicators. There is a rubric definition for each indicator. Respondents rate themselves along a scale of “0” (Not evident) to “3” (Exemplary). The Needs Assessment will be used in the fall of each year. Each participant will complete the needs assessment and the Project Team will use the results to guide program and content decisions.
Year 1 Outcomes

Summary:

One of the very best indicators of the value of the Alaska School Leadership Academy comes from the responses of new principals in Cohort 1 to the question, “How likely are you to recommend the New Principal Induction and Support program to a colleague?” 46 percent said they were “very likely” to recommend the program to a colleague and 54 percent said they were “likely” to recommend the program.

As a follow up to that question, the new principals were asked, “What would you say to your colleague in making a recommendation to join a new principal cohort or advising against it?” The responses are very telling about the value of the program:

• “I have already e-mailed new principals in my district and encouraged them to participate!”

• “It is so important to reach out to other principals in the state and establish a network of support. We’re all struggling with many of the same issues and can help alleviate one another’s stress and try and institute "tried and true" measures from other school at our own schools. I highly recommend this cohort!”

• “It is a great opportunity for learning if you have a growth mindset.”

• ‘It is extremely helpful- the topics are relevant, facilitators are skilled, and developing relationships with colleagues is invaluable.”

100% of new principals would recommend the Alaska School Leadership Academy to a colleague.
Year 1
Outcomes

This was a formative year for the project, and some outcome indicators are not yet available. The project is guided by a committed and well-functioning leadership team. Evaluation instruments were selected and content was created for the Academies. Feedback from participants indicates that the Academy topics were relevant and immediately applicable for the new principal. A highlight from the Principals Conference for many new principals was the Veteran Principals panel. The opportunity to network with other new principals reduced the sense of leadership isolation for many participants.

The demographics for Cohort 1 show that participants came from both large and small school sites and from a variety of school configurations. This diversity enriched conversations as participants listened to others discuss problems of practice.
Alaska School Leadership Academy Cohort 1 Demographics

Cohort 1

12 Male
13 Female

School Type

- Grade 7-12, 1
- K-8, 3
- K-12, 10
- Middle, 1
- Elementary, 7

-9 Urban Principals
-16 Rural Principals
Objective 1: Recruit and provide leadership training to 51 new principals over two cohorts.

Performance Measures:

1.a. Recruitment targets are fully met according to the stratification table (elementary, secondary, urban, rural).

Performance measures for this objective include diversity in participation to include both urban and rural school principals as well as stratification by type of school. A total of 9 urban and 16 rural principals joined Cohort 1, and there are 17 remaining who will continue with the project as second-year principals in 2019-2020. Three principals left the cohort because their positions were eliminated or non-renewed. Three resigned and moved. One accepted a different instructional position. One participant died in a car accident during the year.

Recruitment of principal participants occurred in September 2018. Applicants completed an online form that included two questions in addition to demographics. The application form required consent to participate from the applicant’s superintendent. A total of 31 applications were submitted.

Participants were asked to describe their motivation to participate in the new principals cohort, and what they expected to gain from participation.

Sample responses included,

“I think this is a great opportunity. I’d like to meet other professionals in this career with advice, tips, and building a network of colleagues to work with.”

“This would be a great networking and collaborating opportunity for me.”
“I have been waiting for an effort like this! Last year was my first year as a principal and my only opportunity to network with other principals was at the October conference in Anchorage. While I made good contacts there that I was able to utilize the rest of the school year, it wasn't the same as being part of a formal program designed to mentor those new to the principalship. I hope to make lasting professional contacts to help me grow as a leader, to be able to reach out and talk to someone when there is an urgent need for an outside perspective, and to be exposed to other effective principals doing great things in Alaska schools! I am especially interested in creating a positive school climate, using assessment data to measure growth and inform instruction, and reducing the feelings of isolation that are common in leadership positions.”

Another question on the application form asked potential cohort members to indicate which professional development activities they planned to attend. There was no accompanying statement about attendance requirements with the question.

1.b. Aggregate data from mentor reports shows regular, ongoing contact between mentors and new principals.

