CENTER FOR APPLIED RESEARCH
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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

MINNESOTA PRINCIPALS ACADEMY: END-OF-PROGRAM REPORT FOR THE 2017–19 COHORTS

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Prepared by:
Jane Fields, PhD
Clare Halloran, EdM
Kristin Peterson, MA

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How to Cite this Report

Contact Information

Jane Fields, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement
College of Education and Human Development
University of Minnesota
1954 Buford Avenue, Suite 425
Saint Paul, MN 55108
Telephone: (612) 624-4061
Email: jfields@umn.edu

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Executive Summary

The Minnesota Principals Academy (MPA) is an executive development program designed to enhance the performance of school leaders in order to improve educational outcomes for students. The Center for Applied Research and Education Improvement (CAREI) serves as the program evaluator with the intention of providing information on the extent to which participants, upon completion of the program, changed their behaviors or gained knowledge and skills in the areas covered by the MPA. This report summarizes the results from surveys administered across three 2017–19 MPA cohorts: Brainerd/Staples, Fergus Falls, and the Twin Cities.

Survey Participants

MPA participants from the three 2017–19 cohorts completed a retrospective pre/post-survey in spring 2019 about their leadership practices, skills, and behaviors both *before* and *after* participating in the program. Supervisors of MPA participants also completed a survey to provide information on changes in participants in the areas covered by the MPA curriculum. Nearly all MPA participants completed a survey (94%, *n*=92/98), as well as the majority of supervisors (65%, *n*=36/55).

Key Findings

The survey results were overwhelmingly positive and described a pattern of change for the participants in the key areas identified by the MPA curriculum. One supervisor respondent stated that, "*This program is a necessity for all principals in the state. It provides a common understanding of best educational practices, educational research, and a support network among administrative colleagues.*"

- MPA participants and their supervisors reported that participants gained a variety of leadership skills through the MPA program, emerging as stronger strategic, instructional, and transformational leaders.

  - *Strategic leadership skills* were reported as the area of greatest improvement for MPA participants, with more leaders using data and research in decision making, analyzing issues at a systems-level, trying new approaches in the change process at their schools, clarifying their school or district visions, and asking more purposeful questions as they approach problems.

  - Ways in which leaders reported improving their *instructional leadership skills* included having more conversations with teachers about instruction and how people learn, providing additional resources to staff to support instruction, and changing their teacher observation/evaluation process. After participating in the MPA, supervisors described their leaders as more student-centered (including prioritizing student needs when creating staff schedules) and focused on equity.

  - Changes in leaders' *transformational leadership* skills related to leaders' improved ability to work in a shared leadership model and gather staff perspectives, improved connections with teachers and staff, and leaders' efforts to foster a culture of collaboration in schools.

- MPA participants valued the networks they developed with principals and school leaders from other districts, as well as the tools and resources made available to them through their participation in the MPA. Supervisors concurred and discussed this as an area of impact in their schools and districts.

- A challenge noted by a few supervisors was that their leaders' participation in the MPA placed a burden on the system and teachers, at times, due to the time required of its participants to be out of their buildings for the program, especially in rural or smaller districts.

Introduction

Overview of the Minnesota Principals Academy

The Minnesota Principals Academy (MPA) is an executive development program designed for school leaders that provides ongoing professional development to Minnesota's school leaders by connecting theory to practice. The program is housed in the University of Minnesota's Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development in the College of Education and Human Development, with financial support provided by the Minnesota Legislature and participants' school districts.[1]

The MPA's curriculum is based on curriculum developed by the National Institute for School Leadership's (NISL) Executive Development Program, which aims to provide principals with research-based information that they can use in their schools. The NISL curriculum includes 12 units designed to help participants in three areas that are key to their role: leadership skills, best practices in standards-based education, and content area instruction. However, University of Minnesota faculty have enhanced the content of the NISL curriculum by providing additional information in areas that are of interest and importance for its participants; therefore, in our report, references to the "MPA curriculum" refer to this modified curriculum. In addition, all participants complete an Action Learning Project, which is intended to encourage participants to examine an instructional issue or area relevant to their school. The Action Learning Project also provides a framework that the leader can use after program completion.

The 2017–19 MPA participants included leaders from three cohorts: Brainerd/Staples, Fergus Falls, and the Twin Cities. Participants in all three cohorts began the program in fall 2017 and completed the program in spring 2019.

Purpose of the Report

The Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) serves as the evaluator of the MPA. The purpose of this evaluation is to describe and understand the MPA as a resource and training program for school and district leaders. Specifically, our evaluation is designed to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent have participants gained knowledge in the areas covered by the MPA curriculum?
2. To what extent do the supervisors of MPA participants see a change in participants' knowledge in the areas covered by the MPA curriculum?
3. To what extent have student outcomes (e.g., scores on statewide reading and math tests) in participants' schools changed as a result of participation in the MPA?

This report provides information on the first two evaluation questions for the three 2017–19 cohorts. The third evaluation question will be addressed in a subsequent report by analyzing and reporting on the results of the spring 2019 Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs).

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[1] For more information about the MPA, see https://innovation.umn.edu/mnpa/.

Methods

MPA Participant Survey
To examine the extent to which participants gained knowledge in the areas covered by the MPA curriculum (Evaluation Question 1)**,** participants were asked to complete the MPA Participant Survey (see Appendix A) during one of their course sessions in March–April 2019. Overall, 94% of MPA participants from the 2017–19 cohorts completed the survey (*n*=92/98). This included 97% of Brainerd/Staples participants (*n*=36/37), 91% of Fergus Falls participants (*n*=29/32), and 94% of Twin Cities participants (*n*=27/29). The survey was administered using Qualtrics, an online survey tool. Participants received an initial email inviting them to complete the survey and two reminder emails in the following weeks. The survey consisted of closed-ended retrospective pre/post survey items regarding participants' leadership practices and their perceptions about teachers' instructional practices, school-level practices, and district-level practices. The open-ended survey items focused on what participants perceived was the greatest "take-away" from their participation, what content they found most helpful, and what they are doing differently after completing the program.

MPA Supervisor Survey
To examine the extent to which the supervisors of MPA participants see a change in participants' knowledge in the areas covered by the MPA curriculum (Evaluation Question 2), participants' school/district supervisors were administered the MPA Supervisor Survey (see Appendix B) in spring 2019. Supervisors received an initial email inviting them to complete the online survey and two follow-up emails reminding them to complete the survey. In cases where multiple participants had the same supervisor, the supervisors were asked to complete only one survey and to think *in general* about all of the participants when answering survey items.[2,3]

Analysis and Reporting
For closed-ended survey items, we report the number and percentage of respondents selecting each response option.[4] For the open-ended items, CAREI evaluators independently analyzed the responses and came to agreement on common themes that emerged; responses that fit into multiple themes were coded as such. Quotations are presented in italics (omitted text is represented by ellipses). In some instances, we have made small edits to quotations in order to improve readability but without changing the intent of the respondent. Finally, references to "him"/"her" ("she"/"he") are used interchangeably throughout the report and are not linked to respondent identities.

Results

MPA Participant Survey
The MPA Participant Survey addressed participants' gained knowledge in the areas covered by the MPA curriculum. The information provided in this section covers respondents' current roles in their districts and data tables showing survey results for all three cohorts combined. Given that most items on the survey pertain to school-level leaders, we present results for only school-level respondents in Tables 2–9. Results for individuals in both school-level and district-level positions are included in Table 10 for a select number of items that pertain to district-level practices. Cohort-specific results are attached as Appendix C for Brainerd/Staples, Appendix D for Fergus Falls, and Appendix E for the Twin Cities.

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[2] Supervisors from Staples, Fergus Falls, and Twin Cities completed surveys for 1-3 participants. And, in one case, the same person completed a separate survey for two participants because they were from two distinct charter schools.
[3] The Brainerd school district had 19 school-level participants in the MPA with the same supervisor. One survey across 19 participants would not provide useful data. Thus, 12 surveys were completed by the supervisor (one for each site with MPA participants) which covered between 1 to 4 participants per site.
[4]Categories with a dash (-) indicate that 0% of respondents selected this option. Due to rounding, cumulative percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

Current position. MPA participants' survey results show that the majority of respondents held school-level positions (88%, *n*=81), which included principals, assistant principals, and other school leaders (see Table 1). A small number of respondents (5%, *n*=5) served at the district-level (i.e., superintendent, assistant superintendent, district departmental directors), and 7% (*n*=6) reported serving in roles that were neither at the school- or district-level.

Table 1. *Current Position*

	Brainerd/Staples		Fergus Falls		Twin Cities		Overall	
	n	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
School-level Positions	**30**	**83%**	**26**	**90%**	**25**	**93%**	**81**	**88%**
Principal / Charter School Executive Director	24	67%	21	72%	15	56%	60	65%
Assistant Principal	5	14%	3	10%	9	33%	17	19%
Other School-Level Leaders[a]	1	3%	2	7%	1	4%	4	4%
District-level Positions	**4**	**11%**	**-**	**-**	**1**	**4%**	**5**	**5%**
Superintendent	-	-	-	-	1	4%	1	1%
Assistant Superintendent	1	3%	-	-	-	-	1	1%
Department Director	3	8%	-	-	-	-	3	3%
Other[b]	**2**	**6%**	**3**	**10%**	**1**	**4%**	**6**	**7%**
Total	**36**	**100%**	**29**	**100%**	**27**	**100%**	**92**	**100%**

[a]"Other School-Level Leaders" includes positions listed by respondents such as Dean of Students, Director of Educational Programming, and Director of Athletics.
[b]"Other" includes consultancy positions, state-level roles, or positions at independent education organizations.

School-level respondents' perceptions of their expertise. The 81 school-level respondents from the three cohorts were asked to rate their level of expertise in seven areas *before* and *after* their participation, using a scale of *basic, moderate, good,* or *highly developed* (see Table 2). Overall, the percentage of respondents who rated themselves as *good* or *highly developed* increased in all areas from pre- to post-program completion. The areas showing the greatest percentage point change in respondents selecting *good* or *highly developed* from pre- to post-program were *generating enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school* (item d; 47 percentage point change from 38% to 85% *good/highly developed*) and *developing teacher leaders* (item b; 46 percentage point change from 34% to 80% *good/highly developed*). The two items with the greatest change in respondents indicating that they are *highly developed* included *solving problems systematically* (item g; 17 percentage point change from 5% to 22% *highly developed*) and *developing teacher leaders* (item b; 16 percentage point change from 6% to 22%). Finally, the area of expertise with the greatest number of principals indicating they had increased their expertise beyond a *basic* level was *motivating teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices* (item c; a 28 percentage point change from 32% to 4% *basic*).

School-level respondents' perceptions of their work. Using a scale of *strongly disagree, disagree, agree,* or *strongly agree,* respondents were asked to rate aspects of their instructional leadership; how they define and use standards; and their practices related to school vision, structures, and management (see Tables 3–5). Respondents were also asked to indicate the frequency with which they conducted a range of practices related to their interactions with teachers and use of research (see Table 6), as well as their community engagement, data use, and peer observations (see Table 7).

Table 2. *Self-Reported Level of Expertise*

	Pre/ Post	n	Basic	Moderate	Good	Highly developed
a. Developing teamwork among teachers	Pre	79	13%	46%	37%	5%
	Post	79	-	19%	71%	10%
b. Developing teacher leaders	Pre	79	14%	52%	28%	6%
	Post	79	4%	16%	58%	22%
c. Motivating teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices	Pre	79	32%	44%	22%	3%
	Post	79	4%	33%	56%	8%
d. Generating enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school	Pre	79	15%	47%	33%	5%
	Post	79	-	15%	72%	13%
e. Analyzing and interpreting student assessment data	Pre	79	6%	44%	46%	4%
	Post	79	1%	23%	65%	11%
f. Using student achievement data to help make decisions	Pre	79	9%	42%	46%	4%
	Post	79	3%	13%	68%	16%
g. Solving problems systematically by examining the whole picture, rather than isolated parts	Pre	79	18%	42%	35%	5%
	Post	79	1%	19%	58%	22%

MPA participants *strongly agreed* that they improved their instructional leadership skills in all categories pre- to post-program participation (see Table 3). The three skills with the greatest reported changes included *encouraging and supporting innovative improvement practices* (item e; 46 percentage point change from 10% to 56% *strongly agree*), *insisting that the way to improve student learning is through improving instruction* (item b; 45 percentage point change from 9% to 54% *strongly agree*), and *understanding the seminal research on "how people learn"* (item f; 40 percentage point change from 1% to 41% *strongly agree*). Similarly, the percentage of respondents selecting *disagree* or *strongly disagree* for the two items related to how people learn (items f and g) decreased by 76 and 58 percentage points from pre- to post-program, respectively, indicating a positive shift in opinions about their understanding of the seminal research on how people learn (i.e., for item f there was a 76 percentage point change from 80% to 4% *disagree/strongly disagree* and, for item g, a 58 percentage point change from 88% to 30% *disagree/strongly disagree*).

