



**State Support Network**

Partnering for School Improvement

# Designing Leadership Academies for Principal Professional Learning

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## Introduction

Research conducted over the past 10 years clearly documents that principals are critical to school improvement, school safety, and instructional quality: principal leadership is second only to classroom instruction in its influence on student success (Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010) and is commonly cited by teachers as the reason for joining or leaving schools (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007; Boyd et al., 2009; Marinell & Coca, 2013). Furthermore, well-trained and supported principals can propel schools forward at a quicker pace than less-prepared principals (Gates, Baird, Master, & Chavez-Herrias, 2019). However, principals often lack access to formal professional learning experiences specifically aimed at improving their practice as school leaders.<sup>1</sup>

States and districts are addressing the need for high-quality principal professional learning, and some are taking advantage of opportunities in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to use federal Title II, Part A funds for supporting principal, assistant principal, principal supervisor, and other school-level leader professional learning. Section 2101(c)(3) of ESEA allows state education agencies (SEAs) to reserve up to 3 percent of the Title II, Part A subgrant funds (i.e., “set-aside” funding) to support principals or school leaders, which can include high-quality professional learning programs for principals.

According to a 2017 scan of ESEA consolidated state plans, 22 states plan to use the 3-percent funding option to provide professional learning support for principals (Education Commission of the States, 2017). Of these 22 states, nine specifically mention in their consolidated state plans *leadership academies* as a way to support principals’ professional learning.<sup>2</sup> Leadership academies are a new, intensive approach aimed at increasing principal access to high-quality learning. Leadership academies can be led and organized at many levels (e.g., state, district). In addition, leadership academies can be supported through a partnership or by individual organizations or agencies, including SEAs, districts, institutions of higher education, regional service agencies, or professional organizations. This resource focuses on state leadership academies.

States interested in supporting leadership academies through federal or other funding sources can look to current models of leadership academies to inform design and implementation decisions. This resource shares insights from a review of 10 current state and regional leadership academies,<sup>3</sup> including trends in their design. The purpose of this resource is to help states better

### What is a leadership academy?

*A leadership academy* is a formal professional learning opportunity for current school leaders, focused on augmenting knowledge and skills, increasing specialization, and refreshing leadership practices.

<sup>1</sup> Principals’ practice as school leaders may be defined by a state’s standards for school leaders. For example, please see the 2015 Professional Standards for Educational Leaders at [http://npbea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Professional-Standards-for-Educational-Leaders\\_2015.pdf](http://npbea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Professional-Standards-for-Educational-Leaders_2015.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Arkansas, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Maryland, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

<sup>3</sup> The 10 current state and regional leadership academies included in this resource were chosen based on the availability of publicly available information on their design and implementation and are not meant to be representative or imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education. Please see pages 14–21 for descriptions of the leadership academies reviewed in this resource.

understand how to design and implement state leadership academies<sup>4</sup> to support school improvement. This resource includes three main sections:

- Review of the Evidence Around Leadership Academies
- Trends in Leadership Academy Design and Content
- Considerations for Implementing and Sustaining Leadership Academies

In addition, the appendix includes profiles of the 10 state leadership academies<sup>5</sup> as well as two examples of district leadership academies.<sup>6</sup>

## Emerging Evidence on Leadership Academies

ESEA requires states to consider the quality of evidence supporting educator professional learning or other efforts to sustain leadership talent improvement. States can use federal Title II, Part A funds to support principal professional learning (including establishing leadership academies), provided their programs meet the requirements of one of the four tiers of evidence defined by ESEA (see Figure 1).<sup>7</sup> Of the 10 state leadership academies reviewed in this resource, only one (the Arkansas Leadership Academy) provided a research-based rationale for its design. Two of the state leadership academies reviewed in this resource, however, did provide some publicly available evidence and positive impacts, which are noncomparative in nature:<sup>8</sup>

- The Arkansas Leadership Academy has been linked to statewide gains in math and literacy for students in the lowest performing schools as well as gains in proficient- and advanced-literacy performance. In addition, participants shared that the learning activities provided through the leadership academy helped promote trusting relationships, reciprocal learning, and personal growth (Liang & Augustine-Shaw, 2016).
- Evidence on the New Mexico Principals Pursuing Excellence program shows that the program has a positive impact on student learning, such as closing gaps in reading and math achievement in schools with higher than average numbers of English learners,

Figure 1. Tiers of Evidence under ESEA.