Another indicator for this objective comes from mentor reports to demonstrate regular contact between mentors and new principals. A total of nine mentors were recruited during the first year of the project. Systems and processes for documenting contact and substance for the mentor/new principal relationship were still under construction during year one.

There were two questions on the year-end survey about the mentoring component. The first question was, “Did your mentor help you problem solve one or more challenge this year?” Over 76% of respondents indicated “no” in response to this question, which is likely due to the mid-year start up of the mentoring component. The second question related to mentoring was, “To what extent do you feel your mentor was accessible to you when you needed him or her this year?” The results to this item where more positive, indicating that even though the relationship was compressed by time, it had value. 64% of the new principals said their mentor was available to them.

An open-ended question asked about new principal expectations for the mentoring relationship. Responses included,

“My expectation was that when I called or e-mailed with a problem, she would listen and offer suggestions. My mentor went above and beyond in this regard. She was extremely helpful and made me feel less alone as a principal.”

“I really did not have expectations as I was unclear on what information they [mentors] were given. I didn’t want to take up their time. I am thrilled about the mentor part though.”

“I would have liked the mentor connection earlier in the year.”

“I like having someone outside my district for some things, but it would be nice to have someone from inside my district I could meet with regularly.”
1.c. 95% of participants in each cohort satisfactorily complete all components of the training.

The chart to the right shows attendance by Cohort 1 at face-to-face training events. **57%** of the cohort attended all face-to-face meetings.

*Attendance at the Fall Leadership Conference was optional and not counted in the attendance calculation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019 ASLI</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RtI/MTSS</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Collaborative Leadership</td>
<td>8*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals Conference</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were several ways the Alaska School Leadership Academy Cohort was expected to participate in online discussions within the AKPLN site. Cohort members were asked to post their comments to discussions, reply to others in discussion threads, and could initiate discussions. A total of 104 posts were made by cohort members; the average number of posts per person was 5. The range in number of posts was wide: from 1-12 posts. Twelve individuals made 6 or more posts (57% of the cohort). Eighty replies to posts were made by 14 cohort members. The average number of replies was 5 though four cohort members accounted for 49 of the 80 replies to posts. Seven discussions were started by cohort members. Five of the discussion prompts were from cohort members who were very active in posting and responding to other discussions.
Year 1 Outcomes

Objective 2

Objective 2: Program participants will demonstrate positive leadership skills.

Performance Measures:

2.a The mean score on the Leadership Scale of the School Climate and Connectedness Survey will demonstrate increasing staff satisfaction with school leaders year to year.
2.b 95% of Superintendents of program participants will agree or strongly agree that participants became more effective leaders as a result of the program.
2.c Reports from mentors will indicate that 100% of program participants increased his or her leadership skill from start to finish of the training.
2.d Program participants will self-report via survey and interviews an increase in their school leadership skills and confidence.
2.e Pre- to post-test mean differences for each cohort on the three dimensions of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) will be statistically significant and positive.

Discussion: The purpose of this collection of indicators is to use multiple sources of data to triangulate the growth in leadership skills from a variety of perspectives. School climate surveys administered to teachers provide insight about the principal’s relationship with staff and staff perceptions of the decision making of school leaders. Many districts in Alaska use the School Climate and Connectedness Survey. Some districts use a different instrument, so almost all districts in Alaska have some indicator of teacher satisfaction with school leadership. The items included in the School Leadership scale of the School Climate and Connectedness Survey are shown below:

- At school, decisions are made based on what is best for students.
- I trust the principal will keep his or her word.
- The principal and other leaders in this school make good decisions.
- The principal looks out for the personal welfare of school staff members.
- I am satisfied with my involvement with decision-making at this school.
- When students break rules, they are treated fairly.
- School staff members have a lot of informal opportunities to influence what happens here.
- The work rules at this school are fair.

The SCCS results are reported as a percent favorable. There are five Likert-style response choices, with a rating of 4 or 5 considered favorable. For 2019, results were available for six schools. Of those, four schools had results >75%, and four schools showed growth in the percent favorable over baseline in 2018, before the new principal started in his or her role as school leader.
2.b 95% of Superintendents of program participants will agree or strongly agree that participants became more effective leaders as a result of the program.