Table 3. *Self-Reported Instructional Leadership Skills*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I monitor the effectiveness of instructional practice in the school.	Pre	80	3%	20%	74%	4%
	Post	80	1%	13%	59%	28%
b. I insist that the way to improve student learning is through improvement of instructional practices.	Pre	80	3%	15%	74%	9%
	Post	80	-	5%	41%	54%
c. I challenge teachers to try innovative evidence-based instructional approaches.	Pre	80	-	34%	61%	5%
	Post	80	-	8%	51%	41%
d. I am able to motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices.	Pre	80	5%	45%	48%	3%
	Post	80	-	11%	71%	18%
e. I encourage and support innovative improvement practices such as coaching, modeling, observing practice, and providing feedback.	Pre	79	-	13%	77%	10%
	Post	79		1%	43%	56%
f. I understand the seminal research on "how people learn."	Pre	80	24%	56%	19%	1%
	Post	80	1%	3%	55%	41%
g. I ensure that my staff understands the seminal research on how people learn to better instruct students in their classrooms.	Pre	80	24%	64%	13%	-
	Post	80	1%	29%	57%	13%

Participants' level of agreement increased from pre- to post-program in all areas pertaining to defining and using standards and setting expectations for teachers (see Table 4). The area with the greatest change for respondents who selected *agree* or *strongly agree* was to the statement, *"I am comfortable defining for my teachers what constitutes effective standards for instructional practice"* (item a; 40 percentage point change from 53% to 93% *agree/strongly agree*). This was also the item with the greatest change in respondents selecting *strongly agree* (a 35 percentage point change from 5% pre-program to 40% post-program), followed by *"I convey to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards"* (item e; 30 percentage point change from 5% to 35% *strongly agree*).

Table 4. *Perceptions of Defining and Using Standards*

	Pre/ Post	*n*	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I am comfortable defining for my teachers what constitutes effective standards for instructional practice.	Pre	80	1%	46%	48%	5%
	Post	80	-	8%	53%	40%
b. I expect teachers to design lessons by working backward from the standards and assessments.	Pre	80	3%	33%	59%	6%
	Post	80	3%	8%	59%	31%
c. I ensure that the school has a standards-based instructional system that is aligned with high performance standards.	Pre	80	5%	31%	59%	5%
	Post	80	1%	13%	60%	26%
d. I am clear in my expectation that teachers will regularly meet to assess student work against the standards.	Pre	80	3%	55%	39%	4%
	Post	80	3%	24%	43%	31%
e. I convey to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards.	Pre	80	5%	40%	50%	5%
	Post	80	-	13%	53%	35%

Respondents were next asked to self-report on eight practices related to the school vision, structures, and management (see Table 5). Overall, the percentage of respondents who *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they conducted each area of practice increased in all areas from pre- to post-program. The statement with the greatest change in respondents selecting *agree* or *strongly agree* from pre- to post-program was *"I discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision"* (item d; 57 percentage point change from 29% to 86% *agree/strongly agree*). This was followed by *"I have strategies to use in order to buffer teachers from distractions to their instruction"* (item h; 35 percentage point change from 37% to 72% *agree/strongly agree*) and *"In my school, I have institutionalized processes that ensure that the professional development system is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards"* (item g; 34 percentage point change from 39% to 73%).The item with the greatest change in respondents indicating that they *strongly agree* that they conduct the designated practice was *"I make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student results"* (item f; 30 percentage point change from 3% to 33% *strongly agree*). However, slightly more respondents post-program *strongly disagreed* that they have an effective data management system (item b; 5 percentage point change from 5% to 10% *strongly disagree*).

Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they conducted 11 practices related to teacher interactions (including discussions with teachers, observations, or modeling) or their use of research *before* and *after* their participation, using a scale of *never, seldom*, *sometimes,* or *regularly* (see Table 6). Overall, the number of respondents who conducted each practice *sometimes* or *regularly* increased in all areas from pre- to post-program. The most notable change in respondents selecting *sometimes* or *regularly* related to *using research in decision-making* (item k; 46 percentage point change from 48% to 94% *sometimes/regularly*). The area with the greatest change in respondents indicating that they conduct the practice *regularly* was in *discussing instructional issues with teachers* (item a; 44 percentage point change from 19% to 63% *regularly*). Finally, the greatest decrease in the number of principals who indicated that they *never* conduct the designated practice was in the area of *modeling instructional strategies for teachers* (item e; 8 percentage point change from 13% to 5% *never*).

Table 5. *Self-Reported Practices Related to School Vision, Structures, and Management*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I have established a clear vision for my school.	Pre	80	8%	46%	41%	5%
	Post	80	5%	31%	46%	18%
b. I have established an effective data management system to collect student performance data continuously throughout the year.	Pre	80	5%	49%	41%	5%
	Post	80	10%	25%	53%	13%
c. I ensure that our school's safety nets and interventions are successful in getting struggling students back on track.	Pre	80	3%	41%	50%	6%
	Post	79	3%	24%	57%	16%
d. I discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision.	Pre	80	13%	59%	28%	1%
	Post	80	-	14%	66%	20%
e. I search widely to benchmark our school's performance and identify strategies that have enabled high-performing schools to sustain improvement.	Pre	80	10%	60%	29%	1%
	Post	80	1%	44%	39%	16%
f. I make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student results.	Pre	80	1%	33%	64%	3%
	Post	80	1%	11%	55%	33%
g. In my school, I have institutionalized processes that ensure that the professional development system is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.	Pre	80	4%	57%	34%	5%
	Post	80	3%	25%	53%	20%
h. I have strategies to use in order to buffer teachers from distractions to their instruction.	Pre	80	11%	53%	34%	3%
	Post	80	3%	25%	57%	15%

Table 6. *Self-Reported Frequency of Interaction with Teachers and Use of Research*

How often do you…	Pre/ Post	n	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly
a. Discuss instructional issues with your teachers?	Pre	79	1%	11%	68%	19%
	Post	79	-	3%	34%	63%
b. Discuss equity issues with your teachers?	Pre	79	10%	46%	38%	6%
	Post	79	3%	15%	49%	33%
c. Visit classrooms to briefly observe instruction?	Pre	79	3%	19%	53%	25%
	Post	79	-	6%	39%	54%
d. Watch an entire lesson when observing classroom instruction?	Pre	79	5%	15%	48%	32%
	Post	79	-	10%	42%	48%
e. Model instructional strategies for teachers?	Pre	79	13%	51%	33%	4%
	Post	79	5%	38%	43%	14%
f. Give teachers specific ideas for how to improve their instruction?	Pre	79	1%	15%	65%	19%
	Post	79	-	4%	51%	46%
g. Ask teachers about their use of data in instructional decision-making?	Pre	79	5%	27%	53%	15%
	Post	79	-	10%	38%	52%
h. Attend teacher professional learning community meetings?	Pre	79	6%	33%	42%	19%
	Post	79	1%	15%	41%	43%
i. Provide or locate resources to help staff improve their teaching?	Pre	79	1%	25%	53%	20%
	Post	79	-	6%	41%	53%
j. Made judgements about teacher performance based on student-level data?	Pre	79	5%	24%	61%	10%
	Post	79	1%	10%	59%	29%
k. Use research evidence in your own decision making?	Pre	79	6%	46%	38%	10%
	Post	79	-	6%	41%	53%

The area with the greatest change from pre- to post-program in responses related to community engagement, data use, and peer observations was for *the practice of relying on systematically collected evaluation data to inform decision making* (item b; 20 percentage point change from 10% to 30% *monthly/more than once a month*); this was driven by a change from 9% to 24% of respondents who indicated that they do this *monthly* (See Table 7). Another notable area of change in practice is in the frequency that *teachers observed each other's classrooms* (item c); while 30% of principals indicated that this happened *several times a year* prior to their participation in the MPA, 49% indicated that this was happening *several times a year* post-participation, a change of 19 percentage points.

Table 7. *Self-Reported Frequency of Community Engagement, Data Use, and Peer Observations*

How often do…	Pre/ Post	*n*	Annually	Several times/yr	Monthly	More than once a month
a. You communicate to the community your commitment to the achievement of high performance standards by all students?	Pre	78	56%	36%	6%	1%
	Post	78	33%	49%	13%	5%
b. You rely on systematically collected evaluation data about your school in decision making?	Pre	77	42%	48%	9%	1%
	Post	78	18%	51%	24%	6%
c. Teachers observe each other's classrooms?	Pre	77	68%	30%	1%	1%
	Post	78	44%	49%	4%	4%

School-level respondents' perceptions of their teachers' practices. Respondents were asked to share their perceptions of six teacher practices *before* and *after* their own participation in the program, using a scale of *strongly disagree, disagree, agree*, or *strongly agree* (see Table 8). Overall, the percentage of respondents who *strongly agreed* that these practices were taking place increased in all areas from pre- to post-program participation. The two areas with the greatest change in respondents selecting *agree* or *strongly agree* from pre- to post-program included "*Teachers in this school have ongoing conversations among themselves about instructional practices*" (item d; 29 percentage point change from 50% to 79% *agree/strongly agree*) and *"Teachers in this school view problems as issues to be solved, not as barriers to action"* (item f; 23 percentage point change from 37% to 60%). The two items with the greatest change in respondents indicating that they *strongly agreed* the practices were taking place included *teachers having a collective responsibility for student learning* (item b; 16 percentage point change from 4% to 20% *strongly agree*) and, as above, *teachers having ongoing conversations about instructional practices* (item d; 14 percentage point change from 5% to 19% *strongly agree*). The number of principals who *strongly disagreed* that their *teachers viewed problems as issues to be solved rather than barriers to action* decreased from 14% to 4% (item f; a 10 percentage point change).

Table 8. *Perceptions of Teacher Practices*

Teachers in this school…	Pre/ Post	*n*	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Are able to accurately monitor the progress of their students.	Pre	80	3%	31%	56%	10%
	Post	80	4%	23%	57%	16%
b. Have a sense of collective responsibility for student learning.	Pre	80	4%	33%	60%	4%
	Post	80	1%	23%	56%	20%
c. Have the knowledge and skills they need to improve student learning.	Pre	80	1%	34%	60%	5%
	Post	80	-	25%	63%	13%
d. Have ongoing conversations among themselves about instructional practices.	Pre	80	9%	41%	45%	5%
	Post	80	3%	19%	60%	19%
e. Prepare all students to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.	Pre	79	4%	33%	59%	4%
	Post	79	1%	32%	58%	9%
f. View problems as issues to be solved, not as barriers to action.	Pre	79	14%	49%	34%	3%
	Post	80	4%	36%	46%	14%

School-level respondents' perceptions of their schools. Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions of seven school-level practices *before* and *after* their own participation in the program; an additional item related to parental expectations for students to attend post-secondary education (see Table 9). Overall, the percentage of respondents who *strongly agreed* that these seven school-level practices were taking place increased in all areas from pre- to post-program participation. The area with the greatest change in respondents selecting *agree* or *strongly agree* from pre- to post-program was _"Team leadership at all levels focuses on the guidance, direction, and support of sustained improvement in instructional practice and student learning"_ (item g; 27 percentage point change from 38% to 65% *agree/strongly agree*). The two items with the greatest change in respondents indicating that they *strongly agreed* that these practices were taking place include _"Administrators and teachers collectively plan who will provide leadership for initiatives"_ (item d; 17 percentage point change from 8% to 25% *strongly agree*) and _"Our school improvement plan drives teachers' professional development"_ (item c; 15 percentage point change from 8% to 23% *strongly agree*). There was a small but positive 7 percentage point change from pre- to post-participation in the number of respondents who *strongly agreed* that most parents in their school _"expect their children to go on to some sort of post-secondary education"_ (item h; from 11% to 18%).

Table 9. *Perceptions of School-Level Practices*

	Pre/ Post	*n*	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. We provide an aligned curriculum for students across the grades.	Pre	80	4%	39%	50%	8%
	Post	80	6%	21%	54%	19%
b. There is a strong commitment in this school to a common set of shared goals.	Pre	80	3%	49%	39%	10%
	Post	80	4%	31%	46%	19%
c. Our school improvement plan drives teachers' professional development.	Pre	80	4%	46%	43%	8%
	Post	80	3%	24%	51%	23%
d. Administrators and teachers collectively plan who will provide leadership for initiatives.	Pre	80	8%	38%	48%	8%
	Post	80	3%	19%	54%	25%
e. The schedule allows for adequate embedded time for collaborative teacher planning.	Pre	80	11%	30%	44%	15%
	Post	80	9%	20%	51%	20%
f. We have a range of differentiated safety nets available at the individual student level.	Pre	80	8%	50%	40%	3%
	Post	80	6%	34%	51%	9%
g. Team leadership at all levels focuses on the guidance, direction, and support of sustained improvement in instructional practice and student learning.	Pre	80	6%	56%	33%	5%
	Post	80	-	35%	50%	15%
h. Most of the parents of students in this school expect their children to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.	Pre	80	5%	23%	61%	11%
	Post	80	1%	20%	61%	18%

Respondents' perceptions of their districts. The last set of items asked respondents to consider 11 items pertaining to district-level practices *before* and *after* their own participation in the program, using a scale of *strongly disagree, disagree, agree*, or *strongly agree* (see Table 10). Recall that the results for these items include respondents in both school- and district-level positions (*n*=86). These items represented the greatest variability in responses compared to prior items asked on the survey, with 7 items increasing in the number of respondents *agreeing* or *strongly agreeing* that the practice was taking place, 1 item remaining unchanged, and 3 items decreasing in the number of respondents *agreeing* or *strongly agreeing* that the practice was taking place in their districts.