<b>Tier I (Strong evidence)</b>
Experimental study using random assignment to intervention and control groups
<b>Tier II (Moderate evidence)</b>
Quasi-experimental study using nonrandom assignment to intervention and comparison groups
<b>Tier III (Promising evidence)</b>
Correlation study with some controls
<b>Tier IV (Research-based evidence)</b>
Rationale for intervention design based on other research

<sup>4</sup> Note: Leadership academies can be led and organized at the state, district, or other level (e.g., professional organization, institution of higher education). This resource focuses only on leadership academies that are supported at the state level.

<sup>5</sup> Arkansas, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Maryland, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee offer leadership academies as described in their consolidated state plans; Arizona offers a foundation-funded leadership academy.

<sup>6</sup> Gwinnett County Public Schools in Georgia and districts across North Carolina offer leadership academies.

<sup>7</sup> More information on the four tiers of evidence and the criteria associated with each can be found in the U.S. Department of Education's [Non-Regulatory Guidance: Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments](#).

<sup>8</sup> Noncomparative findings do not include identification of success factors or comparison of implementation approaches.

Native American students, students with disabilities, and students from low-income communities.<sup>9</sup>

One district leadership program included evidence in its design:

- The North Carolina Regional Leadership Academies were found to use best practices for principal professional learning in designing and delivering individual principal preparation programs (Brown, 2014).

States and districts supporting or launching new leadership academies have an opportunity to gather and share information on the design, implementation, and impact of leadership academies in ways that build an evidence base for their programs and this form of professional learning for principals. Because leadership academies often engage cohorts of principals within states, leadership academies have the potential to produce evidence through experimental or quasi-experimental research approaches. With additional information on evidence and best practices related to leadership academies, states and districts can better ensure that their efforts lead to improved principal practice, retention, and impact on student learning.

## Trends in Leadership Academy Design

Of the 22 consolidated state plans that include professional learning support for principals, only nine states name leadership academies as a specific support: Arkansas, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, Maryland, New Mexico, Oregon, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

- Of these nine states, three states (Maryland, Oregon, and Pennsylvania) mention leadership academies as an allowable district-level approach to principal professional learning (rather than a state-level activity supported through Title II, Part A set-aside funds). However, Maryland also supports a state-level leadership academy through state funding sources. The remaining six states (Arkansas, Georgia, Hawaii, Kansas, New Mexico, and Tennessee) describe supports for new or established leadership academies.
- One state (Arizona) does not describe leadership academies in its consolidated state plan, but is implementing a state-level leadership academy through a combination of state funds and philanthropic support.
- There also is a statewide leadership academy in Alabama that is run and supported through the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD); however, this example is not included in this review because it does not have a formal partnership with the SEA (Alabama State Department of Education).

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<sup>9</sup> For more information, please see <https://webnew.ped.state.nm.us/bureaus/priority-schools/principals-pursuing-excellence-ppc/>.

This section summarizes the design trends across 10 state leadership academies (i.e., the nine leadership academies described in consolidated state plans plus Arizona)<sup>10</sup> across four subsections:

- Leadership Academy Purposes
- Leadership Academy Participants
- Leadership Academy Content
- Leadership Academy Learning Approaches

## **Leadership Academy Purposes**

Professional development design varies in purpose, according to the learning needs of its participants. For example, professional conferences are excellent opportunities to gain information about new professional practices, while educator coaching supports allow the incorporation of innovative leadership and instructional approaches into existing school practices (Loucks-Horsely, Stiles, Mundry, Love, & Hewson, 2009; Lambert, 2003). Research currently provides little guidance about the purposes that leadership academies serve in advancing leadership learning; however, state leadership academy descriptions provide some insight about the match between academy purposes and participant learning interests and needs. Consolidated state plans tend to describe the overall purpose of leadership academies as refining and improving the skills for a principal’s or assistant principal’s success. These descriptions of leadership academies in consolidated state plans indicate that leadership academies can serve multiple purposes, including:

- Identifying future principals for schools.
- Inducting new principals into the profession.
- Orienting experienced principals to new leadership practices, school improvement strategies, or state/federal/district policies.
- Supporting principal or leadership team planning with data or other information.
- Creating a problem-solving network of school-level leaders.
- Incorporating new leadership practice or school improvement strategies.