Superintendents of participating principals will be surveyed when the cohort completes the two-year program.

2.c Reports from mentors will indicate that 100% of program participants increased his or her leadership skill from start to finish of the training.

This information will be gathered from mentors via survey at the end of year two.

2.d Program participants will self-report via survey and interviews an increase in their school leadership skills and confidence.

Feedback from surveys administered following the Principal Academies and at the end of the year indicate learning by the principal cohort members:

(Related to the Critical Friends Protocol”): “I had never hear of this before and really enjoyed how it forces you to be reflective and listen to others.”

“This is my second year as a principal. I feel like I am out of panic mode and ready to be more proactive. This group [Principal Cohort] will help with that.”

“I really enjoyed hearing from the veteran principals about the steps they took to create success in their schools.”

“The experienced principals panel at the Fall 2018 New Principals Academy was awesome. I wish there was more of the experienced principals talking and offering advice to the new principals. Being in a New Principal cohort is great, but we have a lot of time together with other novices. We need more time with experienced principals.”
Nine different cohort members responded to the AKLPN prompt asking about attendance at ECHO webinars. During the year, there were 35 ECHO webinars offered. One participant summed up this PD opportunity by saying, “I plan to watch more sessions as I have time this summer. I like that they are recorded to watch later.” Difficult conversations was highlighted by many in the conversation thread.

2.e Pre- to post-test mean differences for each cohort on the three dimensions of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) will be statistically significant and positive.

The PIMRS instrument will be administered to Cohort 1 participants in the fall of 2019 (beginning of second year of principalship) and again at the end of the second year as a principal. Paired sample t-tests will be used to determine self-reported growth for each of the PIMRS scales and dimensions. The results will be reported in aggregate for the cohort, by scale and dimension. The dimension results will be used to determine change in leadership skills, and the scale results will be used to examine and suggest changes to the program.
Objective 3: Provide stability and quality in leadership for Alaska schools.

Performance Measures:

3.a 100% of program completers will continue their career in a school leadership role.
3.b 100% of program completers will remain in Alaska as school leaders.
3.c Where program participants remain in the same school for 3 or more years, there will be measurable growth in school-level student achievement on PEAKS.

The performance measures for Objective 3 will be measured by tracking participants over time. A “program completer” is a principal who remains in his or her job and new principal cohort for two years.

At the conclusion of the first year of the project, there are 17 new principals remaining who will continue with the project as second-year principals in 2019-2020. The principals who complete the second year of the program will be followed as completers.

Three principals left the cohort because their positions were eliminated or non-renewed. Three resigned and moved. One accepted a different instructional position. One participant died in a car accident during the year.
Year 1 Outcomes

Objective 4 (Process)

Objective 4: The components of the program will function as intended to produce the stated summative measures.

Performance Measures:

4.a. Survey feedback from participants at the end of each learning strand will be 80% or higher related to questions about value of the training and applicability for individuals.

There were 10 completed responses to the survey following the Principals Conference in October. Feedback included multiple comments about the value of time to network with other new principals. Participants were glad to have time for networking at the end of the day, and “time to talk with others with no time limits.”

Participants would like very practical strategies and current practices to implement immediately. Several participants indicated that the Trauma Informed Schools information was of very high value to them.

“I think it would be awesome if we had the chance to share more of our experiences and background with one another.”

When asked, “How helpful was the assigned reading (Dispositions of Leadership) to understanding of the material covered during the Academies?” 64% of respondents said it was somewhat helpful and 35% said it was very or extremely helpful to them.

92% said the Academy topics were immediately applicable.
Collaboration and relationships surfaced as key words when new principals were asked to identify the most valuable aspect of the program. Comments included,

“Networking with other principals from around the state. The face-to-face time was great! I came away from each of the three face-to-face sessions with some good ideas I could put into practice immediately.”

“Being a part of a team of administrators who are facing similar challenges and hearing about those challenges and the solutions Also being given the opportunity to work with a mentor when needed.”

“Getting time to talk with fellow principals from around the state – feeling less alone.”