The area with the greatest change in respondents selecting *agree* or *strongly agree* from pre- to post-program was _"Principals participate in ongoing high-quality professional development"_ (item i; 34 percentage point change from 42% to 76% *agree/strongly agree*). This change was driven by a large shift in respondents selecting *strongly agree* post-program, changing from 6% to 38%. The next item with the greatest change in respondents

indicating that they *strongly agreed* practices were taking place was *"Instructional leadership is a key component of our principal evaluation system"* (item b; 29 percentage point change from 11% to 40% *strongly agree*).

Table 10. *Perceptions of District-Level Practices*

	Pre/ Post	*n*	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. District staff help to ensure that our schools offer an aligned curriculum.	Pre	85	-	25%	65%	11%
	Post	85	-	14%	67%	19%
b. Instructional leadership is a key component of our principal evaluation system.	Pre	84	-	23%	67%	11%
	Post	83	4%	23%	34%	40%
c. District leaders often discuss instructional issues with school leadership teams.	Pre	84	4%	50%	42%	5%
	Post	84	10%	31%	43%	17%
d. Our district offers a range of differentiated safety nets or interventions available at the individual student level.	Pre	85	9%	34%	47%	9%
	Post	85	11%	32%	48%	9%
e. Our district has strategies to support principals and teachers in preparing students for college or other post-secondary education beyond high school.	Pre	85	1%	25%	68%	6%
	Post	85	2%	27%	64%	7%
f. District administrators model high levels of professional practice.	Pre	85	-	13%	76%	11%
	Post	85	4%	13%	54%	29%
g. Our district culture is one in which all teachers and administrators feel responsible for working together to improve student achievement.	Pre	85	6%	38%	47%	9%
	Post	85	4%	35%	38%	24%
h. Our district has institutionalized processes that ensure the professional development program is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.	Pre	85	4%	47%	47%	2%
	Post	81	6%	46%	40%	9%
i. Principals participate in ongoing high-quality professional development.	Pre	85	7%	51%	36%	6%
	Post	85	9%	15%	38%	38%
j. Teaching is aligned to rigorous performance standards.	Pre	85	4%	38%	51%	8%
	Post	83	7%	28%	51%	14%
k. Our district supports equity-related initiatives.	Pre	85	4%	44%	46%	7%
	Post	85	11%	28%	52%	9%

Respondents' feedback about their experience. Participants were asked to respond to the following open-ended questions regarding their thoughts about the MPA, each of which we review further below:

1. What is your greatest "take-away" from your participation in the MPA? (Please name /discuss only one.)
2. What content (unit or otherwise) did you find to be the most helpful to you, and why?
3. What are you doing differently now, if anything, in your school as a result of this experience? How do you see it impacting teachers and/or students?

Comments from all survey respondents (school-level, district-level, and those in other positions) were included in our analysis, which we categorized into three broad leadership themes for reporting purposes. These practices related to strategic leadership, instructional leadership, and transformational leadership, which we define as follows:

> Strategic leadership "is based on long-term planning. It involves establishing and maintaining systems, allocating resources, and communicating vision. Principals need to maintain the focus clearly on the central vision for their school" (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2019).[5]

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[5] See: http://www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Leading-change/Strategic-leadership

Instructional leadership "involves setting clear goals, managing curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, allocating resources and evaluating teachers regularly to promote student learning and growth. Quality of instruction is the top priority for the instructional principal. Instructional leadership is committed to the core business of teaching, learning, and knowledge" (Concordia University-Portland, 2013).[6]

Transformational leadership "in schools is when a leader empowers members of the learning community to improve from within. The transformational leader does not simply run a school, merely keeping it afloat. Instead, leaders seek to make things better through genuine collaboration between the school's members and stakeholders" (Concordia University-Portland, 2018).[7]

Respondents' greatest take-away. First, respondents were asked to share their greatest take-away from the program. Of the respondents who answered this item (*n*=88), the five primary themes that emerged related to strategic leadership practices (*n*=47), instructional leadership practices (*n*=33), networking and resources available through their experience with the MPA (*n*=11), transformational leadership practices (*n*=5), and a greater understanding of their role as a change agent in their school or district (*n*=4). Additionally, one respondent wrote "*everything*" and one respondent provided a suggestion for the program. As a reminder, feedback may have been coded into multiple themes if the respondent discussed multiple take-aways.

Strategic leadership practices. First, the majority of respondents (53%, *n*=47) mentioned an aspect of strategic leadership as the greatest take-away of their participation in the MPA, with a focus on a greater understanding of the importance of using data and research in thinking and planning (*n*=32). For example, several respondents wrote the following:

> *The need to look at data and research when it comes to making decisions as opposed to "gut level" or what I "think" is the right approach to a decision or problem.*

> *My thinking about the change process has transformed and will forever be steeped in research-based evidence and has allowed me to already transform who I am as a principal.*

> *My greatest take-away was the power of using research and data in supporting discussions surrounding any new initiatives, decisions, interventions and supports, etc. While I agree that this should have been a no-brainer, I do not feel like we did this well as a District and it's something that I hope to continue to use as I advocate for my building, in particular.*

> *Using research to support decision-making, to support the teacher learner. It's not about grabbing the next initiative to make change but digging in and understanding what the research says to support a change and make change happen.*

Respondents who mentioned aspects of strategic leadership commented on gaining a new perspective on the importance of keeping the "*big picture*" in mind (*n*=12) and their improved ability to make strategic decisions based on research and data (*n*=9). As a few of these respondents shared:

> *The need to evaluate our overall system for the hidden gaps. This could be curricular with under-representation, achievement gap and lack of reduction, missed opportunities, etc. The greatest "take-away" is becoming a much-improved system-level thinker.*

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[6] See: https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/leaders-link/four-instructional-leadership-skills-principals-need/
[7] See: https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/leaders-link/transformational-leadership-model/

I need to keep my eye on overall improvement and not get stuck in day to day operations of the school.

Learning to analyze initiatives/problems with more deliberation and using more research to support/guide decisions. I have learned to be ok with taking more time to contemplate issues and to ask for more help from colleagues.

Instructional leadership practices. Second, areas of instructional leadership were mentioned as the greatest take-away by 38% of respondents (*n*=33). Of the participants who commented on this area, over 80% (*n*=27) mentioned the MPA's content related to "how people learn" as the greatest take-away, while 18% of respondents (*n*=6) mentioned a new focus on instructional leadership or deeper knowledge in content areas such as math or science. Some of these participants shared the following:

The way people learn has been the central theme that has surfaced during all units and is the measure against anything I have attempted at the building level.

The book "How People Learn" has definitely impacted my own viewpoints on learning and has been foundational for me for the rest of the work we have done in the MPA.

Creating an instructional practice plan with my leadership team. This has created a road map for us to follow and a systematic process for implementation of new initiatives.

Networking and resources. The third area that emerged as a take-away for respondents was related to participants' expanded leadership network and access to resources that were made available through their participation (13%, *n*=11). These respondents focused on connecting with principals and school leaders in other districts (*n*=7) and or the tools or resources provided by MPA facilitators that they can now use in their schools or districts (*n*=2). These respondents described their greatest take-aways as follows:

The level of intense and deep professional learning and collaboration with colleagues.

I learned a lot but I also learned the importance of connecting and networking with my fellow Principals in a meaningful way. Taking time out to connect and talk about student learning was SO INCREDIBLY VALUABLE! We don't often make time to do that.

Having the tools and the research to begin creating a shared mission, vision and strategic plan for our District.

Transformational leadership practices. Fourth, 6% of respondents (*n*=5) wrote that their greatest take-away was their improved transformational leadership skills in that they felt better able to work in a shared leadership model and gather staff perspectives. One person stated, "*I have realized that for my school to make more positive growth in any arena, I need to work with colleagues more and involve them more in the work to institutionalize and ensure implementation with fidelity.*"

New understanding of administrative role. A greater understanding of how the administrator can act as a change agent was considered the greatest take-away for 5% of survey respondents (*n*=4). One person described this by sharing, "*I have a better sense of how important this position is and truly how much power the principal has to shape so much of what is happening in their building.*"

Suggestion. One respondent offered a suggestion related to the MPA presenters and facilitators. This respondent shared the following:

> *The greatest take-away is learning from other peers that have vast experiences in education, as principals! Too often we hear from people who are rooted in research and have "read a lot" about equity, pedagogy, data, instruction, etc., but they have little to no experience as a principal. MPA needs facilitators and leaders who have years of experience, not just as researchers, but as building leaders who have served in diverse schools and experienced difficult times. These are the people MPA should seek out.*

Most helpful content or unit for participants. For the second open-ended question, participants were asked what content (unit or otherwise) they found to be the most helpful, and why. Overall, 85 respondents provided feedback on this item; some identified multiple units that were helpful and some indicated a single area. We present the number of respondents that described each MPA unit as most helpful in Table 11. Responses varied and spanned nearly all units. It is important to note that participants did not always explicitly state which unit was most helpful, but rather they described particular topics or content that they found useful. In these instances, evaluators consulted course syllabi to identify the appropriate unit as best as possible, or consulted with the MPA Director.

Table 11. *MPA Units Participants Found Most Helpful*

Unit	*n*	%
Unit 1: The Educational Challenge	-	-
Unit 2: The Principal as Strategic Thinker	11	13%
Unit 3: Elements of Standards-aligned Instructional Systems	3	4%
Unit 4: Foundations of Effective Learning	22	26%
Unit 5: Leadership in the Instructional Core Part 1: Language Arts and History	8	10%
Unit 6: Leadership in the Instructional Core Part 2: Math and Science	10	12%
Unit 7: Coaching for High Quality Teaching	2	2%
Unit 8: Promoting the Learning Organization	4	5%
Unit 9: Teams for Instructional Leadership	7	8%
Unit 10: Ethical Leadership for Equity	16	19%
Unit 11: Driving and Sustaining Transformation	6	7%
Unit 12: Action Learning Project	1	1%

As we display in Table 11, approximately one-quarter of respondents (26%, *n*=22) indicated that *Unit 4: Foundations of Effective Learning* was the most helpful unit, while 19% of respondents (*n*=16) described content learned as part of *Unit 10: Ethical Leadership for Equity* as most helpful. Some of the feedback from respondents about these two units included:

> *When we discuss how people learn, one the biggest components for me is helping my staff to evaluate the prior knowledge of our students and their cultural biases or background rather than make assumptions that all students come with the same knowledge base. Context has become increasingly important in our discussions.*

> *I keep coming back to How People Learn because it has challenged my thinking about how I work with adults as learners.*

> *I really found the work on how people learn to be helpful. It's provided a good focus for staff evaluations and a lot of the conversations I've had with staff about improvement.*

Foundations for Effective Learning. Learning about how people learn and coming back to how people learn in just about every section. I kept my notecard near at all times and will be moving forward.

Chapter 10 – Equity. That chapter opened my eyes about unconscious white bias. I went back to my building that Monday and changed some practices. I look at leadership through a new lens.

The unit on equity. It made me reflect on all the other units and I still am. I am now scanning practices and looking for sign-posts of inequity. It has forced me to reflect on all we do.

The unit on equity work broadened my view on the need and urgency to prioritize this work. The activity where we put moments in history around the room was so powerful and it was obvious that in education, we have been doing the same thing for over 200 years - and it needs to stop.

Although the majority of respondents identified a particular MPA unit or unit content areas as what was most helpful for them, 9 participants (11%) indicated the information on *Getting Relationships Right* (a presentation by the Search Institute) was most helpful. For example:

The unit on relationships because I believe it's the most important thing we do AND it centers around my ALP [Action Learning Plan] project on adding an Advisory Schedule to our school.

Getting relationships right and driving and sustaining transformation were the most impactful units for me. I think that our school has always done a great job of building relationships and prided itself on that, but I feel that there are some things that we could definitely change that would impact things on a greater level.

Finally, 7 respondents (8%) reported that all the content covered was equally helpful, and 4 respondents (5%) mentioned that they found that making connections with other principals and the facilitators was the most helpful for them. As some participants shared:

There were many units that really shook me to my core and caused me to examine my life as a principal.

I don't think I could pick one [unit]. I can truly say that after 19 years as a principal, this has been the best PD I could have ever imagined. This has changed my leadership vision, and I'm confident I now have the tools to better lead my teachers and school.

What MPA participants are doing differently now. MPA participants were asked what, if anything, they are doing differently in their school as a result of participating in the program. Of the 86 responses to this item, five themes emerged: changes in strategic leadership (n=45); changes in instructional leadership (n=29); changes in transformational leadership (n=21); personal changes such as increased confidence (n=10); and no changes at the time of the survey (n=5). As a reminder, feedback was coded into multiple themes if the respondent discussed multiple things they were doing differently.