Although a leadership academy can serve multiple purposes, the overarching purpose of all nine states’ leadership academies as described in consolidated state plans is to meet new principal or advanced principal learning needs.

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<sup>10</sup> The analysis of leadership academy design trends is limited to state examples due to incomplete information on district leadership academy design.

## Leadership Academy Participants

Research does not currently provide information on the participants of leadership academies; however, the participants of leadership academies described in consolidated state plans include aspiring, new, and experienced principals: all nine state leadership academies were designed for current principals, three included new principals (in years 1–3 of being a building leader), and three included aspiring principals.

## Leadership Academy Content

The content focus of the 10 leadership academies reviewed in this resource varied (see Table 1). For example, in the Arizona leadership academy, professional development content focused on leadership strategies and academic pedagogical information, while in Maryland and Georgia, leadership academy content was organized according to state standards and competencies. Two of the 10 state leadership academies (Georgia and Tennessee) had content that was explicitly aligned to national<sup>11</sup> or state<sup>12</sup> professional standards for principals. The other eight leadership academies used different terminology than professional standards but still reflected similar content. The professional development content of the 10 academies reviewed for this brief addressed the following topics:

- Improving school climate
- Leading instruction
- Managing human resources and teacher talent
- Using data and student assessments for strategic decisions
- Managing change
- Communicating with the community
- Managing school finance and operations
- Planning school improvement

## Leadership Academy Learning Approaches

Leadership academies tend to enroll cadres of principals in an extended “learning by leading” experience (with at least a 1-year commitment for participants), which uses a mix of learning methods to build leadership practice by acquiring and applying knowledge to principals’ schools. Leadership academies can use a mix of professional learning methods, such as:

- Weekend or weeklong workshops
- Monthly webinars and online convenings
- Coaching
- Inquiry-based learning (i.e., to determine if changes in practice have the desired effects)
- Networked learning communities to exchange knowledge among peers

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<sup>11</sup> Please see the national Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015) at [http://npbea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Professional-Standards-for-Educational-Leaders\\_2015.pdf](http://npbea.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Professional-Standards-for-Educational-Leaders_2015.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> For example, the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (Tennessee Department of Education, 2018).



The list of learning methods suggests that principals enrolled in leadership academies will learn by stepping outside their school contexts, interacting with experts and other principals, and trying new leadership approaches and techniques in their schools while continuing to serve as building leaders. There were two main trends in learning approaches across the 10 leadership academies:

- **Multiple delivery approaches:** Seven of the 10 leadership academies reviewed used multiple delivery approaches to professional learning, including face-to-face convenings, virtual connections, or job-embedded coaching. By using multiple types of delivery approaches, states and districts can emphasize content in different ways or provide more customizable content for participants.
- **Regular engagement with experienced expert principals:** All 10 leadership academies reviewed include experienced and expert principals in some capacity, whether as speakers during face-to-face convenings, professional learning community (PLC) leaders, or mentors. Being able to learn from (and, at times, work alongside) experienced expert principals can be what sets leadership academies apart from other kinds of professional learning experiences; in addition, these opportunities can allow participants' learning to be adaptive (i.e., both personalized to the individual and customized to the local context).

## Considerations for Implementing and Sustaining Leadership Academies

States and districts planning to use funds provided through ESEA, Title II, Part A<sup>13</sup> to support the design and implementation of leadership academies can look to current leadership academies to learn more about common design and implementation approaches, such as:

- **Align the content and focus of leadership academies with professional standards** for principals or the administrative license program of a partner institution of higher education.<sup>14</sup>
- **Customize the program over time** using the local context, needs assessment data, and individual participant needs.
- **Include continuous opportunities for practice, feedback, and refinement** in the participants' current positions, clinical placements, or residencies, including on-site individual coaching support.
- **Use the peer cohort approach** to promote peer learning and relationship building.

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<sup>13</sup> Leadership academies that use Title II, Part A funds must meet the definition of “academy” in section 2002(4) of ESEA.