Opportunities were provided for networking and sharing ideas and problems of practice during the face-to-face Academies as well as via AKLPN. A question on the year-end survey was, “To what extent did you rely on others in the New Principal Cohort to discuss or gain ideas related to your professional practice?”

- 35.7% of respondents said they relied on other Cohort members a lot or a great deal.
- 35.7% said they relied on their Cohort peers at least some of the time.

Cohort members were split in their response about ease of use of AKLPN. 57% found it moderately to very difficult to use, while 42% said it was easy or very easy to use.

“I had difficulty using AKPLN. I went in to see if I could look at the dialogue and join in but I found it difficult to navigate on my own. I have questions.”

Another respondent said, “I would like to see more participant driven conversations. It can be a struggle to put yourself out there on the Internet. It is much easier in person. The more we can tie things to problems of practice that we are facing, not the philosophical, the better.”
There were 20 different discussions started in AKPLN during the year. Conversations started by members of the new principal cohort included:

“I am helping create new principal binders for new principals in my district. What are some resources you would have liked to have when you started? What would you put in the binders if you were tasked to do this?”
“I plan to do some book studies with my teachers next year. Do you have any book ideas for me?”
“How do you deal with extremely angry or hostile parents?”
“How do/did you announce to staff that you are not going to return?”
“Next year – What is everyone planning? What changes are coming that excite you? Scare you?”
“How do you as an administrator work with a school team to develop workable schedules?”
“How do you decide what students graduating a year early should or should not be included in with seniors?”

Suggestions for AKPLN topics for next year included:

• Conducting observations
• How to work with a school board effectively
• Policy-making
• Mediational language and mediating disputes between teachers
• Balancing directives from federal, state, and local government with actual needs of staff and students
• Cell phone use at school (by staff and students)
• Small school site challenges stemming from principals wearing many different hats

On the year-end survey, new principals were invited to suggest topics or things they wished they had learned as part of their new principal induction. Some of the comments were:

“A bit more about how I can be a strong voice for education to the state legislature.”
“More opportunities for problem-solving and conversations about specific issues happening in our schools, district, and the state.”
“More emphasis on use of data and personnel issues.”
“Peer-to-peer visits to each other’s schools.”
“A chance for us to ask questions in a non-structured format with an experienced principal. Not one-to-one – in a group. Like, a 60-minute session.”
Cohort 1 new principals suggested the following topics for future Academies:

- High school issues related to crediting, transcripting, graduation that small school principals must do without aid of a counselor
- How to have difficult conversations, particularly related to HR
- Teacher evaluations using the Danielson framework
- Budgets
- School law and legal issues
- Master scheduling strategies and challenges
- Technology as used by a school principal
- Meaningful professional development (planning for school-wide PD)
- PEAKS testing
- Dealing with inability to reach consensus
- Building relationships with families and the community

4.b. The program leadership team meets quarterly to discuss progress and suggest improvements to achieve outcomes. During the first year of program implementation, the leadership team met on the following dates:

- August 9, 2019
- August 23, 2019
- September 6, 2019
- September 20, 2019
- September 25, 2019
- October 11, 2019
- November 16, 2019
- February 27, 2019
- April 1, 2019
- May 1, 2019
- June 12, 2019
- June 26, 2019
The Alaska School Leadership Academy is now recruiting new principals for the second year of the program, through September 15.

Cohort 2 new principals will participate in face-to-face meetings in conjunction with three major statewide conferences. Face-to-face meetings will be led by Gary Whiteley, Lexie Domaradzki and RELNW. Participants will meet monthly in hour-long sessions with a mentor to discuss leadership skill development and problems of practice. Finally, Cohort 2 will stay connected with each other through webinars, a book study, and discussion group on AKPLN.