Changes in strategic leadership practices. Approximately half of respondents (52%, n=45) mentioned they were doing something related to strategic leadership differently now based on what they had learned in the MPA. The greatest change in this area related to making decisions more strategically (n=28). Other changes related to using a new approach to the change process with their schools (n=12), clarifying their school or

district vision (*n*=11), looking at issues from a systems-level (*n*=8), and asking more questions and being purposeful about asking "why" (*n*=6). Feedback from some of these participants about their changes include:

> *My decisions around professional development and resource allocation are more data based and strategically aligned to the vision.*

> *I'm more strategic and intentional with changes and initiatives. I feel like I'm actually moving things a bit slower with the idea that over the long-term practices and results will be sustained and embedded in our culture.*

> *I have used the Conceptual Framework for Strategic Thinking when problem solving, especially the strategy steps. When I have taken the time to be a strategic thinker, I am more thoughtful, organized and can articulate the decision- making process.*

> *Prior to doing things, I am very purposeful in asking the "why" and making sure those who are a part of the specific process are clear on the "why."*

> *I focus more on the whole picture when assessing our needs and…share what I am seeing for input from staff before jumping into solutions.*

Changes in instructional leadership practices. Approximately one-third of participants (34%, *n*=29) indicated they are now doing something differently related to their instructional leadership. Of these respondents, 69% (*n*=20) reported having more conversations with teachers about instruction and how people learn. Others mentioned providing additional resources to staff (*n*=7) and changing the teacher observation/evaluation process (*n*=5). For example:

> *Having stronger conversations with staff regarding How People Learn and how to improve instructional practice.*

> *When discussing instructional practices or observing classroom teachers, my conversations now include asking questions about how teachers are accessing preconceptions, creating conceptual frameworks, and incorporating opportunities to demonstrate metacognition.*

> *Aligned instructional systems and practices and promoting an organization of learning with a focus on equity are areas where my work will look significantly different. Teachers need to understand what good teaching and student engagement looks like in multiple contexts…It's the responsibilities of administrators to provide guidance and support around that work while maintaining high and supportive expectations for students and teachers.*

> *I am working hard on tying teacher performance to student performance, and creating an evaluation system that involves teacher peers observing each other.*

> *Using research in my feedback, being ok with slowing down and showing up in conversations around decisions much differently. I'm much more thoughtful prior to decision-making. I think by modeling the use of research and sharing it, teachers are more likely to do the same which will directly impact our students.*

Changes in transformational leadership practices. Next, changes in transformational leadership practices were mentioned by 24% of respondents (*n*=21). The changes reported in this category related to creating more distributed leadership and developing leaders within their schools (*n*=13) and improving relationships and engagement with staff and students (*n*=8). As some of these respondents shared:

> *Using teacher leaders to drive the instructional changes knowing they have done their research and are focused on our vision/mission.*

> *I am working on delegating some of those tasks to allow for more opportunity to be focused on instruction. I have been talking more with peers and identifying some leaders that might be a part of a process moving forward as a site leadership team.*

> *Purposefully building shared leadership and modeling during staff meetings and PD.*

Personal changes. Some respondents (*n*=10) felt they had made changes on a more personal level as a result of their participation in the MPA, such as noticing changes in their confidence level, their ability to lead, and their use of time or resources. Respondents shared the following comments:

> *I feel more confident in my own knowledge in regards to educational best practices, and I feel that I have a place to start from when discussing opportunity and change with my team and with the district team.*

> *I am better able to take context into consideration after seeing the different perspectives from participants as well as the wide range of presenters and readings. I feel much more well-rounded instead of relying only on my narrow set of strengths that I had before the MPA. "If all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail." Now I have more tools and a deeper understanding of how/when to use them.*

> *I am more intentional about my daily work.*

> *I felt I gained a wealth of knowledge and learned to utilize my resources much better.*

No changes. Five respondents (*n*=5) indicated that they had not, as of yet, made any specific changes. However, several of these respondents discussed needing more time to process what they had learned in the MPA and then they would be able to create actionable next steps. For example, one respondent commented*, "I am not doing anything differently at present....I need to take some time to review the content and experiences of this program in order to determine my next steps regarding actions."*

MPA Supervisor Survey
This section describes the results of the MPA Supervisor Survey, which was designed to address Evaluation Question 2: "To what extent do the supervisors of MPA participants see a change in participants' knowledge in the areas covered by the MPA curriculum?"

Response rates. Of the 55 supervisors identified by MPA participants from the 2017–19 cohorts, 36 completed a survey between April–May 2019, for a response rate of 65%. This included a response rate of 90% for Brainerd/Staples (*n*=9/10), a response rate of 55% for Fergus Falls (*n*= 11/20), and a response rate of 64% for the Twin Cities (*n*= 16/25). The 36 supervisors represented 71% of MPA participants (*n*=70/98), including 53% of participants from Fergus Falls, 95% from Brainerd/Staples, and 62% from the Twin Cities.

Supervisors of participants from **Staples** (we discuss Brainerd separately, below)**, Fergus Falls**, and the **Twin Cities** were asked to complete only *one* survey, even if they supervised more than one participant; in cases where they supervised more than one participant, they were asked to think *in general* about all of the participants when answering the survey items. Meanwhile, the MPA participants from **Brainerd** had a single supervisor who completed the supervisor surveys. In order to provide more meaningful feedback about the varied MPA participant experiences and impacts, this supervisor completed separate surveys for smaller groups of MPA participants. In Table 12, we present key points regarding survey administration across the cohorts/sites, which resulted in 48 survey completions.

Table 12. *Overview of MPA Supervisor Survey Administration, by Site*

Cohort / District	Number of surveys completed, with explanation	Number of participants reviewed
Staples, Fergus Falls, Twin Cities	**Total survey completions = 36** • Nearly all supervisors (*n*=34/35) completed *1* survey. • One supervisor completed *2* surveys – a separate survey for participants from 2 distinct charter schools.	• On average, supervisors for the **Twin Cities** cohort completed a survey about *1* participant, though this ranged from 1–2. • On average, **Staples** and **Fergus Falls** supervisors completed a survey about *2* participants, though this ranged from 1–3.
Brainerd	**Total survey completions = 12** • One supervisor completed a separate survey for 12 distinct sites.	• On average, the **Brainerd** supervisor completed a survey about *2* participants per site, though this ranged from 1–4.

Supervisors' perceptions of participants' skills and abilities after participating in MPA. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed that participants' improved their leadership skills as a result of participation in the MPA. The majority of respondents (94%) *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that leadership skills have improved while 6% *disagreed* (see Figure 1). No respondents *strongly disagreed* with this item.

| 6.3% | | 60.4% | | 33.3% |

0%   10%   20%   30%   40%   50%   60%   70%   80%   90%   100%

■ Strongly disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly agree
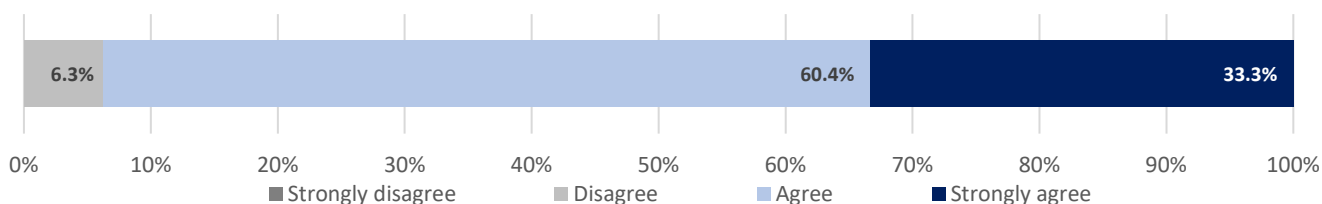
Figure 1. **Level of Agreement that Leadership Skills Improved**

Supervisors' level of agreement with statements pertaining to improvements in MPA participants' skill levels in instructional leadership, transformational leadership, and strategic leadership are discussed in the following sections and shown in Tables 13-15 below.

The supervisors responded to four statements about **instructional leadership skills** using a 4-point scale from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree* (see Table 13). More than 90% of the respondents *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with each statement, and no respondents *strongly disagreed* with any statement. Over 40% of the respondents *strongly agreed* that the participants improved in three areas: *in their "commitment to effort-based theories of learning where all students can learn"* (item a), *in their "ability to ensure that teachers use data to make instructional decisions for students"* (item b), and *in their "ability to identify research and best practices that support instructional improvement"* (item d). Fewer supervisors *strongly agreed* that participants have improved their ability to regularly monitor and analyze a range of student performance data to make judgments about areas of curriculum and instruction that need attention (item c; 24% *strongly agree*).

Table 13. *Supervisors' Perceptions of Changes in Participants' Instructional Leadership Skills*

	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. The participant(s) has improved their commitment to effort-based theories of learning where all students can learn.	47	-	4%	53%	43%
b. The participant(s) has improved their ability to ensure that teachers use data to make instructional decisions for students.	48	-	4%	54%	42%
c. The participant(s) has improved their ability to regularly monitor and analyze a range of student performance data to make judgments about areas of curriculum and instruction that need attention.	46	-	7%	70%	24%
d. The participant(s) has improved their ability to identify research and best practices that support instructional improvement.	47	-	6%	49%	45%

Supervisors were asked to respond to a series of five statements related to participants' **transformational leadership skills** (see Table 14). Supervisors' level of agreement was high with 88% or more of the respondents selecting either *agree* or *strongly agree* for all statements. In particular, nearly all supervisors (96%) either *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their participants have *improved their team-building skills* (item a). No respondent *strongly disagreed* with any of the items.

Table 14. *Supervisors' Perceptions of Changes in Participants' Transformational Leadership Skills*

	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. The participant(s) has improved their team-building skills (e.g., they promote professional learning with staff members, share leadership, support ideas offered by team members).	48	-	4%	69%	27%
b. The participant(s) has improved their ability to motivate teachers or other staff members who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices.	48	-	13%	63%	25%
c. The participant(s) has improved their ability to recognize the individual needs of their staff members and to support them accordingly.	47	-	6%	57%	36%
d. The participant(s) has improved their ability to create a compelling school vision in which all students are held to high expectations.	47	-	9%	51%	40%
e. The participant(s) has improved their ability to listen to community members, advocates, or other stakeholders to inform change within the school.	46	-	9%	61%	30%

Finally, supervisors were asked to consider two statements related to **strategic leadership skills**. The majority of respondents *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that participants' skills had improved in this area as a result of participating in the MPA. The majority of respondents (94%) *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that participants had *"improved their ability to think more systematically about how to improve instruction"* (item a), and 89% *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that participants had *"improved their ability to ensure that adequate resources are prioritized and allocated to the initiatives that will achieve maximum benefit in improving learning for all students"* (item b).

Table 15. *Supervisors' Perceptions of Changes in Participants' Strategic Leadership Skills*

	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. The participant(s) has improved their ability to think more systemically about how to improve instruction.	48	-	6%	40%	54%
b. The participant(s) has improved their ability to ensure that adequate resources are prioritized and allocated to the initiatives that will achieve maximum benefit in improving learning for all students.	47	-	11%	68%	21%

Perceived impact of participants' participation on the district. Supervisors were asked to share how participation in the MPA by one or more of their leaders (MPA participants) has impacted either their district or specific schools in their district. Of the 48 surveys, 38 included feedback, with the majority (95%, *n*=36) describing ways in which their district or schools have benefitted. The impacts of the MPA that supervisors described included changes in leaders' strategic leadership practices (*n*=21), changes in instructional leadership practices (*n*=19), changes in transformational leadership practices (*n*=14), participants' expanded leadership network (*n*=14), and other impacts (*n*=3). In addition, 5 supervisors described how their MPA leaders' participation in the program either presented some challenges for the district (*n*=4) or leaders did not make any significant changes as a result of their participation (*n*=1). The areas of greatest impact that supervisors' described regarding the MPA are provided in the sections below.

Changes in strategic leadership practices. The majority of supervisors (55%, *n*=21/38) mentioned an aspect of strategic leadership as the area of greatest impact as a result of their leader(s) participating in the MPA. Many supervisors explained that their leaders are better able to create strategic plans with the "*big picture*" in mind, create missions and visions for their schools, and take a more systematic approach to student learning (*n*=13). Some supervisors shared the following:

> *The participation of our Assistant Principal has resulted in a leader who is more strategic, focused, data based, and visionary in her leadership. Her participation has resulted in improved systems, structures, teacher coaching, and outcomes for our students. The improvement in her leadership has been dramatic as a result of participating in the MPA.*

> *[Name] has made significant growth through his time in the MPA. He actively took the learning on, and it has changed how he develops, implements, and leads change in his building.*

> *[Name] was assigned as the Principal at the beginning of this past school year. She was able to start the year with staff and her leadership team to create a clear mission, vision, and set strategic direction for the school. [Name]'s staff have stated that they feel there are higher standards and that they are clearly articulated to them.*

> *It helped him to establish the vision and strategic direction with his leadership team.*

Supervisors who mentioned aspects of strategic leadership also commented on their leaders' improved ability to use or understand research and data (*n*=13) or that the leaders have shared research or other information they learned from the MPA with their staff (*n*=5). As a few of these respondents shared:

> *He is more thoughtful and research-based in his decision making.*

> *She stretched herself to read more research and to grow in her understanding of data and continuous improvement for a district, verses a grade level.*

As she has presented to the school board, she has utilized research, systematic approaches and research, to develop compelling arguments of why technology is important for our curriculum and student learning.