<sup>14</sup> Research suggests that 11 practices in preparation should produce higher quality school leaders, including (1) research-based content focused on instruction, change management, and organizational practice; (2) a coherent curriculum that links all aspects of the preparation experience around a set of shared values, beliefs, and knowledge about effective organizational practice; (3) a rigorous selection process that gives priority to underserved groups, particularly racial/ethnic minorities; (4) cohort structures that foster collaborative learning and support; (5) school–university collaborations that create a seamless and coherent program for students; (6) field-based internships that allow individuals to apply their new knowledge and skills while under the guidance of expert leaders; (7) supportive organizational structures that support student retention, engagement, and placement; (8) a systematic process for evaluating and improving programs and coursework; (9) a low student–faculty ratio (i.e., 15:1) and active, student-centered instruction; (10) faculty who identify, develop, and promote relevant knowledge focused on the essential problems of schooling, leadership, and administrative practice; and (11) ongoing professional growth opportunities (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007; Levine, 2005).

- **Use multiple learning methods**, including formal workshops, school-based projects, coaching, and informal network activities, to tailor leadership supports to individual learner needs.
- **Regularly evaluate the implementation and impact of the leadership academy** to identify opportunities for ongoing refinement and to continue building the evidence base for the state or district academy and this form of professional learning. This will require many partners, each playing a different key role, and each investing substantial time and energy into the program. Such investments can bring exceptional talent to academy designs and support academy sustainability. For example, state and district leaders can use regular data collection to ensure that leadership academies are supported in the schools and districts most likely to see success and measure impact.
- **Complement or combine existing professional learning opportunities for principals.** Because leadership academies often use multiple learning modalities, they may partially duplicate existing structures or opportunities for principal professional learning or networking. Leadership academy partners may use existing professional learning opportunities and may work with other providers (e.g., educational service agencies, district staff) to ensure that leadership academy content is aligned with other professional learning.
- **Use leadership academies to support principal induction.** Leadership academies can address continued learning interests of new principals who have successfully completed preparation programs but may need practical and supported learning experiences for successful induction into the profession.
- **Use leadership academies to help develop specialized practice.** As in medical and other fields, specialization is a hallmark of advanced professional practice for principals. Leadership academies are designed to help principals attain specialized knowledge, hone leadership practices, and address particular challenges (e.g., data and assessment) or more specialized needs (e.g., restorative justice). The academies that we reviewed included content on Crucial Conversations, Understanding by Design, and Restorative Discipline. Because most administrative license programs use a traditional credit structure for courses, leadership academies are well suited to support these more specialized and fluid learning opportunities and allow more local customization.
- **Ensure that the time requirements are reasonable and based on importance.** Due to their job demands, principals have a finite time to learn. Leadership academies use multiple learning methods to maximize learning time, focusing on both knowledge acquisition and application opportunities. Weekend or weeklong meetings scheduled during the academic year, combined with coaching and networking, maintain leadership learning intensity and allow principals to join academies. By using multiple modalities, leadership academies can be adaptive and strategically organize content delivery efficiently.
- **Ensure that all learning activities offered through the leadership academy emphasize relational and reflective processes that prompt deep thinking and engagement.** Many aspects of effective school leadership are interpersonal in nature; therefore, leadership academies can be more successful by focusing on shared learning, reflection, and interaction between participants (Fusarelli, Fusarelli, & Drake, 2018). These learning experiences can be more meaningful and rigorous when participants are

able to work with coaches or mentors in their own job rather than only shadowing other administrators.

- **Require participants to commit to applying their learning.** Because principals often have to prioritize responsibilities, it is important to design leadership academies to keep participants engaged. One way to keep participants engaged is to ask principals to commit to applying their learning and sharing their results (e.g., through a professional learning plan or reporting out during cohort meetings). By asking participants to share the application of their learning, states and districts can better understand the value and impact of leadership academies on principal practice and schools overall.

## Conclusion

Leadership academies can help school leaders improve their knowledge and skills, increase their specialized expertise, and refresh their leadership practices. By using multiple delivery approaches and access to experienced mentors, leadership academies can offer school leaders varied and personalized professional development. Leadership academies also can capitalize on and strengthen partnerships between local institutions of higher education, districts, and other partners. States can consider supporting leadership academies through Title II, Part A funds under ESEA or other funding mechanisms.

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## Appendix: Profiles of State and District Leadership Academies

Table 1 provides overview information and descriptions of each of the 10 state leadership academies reviewed in this resource. Table 2 provides examples of two district leadership academies.