The timeline for activities for year 2 is on the next page, followed by the project Evaluation Plan.

https://asdn.org/alaska-school-leadership-academy/
# Alaska Principal’s Academy and Transition Support Induction Program

## 2019-2020 Calendar of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>August ’19</th>
<th>September ’19</th>
<th>October ’19</th>
<th>November ’19</th>
<th>December ’19</th>
<th>January ’20</th>
<th>February ’20</th>
<th>March ’20</th>
<th>April ’20</th>
<th>May ’20</th>
<th>June ’20</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Face to Face Meetings</strong></td>
<td>Principal’s Conf.: Oct. 24-28</td>
<td>RTI/MTSS Effective Instruction Conference: January 24-26</td>
<td>Alaska School Leadership Institute (ASLI): May 27-29</td>
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<td><strong>Principal Mentoring</strong></td>
<td>1 hr monthly</td>
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<td><strong>Required Online Training</strong></td>
<td>‘Jump Start Your School Year’ with Gary Whiteley (1hr)</td>
<td>‘Thinking and Acting Interdependently and Ways of Talking’ – Follow-Up &amp; Problem of Practice – Lexie Domaradzki (1hr)</td>
<td>‘ECHO: Using Data Follow Up &amp; Problem of Practice – Hella Bell Hadji Amor, EdNW (1hr)</td>
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<td><strong>Dispositions of Leadership Book Study/ AKPLN Reflection Questions</strong></td>
<td>AKPLN required reflections (1hr)</td>
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The project evaluation plan for year two is shown in the following chart, by objective and performance measure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>How and when data will be collected</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 1: Recruit and provide leadership training to 51 new principals over two cohorts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.a. Recruitment targets are fully met according to the stratification table (elementary, secondary, urban, rural).</td>
<td>Targets developed by project leadership team; recruitment completed by September annually</td>
<td>Spreadsheet with demographics (M/F, school configuration, district, and school name)</td>
<td>Count by variable; comparison to recruitment targets</td>
<td>ASDN and ACSA (recruitment and targets); Evaluator for analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.b. Aggregate data from mentor reports shows regular, ongoing contact between mentors and new principals.</td>
<td>Mentors will complete monthly log with date, type of contact, duration, and main topic</td>
<td>Excel spreadsheet in Google drive</td>
<td>Frequency of contact and duration, tabulated by participant and total contacts by mentor, compilation of topics</td>
<td>ASDN (monitor completion); Evaluator for analysis for reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.c. 95% of participants in each cohort satisfactorily complete all components of the training.</td>
<td>Attendance at Academies from registration, session sign in sheets; Question on year-end survey for webinar/ECHO attendance; and telemetry data from AKPLN posts</td>
<td>Sign-in sheets at Academies, self-reported webinar attendance on year-end survey, log-in data for AKPLN</td>
<td>Count of sessions and events by participant</td>
<td>ASDN collects registration and session sign in; Evaluator designs end-of-year survey question and collects AKPLN telemetry; Evaluator does analysis and reporting</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Objective 2: Program participants will demonstrate positive leadership skills.</strong>&lt;br&gt;2.a The mean score on the Leadership Scale of the School Climate and Connectedness Survey will demonstrate increasing staff satisfaction with school leaders year to year.</td>
<td>Annually, when the data is collected by school districts.</td>
<td>SCCS OR other school climate instrument in use by the district. The scale of interest is the Leadership scale.</td>
<td>Percent positive score from year prior to new principal will be compared to year 1 and 2 in the cohort. Scale of interest is Leadership. Data will be reported as aggregate number of schools showing increase in positive leadership score with new principal.</td>
<td>Evaluator, with assistance from ACSA will determine instrument in use by new principal districts. Evaluator will request access to school-level Leadership scale score from districts each year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.b 95% of Superintendents of program participants will agree or strongly agree that participants became more effective leaders as a result of the program.</td>
<td>Annually in the spring superintendents of cohort members will be asked if participants became more effective leaders. A definition of “effective leader” will be provided and all responses will be confidential. Data will be collected via interview or survey.</td>
<td>Scripted interview protocol OR electronic survey prompt.</td>
<td>Percent of superintendents queried who say participants became more effective leaders, and attribute the effectiveness at least in part, to the program.</td>
<td>ACSA will make introduction between the evaluator and superintendant. Evaluator will interview OR provide survey link to superintendents and respond to questions.</td>
</tr>
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<td>2.c Reports from mentors will indicate that 100% of program participants increased his or her leadership skill from start to finish of the training.</td>
<td>Annually, mentors will be interviewed with the same question provided to superintendents (see 2.b.) A definition of “effective leader” will be provided and all responses will be confidential.</td>