She is developing her skills to systematically review data to improve student outcomes. Oh - and her 4 year graduation rate doubled this past year…Yes - she took this learning and GREW for our kids.

[Name]'s biggest area of growth from the MPA was to find research and evidence based practices to create a plan to initiate a change within a system. She is able to look more systematically at her data and bring her staff back to the "why" things are needed and imperative through student data.

[Name] was able to connect practices to research which helped staff see the need to change. Readings around equity were shared with the building leadership team which provided an on-ramp for the team to talk about racial bias and equity. There were pieces of research around assessment and instruction which resulted in looking at different criteria as we identify students for support courses.

Changes in instructional leadership practices. Impacts in the area of instructional leadership were mentioned by 50% of supervisors (*n*=19). Approximately half of these supervisors (*n*=9) described how MPA participants improved their work with teacher evaluations, coaching, or observations. For example:

[Name] also expressed that she is having more meaningful conversations with her staff during their evaluations around student data and that she is developing her skills to systematically review data to improve student outcomes.

Her coaching of teachers has significantly strengthened.

Other supervisors described changes in instructional leadership practices, including how participants were now more student-centered (including prioritizing student needs when creating staff schedules) and focused on equity (*n*=3); more confident in their curricular decisions (*n*=1); or bringing new ideas to the district (*n*=1). As some of these supervisors explained:

Two of the principals that participated in MPA have used the knowledge gained in their work to significantly change their staffing schedules in order to better meet the needs of all students.

The principal attending the MPA has become more equity focused in his work. He has made it a priority in his school and in his personal professional growth.

She is motivated to ensure that all of her decisions are student-centered and not adult-centered.

She appears more confident in her curricular decisions that she makes.

Our principal has brought very interesting and innovative ideas she's been exposed to back to the district. One example is implementing standards-based report cards in the elementary.

Changes in transformational leadership practices. A third area of impact described by 37% of supervisors (*n*=14) related to changes in transformational leadership practices as a result of the school leaders participating in the MPA. Half of these respondents (*n*=7) explained that the participants they supervise have improved in their ability to connect or engage with their teachers and staff. This is being accomplished through improved relationships, a better understanding of how adults learn, and personalized feedback to respond to individual teacher needs. For example, some supervisors wrote the following:

> *This experience really allowed her to grow as we are integrating technology into our curriculum. She was able to have discussions with teachers around how students learn, and how technology is integrated into the curriculum for student learning, not just experience or exposure.*

> *The MPA did help [Name] have more difficult conversations with staff regarding student learning.*

> *[Name] has grown in her abilities to adapt to individual teacher needs.*

> *We are a district moving towards Personalized Learning, so the experience of the MPA on our principals' ability to move their respective staff members forward has been invaluable.*

An additional change noted by supervisors in the area of transformational leadership is that leaders who participated in the MPA have been able to foster a culture of collaboration in their schools (*n*=5). As these supervisors explained:

> *Our leader has learned how to facilitate change in their particular staff in a collaborative manner.*

> *Current participant has been able to utilize developed skills to turn a new assignment in a negative school into a newly energized forward looking school who is again focusing on student growth and not on their personal worries.*

> *Our school was impacted by how our school administrator created a culture of collaboration. This improved because it was intentional and our teachers had a better plan to improve their communication with one another.*

> *[Name]…has grown significantly through the MPA. She has been thoughtful in her reflection and she has brought her teacher leadership team alongside her in her learning journey….Her staff are right on board - this experience is felt and observed when you enter her building.*

Expanded or improved leadership network. Another area of impact also noted by 37% of supervisors (*n*=14) was that school leaders who participated in the MPA have been able to expand or improve their leadership network. More specifically, some participants were described as being better connected with other principals and school leaders who participated in the MPA, especially those beyond their school (*n*=10). For example:

> *Our principal made several great connections to other educational leaders in the state and has benefitted from the networking opportunities.*

The interactions and exchanges conversationally with colleagues enrolled in the MPA and in similar roles and positions doing their best to provide exemplary educational opportunities for students always has merit and creates lasting relationships.

The cohort has been an exceptional experience for them to discuss and interact with other school leaders that extend beyond our building.

In a very small school like ours where the principal serves in many capacities, I think the networking with other principals was one of the most critical features of the cohort.

Supervisors also explained that their participants are now better connected with other MPA participants from within their own school or district, in turn fostering greater collaboration or a common language (*n*=5). As one supervisor wrote:

In addition, having been through the MPA myself as a principal…allows us to have a common language and focus regarding the components of effective instructional leadership.

Other impacts. Three supervisors described additional impacts that did not necessarily fall into the four broad themes described above. These supervisors explained that their school leaders who attended the MPA now have a renewed passion or sense of purpose to their work (*n*=2), that they are confident the participant will be a leader in their district work moving forward (*n*=1), and that the leader has shifted from being a "*manager*" to a "*leader*" (*n*=1). For example, some of these supervisors wrote the following:

My two principals have made the "mental shift" from manager to leader. I believe the combination of formal material in combination of peer interaction has provided a unique opportunity for deep reflection and renewed purpose.

It has been fun to watch her find a new passion after [many] years as a principal.

Participation in MPA presented challenges or led to minimal changes. While the majority of respondents described positive changes as a result of their leaders participating in the MPA, 5 supervisors described how the leaders' participation in the MPA either presented some challenges for the district (*n*=4) or that the leaders' did not make any significant changes as a result of their participation (*n*=1). The challenge noted by these supervisors was that the time commitment required of leaders placed a burden on the system and teachers, at times. As these supervisors explained:

I think the time commitment is rather extensive and creates perhaps too many days out of the office for the administrator to perform regular, routine, and on-going on-site leadership duties.

The time out of the building is difficult on a small organization.

In addition, one respondent explained that she did not perceive that the MPA participants she supervised were making significant changes in their leadership or their plans as a result of their participation, acknowledging that more was expected from them given their time away from their schools.

Variation across participants. Respondents were also given the opportunity to explain if they believed that the impact of participating in the MPA varied across the participants they supervise. The following observations were described by a few supervisors: MPA participants who fully engaged in the program appeared to gain more from participation; some participants approached the work slightly differently from one another

(e.g., an "*action-oriented*" approach vs. a "*more systemic*" approach); the program appeared to have the greatest impact on the newest/least experienced principals; differences were observed between the district's MPA participants and *non-MPA participants*; or the impact varied across participants, but this was likely due to factors "larger" than the MPA program, such as relationships and personalities.

Likelihood of future leadership team participation. Respondents were asked to indicate the likelihood that they would encourage additional members of their leadership team to participate in the MPA in the future, using a 4-point scale from *very unlikely* to *very likely*. Of the 45 respondents who answered this item, 62% were *likely* or *very likely* to encourage others to participate, although 4% were *unlikely* and 33% were *very unlikely* to do so (see Figure 2). We note that the *very unlikely* responses may not necessarily reflect dissatisfaction with the program but perhaps that many of the leaders in some districts have already participated in the MPA; however, we offer this as speculation given that this finding does not align with the otherwise positive ratings to the rest of the survey.
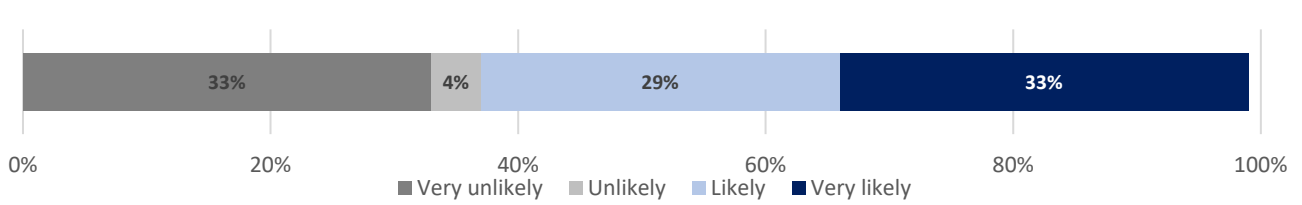
Figure 2. **Likelihood of Encouraging Others to Participate in the MPA**

Additional feedback. Finally, respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional comments that they may have about the MPA, and the feedback was largely positive. Supervisors generally shared that the program and/or the content of the program was highly valuable and that the program benefitted from good leadership and facilitators. In addition, one supervisor shared that it would have further strengthened the participants' work to have the full district team and superintendent attend the MPA, but acknowledged that this probably would not have been feasible. Finally, a suggestion offered by one respondent was to incorporate a module on teacher evaluations, including how principals can respond to teachers who are not viewed as "*effective*." Examples of feedback from supervisors about these themes includes the following:

> *You might consider creating a stronger focus on teacher evaluation. Specifically, the data show a strong trend of principals not being able to terminate ineffective teachers - and we're scared to talk about that as professional leaders. The premise that 99% of our teachers are performing at a proficient level is ridiculous in any profession much less one as complex as teaching - yet it seems no principals know how to tackle that....With your research capabilities I think this could be a key learning "module" for principals.*

> *I believe very strongly in the MPA. Without a doubt, it is the most comprehensive principal leadership professional development available for our administrative leaders across the State of Minnesota. I have watched our administrative leadership team really grow as a result of their learning through MPA.*

> *The content, the collaborative learning, and having to complete an action learning project have made a tremendous impact for our administrators.*

> *I believe this program should be a requirement of all principals!*

Summary

The purpose of this evaluation was to describe and understand the MPA as a resource and training program for school leaders. The evaluation was designed to provide information regarding the extent to which participants gained knowledge and skills, or changed their behaviors, from the beginning of the program to the end of the program in the areas covered by the MPA curriculum. To do this, we administered a retrospective pre/post survey to MPA participants. We also surveyed participants' supervisors to ask them about changes they were seeing in participants' knowledge, skills, or behaviors since participating in the MPA.

Across both surveys, MPA participants and supervisors shared that participating in the program helped leaders to improve their strategic leadership skills, as well as their practices as instructional leaders and transformational leaders. In addition, survey results indicate that MPA participants valued the network they developed and the resources made available through their participation. An area that emerged as a challenge in some cases was that principals' time out of their buildings to participate in the MPA could be a burden on schools and districts, especially in rural or smaller districts.

In summary, the results from the MPA Participant and Supervisor Surveys were overwhelmingly positive and described a pattern of change for the participants in the key areas identified by the MPA curriculum. One supervisor respondent stated that, "*This program is a necessity for all principals in the state. It provides a common understanding of best educational practices, educational research, and a support network among administrative colleagues.*"

Appendix A: MPA Participant Survey[8]

Dear MN Principals Academy Participant,

Now that you are nearing the end of your participation in the MN Principals Academy, we are asking you to complete this survey as part of the CAREI evaluation. This online survey should take no more than 15-20 minutes to complete. The survey questions are designed to obtain your perspectives and attitudes about a variety of topics that you have covered as a participant in the MN Principals Academy. This survey also includes several open-ended questions that will allow you to provide valuable insight and feedback.

By completing the survey, you are indicating that you understand that your participation is voluntary, that you may skip any survey question that you choose, and that you agree to participate in this evaluation. Your responses will be combined with the responses of others and no names will be used in any reporting. Your decision about whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the MN Principals Academy or the University of Minnesota.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

If you have questions about the survey or the evaluation, please feel free to contact Jane Fields (jfields@umn.edu) or Kristin Peterson (kapeters@umn.edu).

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1. **What is your current position?**

   ○ Superintendent
   ○ Principal
   ○ Assistant Principal
   ○ District-Level Department Director
   ○ Education Director
   ○ Dean of Students
   ○ Other (please specify) _____

In the sections that follow, you will be asked to compare your district, your work, or your teachers **prior to** and **after** your participation in the MN Principals Academy. For each item:

 1. Rate your level of agreement to that item **prior to** your participation in the MN Principals Academy in the **"Before the program"** column.
2. Rate your level of agreement to that item **after** your participation in the MN Principals Academy in the **"After the program"** column.

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[8] The survey items presented here do not always follow in the same order as presented in the report above.

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2. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about your district?**

	Before the program				**After** the Program			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. District staff help to ensure that our schools offer an aligned curriculum.								
b. Instructional leadership is a key component of our principal evaluation system.								
c. District leaders often discuss instructional issues with school leadership teams.								
d. Our district offers a range of differentiated safety nets or interventions available at the individual student level.								
e. Our district has strategies to support principals and teachers in preparing students for college or other post-secondary education beyond high school.								
f. District administrators model high levels of professional practice.								

3. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about your district?**

	Before the program				**After** the Program			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Our district culture is one in which all teachers and administrators feel responsible for working together to improve student achievement.								
b. Our district has institutionalized processes that ensure the professional development program is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.								
c. Principals participate in ongoing high-quality professional development.								
d. Teaching is aligned to rigorous performance standards.								
e. Our district supports equity-related initiatives.								

4. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your work?**

	Before the program				After the Program			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I have established a clear vision for my school.								
b. I have established an effective data management system to collect student performance data continuously throughout the year.								
c. I am comfortable defining for my teachers what constitutes effective standards for instructional practice.								
d. I expect teachers to design lessons by working backward from the standards and assessments.								
e. I ensure that our school's safety nets and interventions are successful in getting struggling students back on track.								
f. I understand the seminal research on "how people learn."								

5. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your work?**

	Before the program				After the Program			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision.								
b. I ensure that the school has a standards-based instructional system that is aligned with high performance standards.								
c. I am clear in my expectation that teachers will regularly meet to assess student work against the standards.								
d. I convey to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards.								
e. I ensure that my staff understands the seminal research on how people learn to better instruct students in their classrooms.								

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements as they relate to your work?

	Before the program				After the Program			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I monitor the effectiveness of instructional practice in the school.								
b. I insist that the way to improve student learning is through improvement of instructional practices.								
c. I challenge teachers to try innovative evidence-based instructional approaches.								
d. I am able to motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices.								
e. I search widely to benchmark our school's performance and identify strategies that have enabled high-performing schools to sustain improvement.								
f. I encourage and support innovative improvement practices such as coaching, modeling, observing practice, and providing feedback.								
g. I make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student results.								
h. In my school, I have institutionalized processes that ensure that the professional development system is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.								
i. I have strategies to use in order to buffer teachers from distractions to their instruction.								

7. **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your school?**

	Before the program				**After** the Program			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. We provide an aligned curriculum for students across the grades.								
b. There is a strong commitment in this school to a common set of shared goals.								
c. Our school improvement plan drives teachers' professional development.								
d. Administrators and teachers collectively plan who will provide leadership for initiatives.								
e. The schedule provides adequate time for collaborative teacher planning.								
f. We have a range of differentiated safety nets available at the individual student level.								
g. Most of the parents of students in this school expect their children to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.								
h. Team leadership at all levels focuses on the guidance, direction, and support of sustained improvement in instructional practice and student learning.								

8. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that teachers in your school...**

	Before the program				**After** the Program			
	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Are able to accurately monitor the progress of their students?								
b. Have a sense of collective responsibility for student learning?								
c. Have the knowledge and skills they need to improve student learning?								
d. Have ongoing conversations among themselves about instructional practices?								
e. Prepare all students to go on to some sort of post-secondary education?								
f. View problems as issues to be solved, not as barriers to action?								

9. **How often do you...**

	Before the program				After the Program			
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly
a. Discuss instructional issues with your teachers?								
b. Discuss equity issues with your teachers?								
c. Visit classrooms to briefly observe instruction?								
d. Watch an entire lesson when observing classroom instruction?								
e. Model instructional strategies for teachers?								
f. Give teachers specific ideas for how to improve their instruction?								
g. Ask teachers about their use of data in instructional decision-making?								

10. **How often do you...**

	Before the program				After the Program			
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly
a. Make judgments about teacher performance based on student-level data?								
b. Use research evidence in your decision-making?								
c. Attend teacher professional learning community meetings?								
d. Provide or locate resources to help staff improve their teaching?								

11. **How often do...**

	Before the program				After the Program			
	More than once a month	Monthly	Several times a year	Annually	More than once a month	Monthly	Several times a year	Annually
a. You communicate to the community your commitment to the achievement of high performance standards by all students?								
b. You rely on systematically collected evaluation data about your school in decision making?								
c. Teachers observe each other's classrooms?								

12. **Please rate your own level of expertise in the following areas.**

	Before the program				After the Program			
	Basic	Moderate	Good	Highly Developed	Basic	Moderate	Good	Highly Developed
a. Developing teamwork among teachers								
b. Developing teacher leaders								
c. Motivating teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices								
d. Generating enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school								
e. Analyzing and interpreting student assessment data								
f. Using student achievement data to help make decisions								
g. Solving problems systematically by examining the whole picture, rather than isolated parts								

13**. What is your greatest "take-away" from your participation in the Minnesota Principals Academy? (Please name/discuss only one.)**

14. **What content (unit or otherwise) did you find to be the most helpful to you, and why?**

15. **What are you doing differently now, if anything, in your school as a result of this experience? How do you see it impacting teachers and/or students?**

Appendix B: MPA Supervisor Survey[9]

Dear District Leader,

Now that one or more of the people who you supervise are nearing the end of their participation in the Minnesota Principals Academy, we are asking you to complete this survey as part of the University of Minnesota's Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement's evaluation of the program. This online survey should take no more than 10-15 minutes to complete. The survey questions are designed to gather feedback about the ways in which the Minnesota Principals Academy has impacted the participant(s) and your district. Your responses will remain confidential, and results will be reported in such a way that no individual respondent will be identifiable.

By completing the survey, you are indicating that you understand that your participation is voluntary, that you may skip any survey question that you choose, and that you agree to participate in this evaluation. Your decision about whether or not to participate will not affect your relationship with the Minnesota Principals Academy or the University of Minnesota.

If you have questions about the survey or the evaluation, please feel free to contact Jane Fields (jfields@umn.edu) or Kristin Peterson (kapeters@umn.edu).

Thank you for your time!

When completing this survey, please think about the person in your school/district who you currently supervise and who is currently participating in the Minnesota Principals Academy. If multiple people who you supervise in your school or district are participating, please think in general about all of them when answering these survey items.

1. **As a result of participating in the MPA, the participant(s) has improved their…**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Leadership skills.				
b. Team-building skills (e.g., he/she promotes professional learning with staff members, shares leadership, supports ideas offered by team members).				
c. Ability to motivate teachers or other staff members who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices.				
d. Commitment to effort-based theories of learning where all students can learn.				
e. Ability to think more systemically about how to improve instruction.				
f. Ability to recognize the individual needs of their staff members and to support them accordingly.				

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[9] The survey items presented here do not always follow in the same order as presented in the report above.

2. **As a result of participating in the MPA, the participant(s) has improved their ability to...**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
a. Ensure that adequate resources are prioritized and allocated to the initiatives that will achieve maximum benefit in improving learning for all students.				
b. Ensure that teachers use data to make instructional decisions for students.				
c. Create a compelling school vision in which all students are held to high expectations.				
d. Regularly monitor and analyze a range of student performance data to make judgments about areas of curriculum and instruction that need attention.				
e. Identify research and best practices that support instructional improvement.				
f. Listen to community members, advocates, or other stakeholders to inform change within the school.				

3. **In what ways, if any, has participation in the MPA by one or more of your leaders impacted your district or specific schools in your district? (Please provide specific examples, if possible).**

4. **If the impact of participating in the MPA varied across the participants you supervise, please feel free to elaborate how it was different in the space below.**

5. **In the future, what is the likelihood that you would encourage additional members of your leadership team to participate in the MPA?**
- ○ Very unlikely
- ○ Unlikely
- ○ Likely
- ○ Very likely

6. **Please provide any other comments you may have about the MPA.**

Appendix C: MPA Participant Survey Results – Brainerd/Staples Cohort

Table C1. *Brainerd/Staples: Current Position*

	n	**%**
School-level Positions	**30**	**83%**
Principal / Charter School Executive Director	24	67%
Assistant Principal	5	14%
Other School Leaders	1	3%
District-level Positions	**4**	**11%**
Superintendent	-	-
Assistant Superintendent	1	3%
Department Director	3	8%
Other	**2**	**6%**
Total	**36**	**100%**

Table C2. *Brainerd/Staples: Self-Reported Level of Expertise*

	Pre/Post	*n*	Basic	Moderate	Good	Highly developed
a. Developing teamwork among teachers	Pre	29	3%	45%	45%	7%
	Post	29	-	28%	62%	10%
b. Developing teacher leaders	Pre	29	10%	52%	31%	7%
	Post	29	3%	17%	59%	21%
c. Motivating teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices	Pre	29	28%	41%	24%	7%
	Post	29	7%	28%	55%	10%
d. Generating enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school	Pre	29	7%	38%	48%	7%
	Post	29	-	14%	72%	14%
e. Analyzing and interpreting student assessment data	Pre	29	3%	52%	41%	3%
	Post	29	3%	31%	59%	7%
f. Using student achievement data to help make decisions	Pre	29	3%	55%	38%	3%
	Post	29	7%	14%	66%	14%
g. Solving problems systematically by examining the whole picture, rather than isolated parts	Pre	29	3%	41%	48%	7%
	Post	29	3%	14%	69%	14%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table C3. *Brainerd/Staples: Self-Reported Instructional Leadership Skills*

	Pre/Post	*n*	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I monitor the effectiveness of instructional practice in the school.	Pre	30	-	23%	73%	3%
	Post	30	3%	23%	63%	10%
b. I insist that the way to improve student learning is through improvement of instructional practices.	Pre	30	3%	7%	87%	3%
	Post	30	-	7%	57%	37%
c. I challenge teachers to try innovative evidence-based instructional approaches.	Pre	30	-	23%	73%	3%
	Post	30	-	13%	50%	37%
d. I am able to motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices.	Pre	30	-	40%	53%	7%
	Post	30	-	17%	70%	13%
e. I encourage and support innovative improvement practices such as coaching, modeling, observing practice, and providing feedback.	Pre	30	-	7%	80%	13%
	Post	30	-	3%	50%	47%
f. I understand the seminal research on "how people learn."	Pre	30	27%	47%	27%	-
	Post	30	3%	7%	57%	33%
g. I ensure that my staff understands the seminal research on how people learn to better instruct students in their classrooms.	Pre	30	30%	53%	17%	0%
	Post	30	-	30%	63%	7%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table C4. *Brainerd/Staples: Perceptions of Defining and Using Standards*

	Pre/Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I am comfortable defining for my teachers what constitutes effective standards for instructional practice.	Pre	30	-	43%	53%	3%
	Post	30	-	13%	57%	30%
b. I expect teachers to design lessons by working backward from the standards and assessments.	Pre	30	3%	37%	60%	-
	Post	30	-	13%	63%	23%
c. I ensure that the school has a standards-based instructional system that is aligned with high performance standards.	Pre	30	7%	40%	50%	3%
	Post	30	3%	17%	60%	20%
d. I am clear in my expectation that teachers will regularly meet to assess student work against the standards.	Pre	30	3%	50%	47%	-
	Post	30	3%	30%	53%	13%
e. I convey to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards.	Pre	30	10%	27%	63%	-
	Post	30	-	17%	60%	23%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table C5. *Brainerd/Staples: Self-Reported Practices Related to School Vision, Structures, and Management*

	Pre/Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I have established a clear vision for my school.	Pre	30	17%	43%	40%	-
	Post	30	13%	37%	40%	10%
b. I have established an effective data management system to collect student performance data continuously throughout the year.	Pre	30	7%	40%	47%	7%
	Post	30	17%	20%	57%	7%
c. I ensure that our school's safety nets and interventions are successful in getting struggling students back on track.	Pre	30	3%	37%	53%	7%
	Post	30	3%	30%	53%	13%
d. I discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision.	Pre	30	10%	50%	40%	-
	Post	30	-	27%	53%	20%
e. I search widely to benchmark our school's performance and identify strategies that have enabled high-performing schools to sustain improvement.	Pre	30	3%	73%	23%	-
	Post	30	3%	43%	50%	3%
f. I make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student results.	Pre	30	-	23%	77%	-
	Post	30	3%	13%	67%	17%
g. In my school, I have institutionalized processes that ensure that the professional development system is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.	Pre	30	-	63%	33%	3%
	Post	30	3%	37%	43%	17%
h. I have strategies to use in order to buffer teachers from distractions to their instruction.	Pre	30	3%	50%	43%	3%
	Post	30	-	37%	50%	13%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table C6. *Brainerd/Staples: Self-Reported Frequency of Interaction with Teachers and Use of Research*

How often do you…	Pre/ Post	n	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly
a. Discuss instructional issues with your teachers?	Pre	29	-	7%	76%	17%
	Post	29	-	7%	45%	48%
b. Discuss equity issues with your teachers?	Pre	29	10%	41%	45%	3%
	Post	29	-	28%	48%	24%
c. Visit classrooms to briefly observe instruction?	Pre	29	3%	14%	52%	31%
	Post	29	-	17%	34%	48%
d. Watch an entire lesson when observing classroom instruction?	Pre	29	-	14%	55%	31%
	Post	29	-	10%	45%	45%
e. Model instructional strategies for teachers?	Pre	29	17%	48%	34%	-
	Post	29	10%	34%	52%	3%
f. Give teachers specific ideas for how to improve their instruction?	Pre	29	-	10%	69%	21%
	Post	29	-	3%	69%	28%
g. Ask teachers about their use of data in instructional decision-making?	Pre	29	3%	17%	62%	17%
	Post	29	-	3%	45%	52%
h. Attend teacher professional learning community meetings?	Pre	29	10%	31%	48%	10%
	Post	29	3%	24%	38%	34%
i. Provide or locate resources to help staff improve their teaching?	Pre	29	0%	24%	69%	7%
	Post	29	0%	3%	55%	41%
j. Made judgements about teacher performance based on student-level data?	Pre	29	3%	24%	62%	10%
	Post	29	0%	14%	62%	24%
k. Use research evidence in your own decision making?	Pre	29	0%	41%	41%	17%
	Post	29	0%	3%	41%	55%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table C7. *Brainerd/Staples: Self-Reported Frequency of Community Engagement, Data Use, and Peer Observations*