**Table 1. Examples of State-Level Leadership Academies**






State	Name	Background	Participants	Learning Approach(es)	Content
Arizona	Beat the Odds School Leadership Academy <sup>15</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2017   <b>Partner(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arizona Department of Education</li> <li>• Center for the Future of Arizona</li> <li>• National Institute for School Leadership</li> <li>• Helios Education Foundation</li> <li>• Burton Family Foundation</li> </ul>  <b>Program length:</b> 1–1.5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current principals</li> <li>• Aspiring principals</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> 12 two-day unit trainings   <b>Virtual:</b> Online coursework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic leadership</li> <li>• Standards-based education</li> <li>• Instructional practices in math, English, history, and science</li> </ul>

<sup>15</sup> Center for the Future of Arizona, 2019






State	Name	Background	Participants	Learning Approach(es)	Content
Arkansas	Arkansas Leadership Quest <sup>16</sup>	 Established 2016  <b>Partner(s):</b> Arkansas Department of Education  <b>Program length:</b> 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principals</li> <li>Assistant principals</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One annual regional in-person for all districts participating in a select leadership “journey” with support through the Arkansas Department of Education</li> <li>Meetings throughout the year with the lead development coach, regional support coaches, and lead principals conducting local professional learning communities (PLCs)</li> </ul>	Each participating district picks one of three specific leadership “journeys” to focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Journey to a Great Place to Work and Learn</li> <li>Establishing a culture of high expectations promoting professionalism</li> <li>Utilizing innovations and opportunities</li> <li>Fostering collaborative relationships</li> <li>Maximizing Talent</li> <li>Promoting teacher leadership to build leadership capacity</li> <li>Using teacher leaders</li> <li>Facilitating adult learning</li> <li>In Pursuit of Teacher Excellence</li> <li>Conducting observations leading to meaningful discussions with useful feedback</li> <li>Promoting teacher learning</li> <li>Using information wisely to enhance shared accountability for student learning</li> </ul>

<sup>16</sup> Arkansas Department of Education, 2016, 2018








State	Name	Background	Participants	Learning Approach(es)	Content
Georgia	Governor's School Leadership Academy <sup>17</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2018   <b>Partner(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Georgia Department of Education</li> <li>Gwinnett County Public Schools</li> </ul>  <b>Program length:</b> 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current principals in turnaround-eligible schools</li> <li>Aspiring principals from targeted districts throughout the state</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Face-to-face cohort meetings</li> <li>On-site coaching</li> </ul>  <b>Virtual:</b> Virtual coaching opportunities with former Georgia principals with experience in successfully developing school leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of research and best practices (face-to-face meetings)</li> <li>Data-driven decision making (job-embedded)</li> <li>Cultural competence (job-embedded)</li> </ul>





<sup>17</sup> State of Georgia, 2019

State	Name	Background	Participants	Learning Approach(es)	Content
Hawaii	New Principal Academy <sup>18</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2003  <b>Partner(s):</b> Hawaii Department of Education  <b>Program length:</b> 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All new principals in Hawaii (for their first 2 years)</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> Regular thematic PLCs  <b>Job-embedded:</b> Weekly individualized coaching	<p>The New Principal Academy is aligned to performance evaluations for school leaders, state strategic initiatives, and Complex Area (i.e., school and district) priorities.</p> <p>Year 1 content foci:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication and school culture</li> <li>Fiscal and personnel resource management</li> <li>Leading innovative thinking</li> <li>Academic and financial planning</li> <li>Family and community engagement</li> <li>Change leadership</li> <li>Coaching feedback and capacity building</li> <li>Communication and relationships</li> <li>Instructional leadership</li> </ul> <p>Year 2 content foci:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboratively honing skills and competencies</li> <li>Clarifying leadership decisions</li> <li>Implementing iterative improvement changes</li> </ul>










<sup>18</sup> Hawaii State Department of Education, 2019; New Teacher Center, 2016; Hawaii Department of Education & Professional Development and Educational Research Institute, 2018