<td>Scripted interview protocol.</td>
<td>Percent of participants who increased leadership skills (according to definition provided) as reported by mentors.</td>
<td>ASDN will make introduction between the evaluator and mentors. Evaluator will interview mentors confidentially and report data in aggregate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.d Program participants will self-report via survey and interviews an increase in their school leadership skills and confidence.</td>
<td>Survey following each Academy, with variable to disaggregate (skip logic) for new principals; also, year-end survey about process and value of the program.</td>
<td>Online survey, and scripted interview questions.</td>
<td>Percent of participants who self-report an increase in leadership skills and confidence on surveys. Summary and coding of narrative responses to survey prompts.</td>
<td>ASDN will administer Principal Academy surveys and provide results to the evaluator for analysis. Project evaluator will administer online year-end survey. Evaluator will create scripted interview questions with leadership team and conduct interviews confidentially.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.e Pre- to post-test mean differences for each cohort on the three dimensions of the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) will be statistically significant and positive.</td>
<td>The PIMRS instrument will be administered to Cohort 1 at the beginning and end of their second year of participation. Cohort 2 will take the PIMRS at the end of their first year of principalship and at the end of the second year of principalship.</td>
<td>Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale by Hallinger.</td>
<td>Paired sample t-tests to determine pre-post change in dimensions and scales of the instrument. Dimension scores and change will be used to determine growth in effectiveness and scale scores will be used for program improvement.</td>
<td>Evaluator will administer the PIMRS and track responses to reach 100% participation. Evaluator will aggregate responses for reporting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td><strong>Objective 3: Provide stability and quality in leadership for Alaska schools.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.a 100% of program completers will continue their career in a school leadership role.</td>
<td>In the spring of each year new principals will be asked if they plan to continue as a school principal.</td>
<td>Interview question.</td>
<td>Reported as a percent of new principals in the cohort who continue in their job following completion of the two-year induction.</td>
<td>Data collected by ASDN and reported to project evaluator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.b 100% of program completers will remain in Alaska as school leaders.</td>
<td>Collected in the spring of each year. This indicator probes for whether participants remain as principals in Alaska in another district or school.</td>
<td>Interview question.</td>
<td>Program completers are new principals who complete the two-year induction. This measure is the percent of those individuals who remain as principals in a school in Alaska, regardless whether the starting site.</td>
<td>Data collected by ASDN and reported to project evaluator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.c Where program participants remain in the same school for 3 or more years, there will be measurable growth in school-level student achievement on PEAKS.</td>
<td>Collected when PEAK scores are available beginning in 2021 for Cohort 1.</td>
<td>School-wide PEAKS growth scores for ELA and Math</td>
<td>Schools counted are those where the new principal has been in place for 3 years. Numerator is the number of schools where PEAKS scores increased over 3 years, and denominator is number of schools where the new principal was in place for 3 years.</td>
<td>Project evaluator.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Year 2 Evaluation Plan

#### Objective 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 4</strong>: The components of the program will function as intended to produce the stated summative measures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.a. Survey feedback from participants at the end of each learning strand will be 80% or higher related to questions about value of the training and applicability for individuals.</td>
<td>Participants will complete the ASDN survey at the end of each Principal Academy. A demographic question will identify them as Cohort members separate from other attendees. Participants will also complete an online end-of-year survey with value questions.</td>
<td>Online surveys.</td>
<td>Numerator is percent of participants who respond positively (5 or 5) on a Likert scale; denominator is total cohort members who attended the training (or total respondents, for end-of-year survey)</td>
<td>ASDN for Academy surveys; project evaluator for end-of-year survey.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b. The program leadership team meets quarterly to discuss progress and suggest improvements to achieve outcomes.</td>
<td>Collected at each meeting.</td>
<td>Meeting agendas and minutes showing attendees and summary of discussion and actions taken.</td>
<td>Number of meetings and narrative description of activity.</td>
<td>ASDN will keep agendas and minutes and project evaluator will summarize.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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