How often do …	Pre/ Post	n	Annually	Several times/yr	Monthly	More than once a month
a. You communicate to the community your commitment to the achievement of high performance standards by all students?	Pre	28	50%	39%	11%	-
	Post	28	36%	43%	21%	-
b. You rely on systematically collected evaluation data about your school in decision making?	Pre	28	36%	61%	-	4%
	Post	28	25%	57%	14%	4%
c. Teachers observe each other's classrooms?	Pre	28	57%	39%	4%	-
	Post	28	39%	50%	4%	7%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table C8. *Brainerd/Staples: Perceptions of Teacher Practices*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Teachers in this school are able to accurately monitor the progress of their students.	Pre	30	-	27%	63%	10%
	Post	30	10%	20%	60%	10%
b. Teachers in this school have a sense of collective responsibility for student learning.	Pre	30	-	33%	63%	3%
	Post	30	-	37%	53%	10%
c. Teachers in this school have the knowledge and skills they need to improve student learning.	Pre	30	-	30%	63%	7%
	Post	30	-	37%	63%	-
d. Teachers in this school have ongoing conversations among themselves about instructional practices.	Pre	30	3%	40%	57%	-
	Post	30	7%	17%	67%	10%
e. Teachers in this school prepare all students to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.	Pre	29	7%	38%	55%	-
	Post	29	-	48%	52%	-
f. Teachers in this school view problems as issues to be solved, not as barriers to action.	Pre	29	14%	45%	38%	3%
	Post	30	7%	40%	47%	7%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table C9. *Brainerd/Staples: Perceptions of School-Level Practices*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. We provide an aligned curriculum for students across the grades.	Pre	30	-	47%	50%	3%
	Post	30	7%	17%	70%	7%
b. There is a strong commitment in this school to a common set of shared goals.	Pre	30	-	47%	47%	7%
	Post	30	10%	23%	60%	7%
c. Our school improvement plan drives teachers' professional development.	Pre	30	3%	40%	53%	3%
	Post	30	3%	27%	47%	23%
d. Administrators and teachers collectively plan who will provide leadership for initiatives.	Pre	30	3%	40%	53%	3%
	Post	30	3%	20%	63%	13%
e. The schedule allows for adequate embedded time for collaborative teacher planning.	Pre	30	10%	33%	40%	17%
	Post	30	10%	30%	47%	13%
f. We have a range of differentiated safety nets available at the individual student level.	Pre	30	3%	47%	50%	-
	Post	30	7%	30%	53%	10%
g. Team leadership at all levels focuses on the guidance, direction, and support of sustained improvement in instructional practice and student learning.	Pre	30	-	57%	40%	3%
	Post	30	-	37%	57%	7%
h. Most parents of students in this school expect their children to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.	Pre	30	7%	37%	53%	3%
	Post	30	-	33%	63%	3%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table C10. *Brainerd/Staples: Perceptions of District-Level Practices*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. District staff help to ensure that our schools offer an aligned curriculum.	Pre	34	-	21%	71%	9%
	Post	34	-	3%	79%	18%
b. Instructional leadership is a key component of our principal evaluation system.	Pre	34	-	29%	59%	12%
	Post	34	3%	24%	35%	38%
c. District leaders often discuss instructional issues with school leadership teams.	Pre	33	3%	45%	48%	3%
	Post	33	6%	36%	39%	18%
d. Our district offers a range of differentiated safety nets or interventions available at the individual student level.	Pre	34	12%	50%	26%	12%
	Post	34	18%	35%	35%	12%
e. Our district has strategies to support principals and teachers in preparing students for college or other post-secondary education beyond high school.	Pre	34	-	21%	76%	3%
	Post	34	3%	26%	71%	0%
f. District administrators model high levels of professional practice.	Pre	34	-	12%	79%	9%
	Post	34	-	15%	62%	24%
g. Our district culture is one in which all teachers and administrators feel responsible for working together to improve student achievement.	Pre	34	3%	50%	41%	6%
	Post	34	6%	35%	41%	18%
h. Our district has institutionalized processes that ensure the PD program is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.	Pre	34	-	56%	44%	-
	Post	32	3%	56%	38%	3%
i. Principals participate in ongoing high-quality professional development.	Pre	34	9%	53%	35%	3%
	Post	34	3%	9%	56%	32%
j. Teaching is aligned to rigorous performance standards.	Pre	34	3%	44%	50%	3%
	Post	34	12%	26%	53%	9%
k. Our district supports equity-related initiatives.	Pre	34	-	47%	53%	-
	Post	34	15%	32%	44%	9%

Note. Results include both school-level and district-level respondents.

Appendix D: MPA Participant Survey Results – Fergus Falls Cohort

Table D1. *Fergus Falls: Current Position*

	n	%
School-level Positions	**26**	**90%**
Principal / Charter School Executive Director	21	72%
Assistant Principal	3	10%
Other School Leaders	2	7%
District-level Positions	**-**	**-**
Superintendent	-	-
Assistant Superintendent	-	-
Department Director	-	-
Other	**3**	**10%**
Total	**29**	**100%**

Table D2. *Fergus Falls: Self-Reported Level of Expertise*

	Pre/ Post	n	Basic	Moderate	Good	Highly developed
a. Developing teamwork among teachers	Pre	25	8%	56%	32%	4%
	Post	25	-	8%	84%	8%
b. Developing teacher leaders	Pre	25	16%	60%	24%	-
	Post	25	8%	12%	72%	8%
c. Motivating teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices	Pre	25	40%	44%	16%	-
	Post	25	-	48%	44%	8%
d. Generating enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school	Pre	25	20%	52%	24%	4%
	Post	25	-	28%	68%	4%
e. Analyzing and interpreting student assessment data	Pre	25	12%	40%	48%	-
	Post	25	-	20%	80%	-
f. Using student achievement data to help make decisions	Pre	25	12%	48%	40%	-
	Post	25	-	12%	84%	4%
g. Solving problems systematically by examining the whole picture, rather than isolated parts	Pre	25	40%	44%	16%	-
	Post	25	-	36%	60%	4%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table D3. *Fergus Falls: Self-Reported Instructional Leadership Skills*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I monitor the effectiveness of instructional practice in the school.	Pre	25	4%	20%	72%	4%
	Post	25	-	8%	60%	32%
b. I insist that the way to improve student learning is through improvement of instructional practices.	Pre	25	-	24%	68%	8%
	Post	25	-	4%	48%	48%
c. I challenge teachers to try innovative evidence-based instructional approaches.	Pre	25	-	52%	40%	8%
	Post	25	-	8%	48%	44%
d. I am able to motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices.	Pre	25	8%	48%	44%	-
	Post	25	-	16%	64%	20%
e. I encourage and support innovative improvement practices such as coaching, modeling, observing practice, and providing feedback.	Pre	25	-	16%	76%	8%
	Post	25	-	-	44%	56%
f. I understand the seminal research on "how people learn."	Pre	25	20%	64%	12%	4%
	Post	25	-	-	68%	32%
g. I ensure that my staff understands the seminal research on how people learn to better instruct students in their classrooms.	Pre	25	16%	76%	8%	-
	Post	25	-	28%	60%	12%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table D4. *Fergus Falls: Perceptions of Defining and Using Standards*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I am comfortable defining for my teachers what constitutes effective standards for instructional practice.	Pre	25	-	60%	32%	8%
	Post	25	-	4%	52%	44%
b. I expect teachers to design lessons by working backward from the standards and assessments.	Pre	25	-	36%	56%	8%
	Post	25	-	4%	68%	28%
c. I ensure that the school has a standards-based instructional system that is aligned with high performance standards.	Pre	25	4%	20%	72%	4%
	Post	25	-	12%	68%	20%
d. I am clear in my expectation that teachers will regularly meet to assess student work against the standards.	Pre	25	-	64%	28%	8%
	Post	25	-	24%	44%	32%
e. I convey to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards.	Pre	25	-	56%	32%	12%
	Post	25	-	12%	48%	40%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table D5. *Fergus Falls: Self-Reported Practices Related to School Vision, Structures, and Management*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I have established a clear vision for my school.	Pre	25	-	52%	44%	4%
	Post	25	-	28%	48%	24%
b. I have established an effective data management system to collect student performance data continuously throughout the year.	Pre	25	4%	60%	36%	-
	Post	25	8%	20%	64%	8%
c. I ensure that our school's safety nets and interventions are successful in getting struggling students back on track.	Pre	25	-	48%	48%	4%
	Post	24	-	21%	63%	17%
d. I discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision.	Pre	25	12%	60%	24%	4%
	Post	25	-	8%	72%	20%
e. I search widely to benchmark our school's performance and identify strategies that have enabled high-performing schools to sustain improvement.	Pre	25	16%	60%	20%	4%
	Post	25	-	56%	28%	16%
f. I make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student results.	Pre	25	-	44%	48%	8%
	Post	25	-	16%	52%	32%
g. In my school, I have institutionalized processes that ensure that the professional development system is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.	Pre	25	8%	48%	36%	8%
	Post	25	4%	8%	64%	24%
h. I have strategies to use in order to buffer teachers from distractions to their instruction.	Pre	25	16%	56%	24%	4%
	Post	25	4%	20%	68%	8%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table D6. *Fergus Falls: Self-Reported Frequency of Interaction with Teachers and Use of Research*

How often do you…	Pre/Post	n	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly
a. Discuss instructional issues with your teachers?	Pre	25	4%	12%	64%	20%
	Post	25	-	-	36%	64%
b. Discuss equity issues with your teachers?	Pre	25	4%	68%	24%	4%
	Post	25	4%	12%	60%	24%
c. Visit classrooms to briefly observe instruction?	Pre	25	-	28%	48%	24%
	Post	25	-	-	48%	52%
d. Watch an entire lesson when observing classroom instruction?	Pre	25	8%	12%	48%	32%
	Post	25	-	8%	44%	48%
e. Model instructional strategies for teachers?	Pre	25	8%	52%	36%	4%
	Post	25	4%	44%	32%	20%
f. Give teachers specific ideas for how to improve their instruction?	Pre	25	4%	12%	64%	20%
	Post	25	-	4%	44%	52%
g. Ask teachers about their use of data in instructional decision-making?	Pre	25	8%	32%	48%	12%
	Post	25	-	16%	44%	40%
h. Attend teacher professional learning community meetings?	Pre	25	4%	32%	36%	28%
	Post	25	-	16%	36%	48%
i. Provide or locate resources to help staff improve their teaching?	Pre	25	4%	24%	32%	40%
	Post	25	-	8%	28%	64%
j. Made judgements about teacher performance based on student-level data?	Pre	25	8%	28%	48%	16%
	Post	25	-	12%	60%	28%
k. Use research evidence in your own decision making?	Pre	25	12%	48%	28%	12%
	Post	25	-	16%	48%	36%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table D7. *Fergus Falls: Self-Reported Frequency of Community Engagement, Data Use, and Peer Observations*

	Pre/Post	n	Annually	Several times/yr	Monthly	More than once a month
a. You communicate to the community your commitment to the achievement of high performance standards by all students?	Pre	25	56%	40%	4%	-
	Post	25	28%	60%	8%	4%
b. You rely on systematically collected evaluation data about your school in decision making?	Pre	25	40%	52%	8%	-
	Post	25	16%	56%	28%	-
c. Teachers observe each other's classrooms?	Pre	25	72%	28%	-	-
	Post	25	40%	60%	-	-

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table D8. *Fergus Falls: Perceptions of Teacher Practices*

	Pre/Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Teachers in this school are able to accurately monitor the progress of their students.	Pre	25	4%	24%	60%	12%
	Post	25	-	16%	60%	24%
b. Teachers in this school have a sense of collective responsibility for student learning.	Pre	25	-	32%	64%	4%
	Post	25	-	4%	76%	20%
c. Teachers in this school have the knowledge and skills they need to improve student learning.	Pre	25	-	44%	52%	4%
	Post	25	-	16%	68%	16%
d. Teachers in this school have ongoing conversations among themselves about instructional practices.	Pre	25	12%	40%	40%	8%
	Post	25	-	16%	68%	16%
e. Teachers in this school prepare all students to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.	Pre	25	4%	28%	68%	-
	Post	25	-	20%	76%	4%
f. Teachers in this school view problems as issues to be solved, not as barriers to action.	Pre	25	12%	56%	32%	-
	Post	25	-	28%	60%	12%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table D9. *Fergus Falls: Perceptions of School-Level Practices*

	Pre/Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. We provide an aligned curriculum for students across the grades.	Pre	25	-	32%	56%	12%
	Post	25	4%	28%	40%	28%
b. There is a strong commitment in this school to a common set of shared goals.	Pre	25	-	60%	28%	12%
	Post	25	-	28%	52%	20%
c. Our school improvement plan drives teachers' professional development.	Pre	25	4%	60%	28%	8%
	Post	25	4%	24%	52%	20%
d. Administrators and teachers collectively plan who will provide leadership for initiatives.	Pre	25	8%	44%	40%	8%
	Post	25	-	20%	60%	20%
e. The schedule allows for adequate embedded time for collaborative teacher planning.	Pre	25	12%	28%	48%	12%
	Post	25	8%	16%	56%	20%
f. We have a range of differentiated safety nets available at the individual student level.	Pre	25	8%	48%	40%	4%
	Post	25	12%	24%	60%	4%
g. Team leadership at all levels focuses on the guidance, direction, and support of sustained improvement in instructional practice and student learning.	Pre	25	12%	64%	20%	4%
	Post	25	-	36%	52%	12%
h. Most parents of students in this school expect their children to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.	Pre	25	-	20%	80%	-
	Post	25	-	20%	76%	4%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table D10. *Fergus Falls: Perceptions of District-Level Practices*