State	Name	Background	Participants	Learning Approach(es)	Content
Kansas	Kansas Educational Leadership Institute (KELI) <sup>19</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2011   <b>Partner(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kansas State University</li> <li>• Kansas State Department of Education</li> <li>• Kansas Association of School Boards</li> <li>• United School Administrators of Kansas</li> <li>• Kansas School Superintendents Association</li> </ul>  <b>Program length:</b> 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All first-year principals (required; fulfills requirements for renewable administrator license)</li> <li>• All principals (for license renewal)</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-person “deep learning” retreats</li> <li>• Two performance demonstrations (e.g., staff meeting facilitation, parent group meeting participation)</li> </ul>  <b>Virtual:</b> Ongoing contact with mentors through phone, e-mail, video conferencing, or other technology	<p>KELI focuses on topics important for new leaders, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgets</li> <li>• Accreditation</li> <li>• School violence</li> <li>• Special education</li> <li>• School change and redesign</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> Kansas Educational Leadership Institute, 2017, 2019

State	Name	Background	Participants	Learning Approach(es)	Content
Maryland	Promising Principals Academy <sup>20</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2014   <b>Partner(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maryland State Department of Education</li> <li>Governor’s Office of Maryland</li> </ul>  <b>Program length:</b> 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assistant principals, central office staff, and teacher leaders who have earned their administrator certification and are recommended by their superintendent (limited to two participants per district)</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> 13 face-to-face convenings over the course of the year, focused on specific topics	<p>The Promising Principals Academy focuses on topics that superintendents have reported to be the most critical needs of new principals, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership and team building</li> <li>Leadership styles and relationship building</li> <li>Professional learning</li> <li>Strategic planning</li> <li>Data analysis</li> <li>Effective evaluations</li> <li>Budget management</li> <li>Ethical dilemmas</li> <li>Culture of improvement</li> <li>School improvement</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> Maryland State Department of Education, 2019a, 2019b











State	Name	Background	Participants	Learning Approach(es)	Content
New Mexico	Principals Pursuing Excellence <sup>21</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2012   <b>Partner(s):</b> New Mexico Public Education Department   <b>Program length:</b> 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principals</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive convenings with superintendents and district leadership to cultivate the skills needed for turnaround leaders and develop a 90-day plan for driving improvement strategies (e.g., data-driven instruction, school culture of learning, observation and feedback)</li> <li>Monthly on-site visits and frequent check-ins from coaches or mentors</li> </ul>	The content of the Principals Pursuing Excellence program depends on the needs of the participating principals, schools, and districts.
Tennessee	Tennessee Academy for School Leaders (TASL) Induction Academy <sup>22</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2017   <b>Partner(s):</b> Tennessee Department of Education   <b>Program length:</b> 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Principals and assistant principals with 3 or fewer years of experience in any leadership role</li> <li>Limited to 40 participants<sup>23</sup></li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> Three to five face-to-face meetings in each region   <b>Virtual:</b> Virtual learning modules, meetings, and assignments	The content of the Tennessee Academy for School Leaders is based on the <a href="#">Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS)</a> .

<sup>21</sup> New Mexico Public Education Department, 2019

<sup>22</sup> Tennessee Department of Education, 2019

<sup>23</sup> Note: All instructional leaders must earn professional learning credits through TASL.

**Table 2. Examples of District and Regional Leadership Academies**

District	Program	Background	Participation	Design	Content
Gwinnett County Public Schools, Georgia	The Aspiring Principal Program <sup>24</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2007  <b>Partner(s):</b> Gwinnett County Public Schools  <b>Program length:</b> 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspiring principals who demonstrate leadership characteristics</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> Instructional program led by the superintendent and other district leaders  <b>Job-embedded:</b> 90-day residency with the support of a mentor principal and assistant superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Foundations of leadership</li> <li>Shaping a vision of academic success</li> <li>Improving instruction</li> <li>Cultivating leadership in others</li> <li>Creating a climate hospitable to education</li> <li>Managing people, data, and processes to foster school improvement</li> </ul>
Districts Across North Carolina	North Carolina’s Regional Leadership Academies <sup>25</sup>	 <b>Established</b> 2001  <b>Partner(s):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Carolina State University</li> <li>North Carolina Department of Public Instruction</li> </ul>  <b>Program length:</b> 1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District leaders nominate qualified candidates from within a region.</li> <li>Candidates become certified principals on completion of the program and are obligated to work at least 3 years in the region.</li> </ul>	 <b>On-site support:</b> Face-to-face regional meetings  <b>Job-embedded:</b> Full-time residency	The curriculum uses an action-research approach addressing local needs and aligned with the North Carolina Standards for School Executives.

<sup>24</sup> Gwinnett County Public Schools, 2019

<sup>25</sup> North Carolina Legislature, 2014; Brown, 2014