



Georgia Department of Education Principal Induction Draft Guidelines

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"Making Education Work for All Georgians"

Introduction

Within Georgia's Race to the Top (RT3) grant, the Great Teachers and Leaders Project focuses on increasing the overall effectiveness of Georgia's teachers and leaders, a critical factor in increasing student growth and achievement. These guidelines inform, encourage, and support districts in implementing high-quality principal induction, a cornerstone of such reform.

Rationale

Sustained improvement in student learning rarely occurs without a great principal. Principal leadership is second only to teaching among school-based factors that influence student learning.ⁱ Principals create cultures of high expectations not only for student learning, but for adult learning.ⁱⁱ Successfully building an enduring school culture that yields high performance from students and teachers is complex work, rooted in relationship building and effective organizational practices.ⁱⁱⁱ Principals who do not do this well are more likely to preside over high rates of teacher turnover,^{iv} which is correlated with lower student achievement.^v

Learning to be a great principal not only takes time during the early years of a principal's career, but can be discouraging and overwhelming. In Georgia, the average tenure of principals in their current schools is only 3.5 years.^{vi} At the same time that Georgia's students need great principals most, Georgia's principals are leaving the job more rapidly than elsewhere in the nation. These guidelines provide districts with a roadmap for arresting principal turnover by providing continuous high-quality induction support to early career principals (ranging from one to three years, depending on individual needs).

Structure of Guidelines

These guidelines address six domains of high-quality principal induction: 1) Roles and Responsibilities; 2) Leadership and Organizational Structures; 3) Orientation; 4) Mentoring; 5) Ongoing Assessment; and 6) Program Evaluation. Guidelines are clarified by components. Some components (elements in each domain) are required while others are suggested.

How these Guidelines Were Developed

These principal induction guidelines were developed as a component of Georgia's Race to the Top initiative. A cross-disciplinary team – including teachers, instructional coaches, early career and experienced principals, district leaders, university faculty, education organization staff, and state agency leaders – was convened multiple times over a period of several months. The team worked collaboratively to distill research on effective induction and principal mentoring into guidelines that are meant to be flexible and accommodating of the wide range of districts and district needs in Georgia. At the same time, these guidelines paint an inspirational vision of the type of support new principals must receive.

High quality principal induction can stop the exodus from the principal's office and maintain continuity in improvement efforts for teachers. Therefore teachers will be encouraged to stay and strive to get better, ultimately leading to sustained improvements in instruction and student learning, over time and at scale.

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Definition of Terms

Induction Phase Principal

The induction phase principal is defined as all principals who have been hired or appointed into a new permanent position in any Georgia school. Principals are considered to be “induction phase” until they successfully complete the district induction program.

Principal Induction Support Team

The Principal Induction Support Team is comprised of the immediate supervisor or designee, a mentor, and when possible, an external support agency representative, i.e. higher education, regional educational service agency, or district specialist.

Principal Induction Plan

The Principal Induction Plan is developed collaboratively with the induction phase principal and the Principal Induction Support Team to drive the professional learning of the induction phase principal. The plan will be based on the district and/or school teaching and learning goals, identified developmental needs, prior preparation and experiences, and assessment results.

Mentor

A mentor is highly committed to supporting the personal growth of the induction phase principal. The mentor provides guidance, shares knowledge and experiences, and supports the induction phase principal in making a positive impact on student growth and achievement.

Coach

A coach supports the performance of the induction phase principal in reaching a specific goal(s).

References

ⁱ Leithwood, K., Louis, K.S., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *Review of research: How leadership influences student learning*. University of Minnesota: Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement; Hallinger, P., & Heck, R. (1996). Reassessing the principal's role in school effectiveness: A review of empirical research, 1980-1995. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 32(1), 5-44.

ⁱⁱ Knapp, M., Copland, M., Ford, B., Markholt, A., McLaughlin, M., Milliken, M., & Talbert, J. (2003). *Leading for learning sourcebook: Concepts and examples*. Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.; Deal, T. & Peterson, K. (1999). *Shaping School Culture: The Heart of Leadership*. Jossey-Bass.; Fullan, M. (2001). *The new meaning of educational change* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.; DuFour, R. & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.

ⁱⁱⁱ Wahlstrom, K., Louis, K., Leithwood, K., and Anderson, S. (2010) *Learning from Leadership Project: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning*. Produced by the University of Minnesota and University of Toronto and commissioned by The Wallace Foundation.

^{iv} Boyd, W., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, H., Loeb, S. & Wycoff, J. (2010). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. *American Educational Research Journal*. Published online before print on September 14, 2010.

^v Boyd, W., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wycoff, J. (2005). Explaining the short careers of high-achieving teachers in schools with low-performing students. *The American Economic Review*, 95(2), 166-171.

^{vi} U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS)*, "Public School Principal Data File," 2007-2008