	Pre/Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. District staff help to ensure that our schools offer an aligned curriculum.	Pre	25	-	20%	64%	16%
	Post	25	-	16%	68%	16%
b. Instructional leadership is a key component of our principal evaluation system.	Pre	25	-	12%	76%	12%
	Post	25	8%	12%	40%	40%
c. District leaders often discuss instructional issues with school leadership teams.	Pre	25	4%	64%	28%	4%
	Post	25	8%	32%	52%	8%
d. Our district offers a range of differentiated safety nets or interventions available at the individual student level.	Pre	25	4%	24%	64%	8%
	Post	25	8%	20%	64%	8%
e. Our district has strategies to support principals and teachers in preparing students for college or other post-secondary education beyond high school.	Pre	25	-	28%	64%	8%
	Post	25	4%	24%	60%	12%
f. District administrators model high levels of professional practice.	Pre	25	-	20%	72%	8%
	Post	25	4%	16%	44%	36%
g. Our district culture is one in which all teachers and administrators feel responsible for working together to improve student achievement.	Pre	25	4%	36%	52%	8%
	Post	25	-	32%	52%	16%
h. Our district has institutionalized processes that ensure the PD program is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.	Pre	25	-	48%	52%	-
	Post	23	4%	35%	52%	9%
i. Principals participate in ongoing high-quality professional development.	Pre	25	-	60%	28%	12%
	Post	25	4%	24%	20%	52%
j. Teaching is aligned to rigorous performance standards.	Pre	25	-	44%	48%	8%
	Post	24	4%	21%	58%	17%
k. Our district supports equity-related initiatives.	Pre	25	-	52%	40%	8%
	Post	25	-	32%	64%	4%

Note. Results include both school-level and district-level respondents.

Appendix E: MPA Participant Survey Results – Twin Cities Cohort

Table E1. *Twin Cities: Current Position*

	n	%
School-level Positions	**25**	**93%**
Principal / Charter School Executive Director	15	56%
Assistant Principal	9	33%
Other School Leaders	1	4%
District-level Positions	**1**	**4%**
Superintendent	1	4%
Assistant Superintendent	-	-
Department Director	-	-
Other	**1**	**4%**
Total	**27**	**100%**

Table E2. *Twin Cities: Self-Reported Level of Expertise*

	Pre/ Post	n	Basic	Moderate	Good	Highly developed
a. Developing teamwork among teachers	Pre	25	28%	36%	32%	4%
	Post	25	-	20%	68%	12%
b. Developing teacher leaders	Pre	25	16%	44%	28%	12%
	Post	25	-	20%	44%	36%
c. Motivating teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices	Pre	25	28%	48%	24%	-
	Post	25	4%	24%	68%	4%
d. Generating enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school	Pre	25	20%	52%	24%	4%
	Post	25	-	4%	76%	20%
e. Analyzing and interpreting student assessment data	Pre	25	4%	40%	48%	8%
	Post	25	-	16%	56%	28%
f. Using student achievement data to help make decisions	Pre	25	12%	20%	60%	8%
	Post	25	-	12%	56%	32%
g. Solving problems systematically by examining the whole picture, rather than isolated parts	Pre	25	12%	40%	40%	8%
	Post	25	-	8%	44%	48%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table E3. *Twin Cities: Self-Reported Instructional Leadership Skills*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I monitor the effectiveness of instructional practice in the school.	Pre	25	4%	16%	76%	4%
	Post	25	-	4%	52%	44%
b. I insist that the way to improve student learning is through improvement of instructional practices.	Pre	25	4%	16%	64%	16%
	Post	25	-	4%	16%	80%
c. I challenge teachers to try innovative evidence-based instructional approaches.	Pre	25	-	28%	68%	4%
	Post	25	-	-	56%	44%
d. I am able to motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices.	Pre	25	8%	48%	44%	-
	Post	25	-	-	80%	20%
e. I encourage and support innovative improvement practices such as coaching, modeling, observing practice, and providing feedback.	Pre	24	-	17%	75%	8%
	Post	24	-	-	33%	67%
f. I understand the seminal research on "how people learn."	Pre	25	24%	60%	16%	-
	Post	25	-	-	40%	60%
g. I ensure that my staff understands the seminal research on how people learn to better instruct students in their classrooms.	Pre	25	24%	64%	12%	-
	Post	25	4%	28%	48%	20%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table E4. *Twin Cities: Perceptions of Defining and Using Standards*

	Pre/ Post	*n*	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I am comfortable defining for my teachers what constitutes effective standards for instructional practice.	Pre	25	4%	36%	56%	4%
	Post	25	-	4%	48%	48%
b. I expect teachers to design lessons by working backward from the standards and assessments.	Pre	25	4%	24%	60%	12%
	Post	25	8%	4%	44%	44%
c. I ensure that the school has a standards-based instructional system that is aligned with high performance standards.	Pre	25	4%	32%	56%	8%
	Post	25	-	8%	52%	40%
d. I am clear in my expectation that teachers will regularly meet to assess student work against the standards.	Pre	25	4%	52%	40%	4%
	Post	25	4%	16%	28%	52%
e. I convey to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards.	Pre	25	4%	40%	52%	4%
	Post	25	-	8%	48%	44%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table E5. *Twin Cities: Self-Reported Practices Related to School Vision, Structures, and Management*

	Pre/ Post	*n*	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I have established a clear vision for my school.	Pre	25	4%	44%	40%	12%
	Post	25	-	28%	52%	20%
b. I have established an effective data management system to collect student performance data continuously throughout the year.	Pre	25	4%	48%	40%	8%
	Post	25	4%	36%	36%	24%
c. I ensure that our school's safety nets and interventions are successful in getting struggling students back on track.	Pre	25	4%	40%	48%	8%
	Post	25	4%	20%	56%	20%
d. I discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision.	Pre	25	16%	68%	16%	-
	Post	25	-	4%	76%	20%
e. I search widely to benchmark our school's performance and identify strategies that have enabled high-performing schools to sustain improvement.	Pre	25	12%	44%	44%	-
	Post	25	-	32%	36%	32%
f. I make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student results.	Pre	25	4%	32%	64%	-
	Post	25	-	4%	44%	52%
g. In my school, I have institutionalized processes that ensure that the professional development system is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.	Pre	25	4%	60%	32%	4%
	Post	25	-	28%	52%	20%
h. I have strategies to use in order to buffer teachers from distractions to their instruction.	Pre	25	16%	52%	32%	-
	Post	25	4%	16%	56%	24%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table E6. *Twin Cities: Self-Reported Frequency of Interaction with Teachers and Use of Research*

How often do you…	Pre/Post	n	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Regularly
a. Discuss instructional issues with your teachers?	Pre	25	-	16%	64%	20%
	Post	25	-	-	20%	80%
b. Discuss equity issues with your teachers?	Pre	25	16%	28%	44%	12%
	Post	25	4%	4%	40%	52%
c. Visit classrooms to briefly observe instruction?	Pre	25	4%	16%	60%	20%
	Post	25	-	-	36%	64%
d. Watch an entire lesson when observing classroom instruction?	Pre	25	8%	20%	40%	32%
	Post	25	-	12%	36%	52%
e. Model instructional strategies for teachers?	Pre	25	12%	52%	28%	8%
	Post	25	-	36%	44%	20%
f. Give teachers specific ideas for how to improve their instruction?	Pre	25	-	24%	60%	16%
	Post	25	-	4%	36%	60%
g. Ask teachers about their use of data in instructional decision-making?	Pre	25	4%	32%	48%	16%
	Post	25	-	12%	24%	64%
h. Attend teacher professional learning community meetings?	Pre	25	4%	36%	40%	20%
	Post	25	-	4%	48%	48%
i. Provide or locate resources to help staff improve their teaching?	Pre	25	-	28%	56%	16%
	Post	25	-	8%	36%	56%
j. Made judgements about teacher performance based on student-level data?	Pre	25	4%	20%	72%	4%
	Post	25	4%	4%	56%	36%
k. Use research evidence in your own decision making?	Pre	25	8%	48%	44%	-
	Post	25	-	-	32%	68%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table E7. *Twin Cities: Self-Reported Frequency of Community Engagement, Data Use, and Peer Observations*

	Pre/Post	n	Annually	Several times/yr	Monthly	More than once a month
a. You communicate to the community your commitment to the achievement of high performance standards by all students?	Pre	25	64%	28%	4%	4%
	Post	25	36%	44%	8%	12%
b. You rely on systematically collected evaluation data about your school in decision making?	Pre	24	50%	29%	21%	-
	Post	25	12%	40%	32%	16%
c. Teachers observe each other's classrooms?	Pre	24	75%	21%	-	4%
	Post	25	52%	36%	8%	4%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table E8. *Twin Cities: Perceptions of Teacher Practices*

	Pre/Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. Teachers in this school are able to accurately monitor the progress of their students.	Pre	25	4%	44%	44%	8%
	Post	25	-	32%	52%	16%
b. Teachers in this school have a sense of collective responsibility for student learning.	Pre	25	12%	32%	52%	4%
	Post	25	4%	24%	40%	32%
c. Teachers in this school have the knowledge and skills they need to improve student learning.	Pre	25	4%	28%	64%	4%
	Post	25	-	20%	56%	24%
d. Teachers in this school have ongoing conversations among themselves about instructional practices.	Pre	25	12%	44%	36%	8%
	Post	25	-	24%	44%	32%
e. Teachers in this school prepare all students to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.	Pre	25	-	32%	56%	12%
	Post	25	4%	24%	48%	24%
f. Teachers in this school view problems as issues to be solved, not as barriers to action.	Pre	25	16%	48%	32%	4%
	Post	25	4%	40%	32%	24%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table E9. *Twin Cities: Perceptions of School-Level Practices*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. We provide an aligned curriculum for students across the grades.	Pre	25	12%	36%	44%	8%
	Post	25	8%	20%	48%	24%
b. There is a strong commitment in this school to a common set of shared goals.	Pre	25	8%	40%	40%	12%
	Post	25	-	44%	24%	32%
c. Our school improvement plan drives teachers' professional development.	Pre	25	4%	40%	44%	12%
	Post	25	-	20%	56%	24%
d. Administrators and teachers collectively plan who will provide leadership for initiatives.	Pre	25	12%	28%	48%	12%
	Post	25	4%	16%	36%	44%
e. The schedule allows for adequate embedded time for collaborative teacher planning.	Pre	25	12%	28%	44%	16%
	Post	25	8%	12%	52%	28%
f. We have a range of differentiated safety nets available at the individual student level.	Pre	25	12%	56%	28%	4%
	Post	25	-	48%	40%	12%
g. Team leadership at all levels focuses on the guidance, direction, and support of sustained improvement in instructional practice and student learning.	Pre	25	8%	48%	36%	8%
	Post	25	-	32%	40%	28%
h. Most parents of students in this school expect their children to go on to some sort of post-secondary education.	Pre	25	8%	8%	52%	32%
	Post	25	4%	4%	44%	48%

Note. Results include school-level respondents only.

Table E10. *Twin Cities: Perceptions of District-Level Practices*

	Pre/ Post	n	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. District staff help to ensure that our schools offer an aligned curriculum.	Pre	26	-	35%	58%	8%
	Post	26	-	27%	50%	23%
b. Instructional leadership is a key component of our principal evaluation system.	Pre	25	-	24%	68%	8%
	Post	24	-	33%	25%	42%
c. District leaders often discuss instructional issues with school leadership teams.	Pre	26	4%	42%	46%	8%
	Post	26	15%	23%	38%	23%
d. Our district offers a range of differentiated safety nets or interventions available at the individual student level.	Pre	26	12%	23%	58%	8%
	Post	26	4%	38%	50%	8%
e. Our district has strategies to support principals and teachers in preparing students for college or other post-secondary education beyond high school.	Pre	26	4%	27%	62%	8%
	Post	26	-	31%	58%	12%
f. District administrators model high levels of professional practice.	Pre	26	-	8%	77%	15%
	Post	26	8%	8%	54%	31%
g. Our district culture is one in which all teachers and administrators feel responsible for working together to improve student achievement.	Pre	26	12%	23%	50%	15%
	Post	26	4%	38%	19%	38%
h. Our district has institutionalized processes that ensure the PD program is aligned with a belief that all students can achieve the same high standards.	Pre	26	12%	35%	46%	8%
	Post	26	12%	42%	31%	15%
i. Principals participate in ongoing high-quality professional development.	Pre	26	12%	38%	46%	4%
	Post	26	23%	15%	31%	31%
j. Teaching is aligned to rigorous performance standards.	Pre	26	8%	23%	54%	15%
	Post	25	4%	36%	40%	20%
k. Our district supports equity-related initiatives.	Pre	26	12%	31%	42%	15%
	Post	26	15%	19%	50%	15%

Note. Results include both school-level and district-level respondents.