MINNESOTA PRINCIPALS ACADEMY:
2-YEAR FOLLOW-UP SURVEY OF 2015–17 COHORTS

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Research, Development, and Engagement to Improve Education

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

Introduction

Overview of the Minnesota Principals Academy

The Minnesota Principals Academy (MPA) is an executive development program 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.

The curriculum for the MPA is based on the National Institute for School Leadership's (NISL) Executive Development Program, which provides 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 participants in Minnesota; therefore, in our report, references to the "MPA curriculum" refer to this modified curriculum. All participants also 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 principal can use after program completion.

Purpose of the Report

In this report, we describe the results of a survey designed to better understand how participation in the MPA is impacting alumni participants' practices in their schools and districts two years after their participation in the program. The survey was administered in Spring 2019 to two cohorts of participants—the Northwest Cohort and the Twin Cities Cohort—who began the program in 2015[1] and completed the program in June 2017.

Methods

Survey Instrument and Administration

The evaluation question addressed in this report reads as follows: *"To what extent are the participants in the 2015–17 cohorts making changes in their schools/districts as a result of participating in the MPA two years after participation (i.e., near the end of the 2018–19 school year)?"* In order to address this evaluation question, a survey was developed by CAREI evaluators in collaboration with the MPA program director. The survey consisted of a series of closed-ended items asking respondents to think about their participation in the MPA from 2015–17 and to indicate the extent to which their participation in the program has improved their ability to do various leadership tasks, using a scale of *not much, somewhat,* and *to a great extent.* This included areas related to instructional, transformational, and strategic leadership practices. In this report, we use the following definitions for these three leadership practices:

- Instructional leadership "involves setting clear goals, managing curriculum, monitoring lesson plans, allocating resources and evaluating teachers regularly to promote student learning and

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[1] Participants in the Northwest Cohort began in July 2015; those in the Twin Cities Cohort began in October 2015.

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" (https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/leaders-link/four-instructional-leadership-skills-principals-need/).

- 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, such leaders seek to make things better through genuine collaboration between the school's members and stakeholders" (https://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/leaders-link/transformational-leadership-model/).
- "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" (http://www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Leading-change/Strategic-leadership).

In addition, respondents were asked two open-ended items about what they chose to focus on in the current school year (2018-19) and what has been their greatest success related to what they learned in the MPA. Finally, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they would recommend the MPA to other school leaders, and why.

The survey was administered over the course of several weeks in April 2019 to all program participants from the two 2015–17 cohorts using Qualtrics, an online survey tool. Participants received an initial email inviting them to complete the survey, with two reminders sent to those who had not yet completed the survey.

Analysis and Reporting

In this section, we present the results for individuals from both cohorts combined. The cohort-specific results are provided in the appendices; see Appendix A for the Northwest Cohort results and Appendix B for the Twin Cities Cohort results. For the closed-ended items, we report the number of respondents answering each item and the percentage of respondents selecting each response option. For the open-ended items, evaluators analyzed and coded all responses separately and then, after discussing any discrepancies, 100% agreement was reached on the identified themes. We report on the primary themes that emerged. In some instances, the information provided by respondents fit into multiple themes. Quotations chosen in this report are representative of the pool of responses and are presented in italics (omitted text is represented by ellipses); in addition, we have made small edits to quotations in order to improve readability without changing the intent of the respondent (e.g., all references to the Minnesota Principals Academy, such as "the Principals Academy," "the Academy," and so forth have been changed to MPA in the quotations provided below).

Results

Response Rates

All 53 MPA participants from the 2015–17 cohorts were invited to complete the survey;[2] overall, 29 individuals completed the survey for a response rate of 55%. This included a response rate of 55% for

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[2] There were originally 62 participants in the 15-17 cohorts; however, participants have left over time for a variety of reasons (e.g., dropped out of the program, left the education field, retired, and so forth). Of the 53 participants who were invited to complete the survey, 12 were in an assistant principal role, 33 were in a principal role, 1 was in the role of school dean, and 7 were in a district-level role.

the Northwest Cohort (*n*=12/22) and a response rate of 55% for the Twin Cities Cohort (*n*=17/31). The survey was completed by both school and district leaders. Of the 29 participants who responded to the survey, 5 were in an assistant principal role, 17 were in a principal role, and 7 were in a district-level role. In our analysis and reporting, we include all respondents (i.e., those at both the school- and district-level), because the MPA is designed to improve the skills and knowledge of all school leaders so that they are able to influence the work that happens in individual school buildings and throughout a district.

Changes in Instructional Leadership Practices

Respondents were first asked to indicate the extent to which their participation improved their ability to perform a set of 8 instructional leadership practices to guide the school, such as setting high expectations for all students, overseeing the instructional programming for the school, making data-based decisions, and being involved in school practices such as professional development and professional learning communities (see Table 1). Overall, over two-thirds of respondents indicated that their practices had changed *to a great extent* in 7 of the 8 areas. In particular, 89% of respondents indicated that their involvement in professional development, instruction, and coaching had changed *to a great extent* (item e), and 86% reported that their focus on the academic achievement of all students (item a) had changed *to a great extent*. The one item that fewer than two-thirds of the respondents indicated had changed *to a great extent* related to making judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources (item g); nonetheless, 50% of respondents indicated this had changed *to a great extent* and the remaining respondents reported that their practice in this area had changed *somewhat.*

Table 1. *Self-Reported Changes in Instructional Leadership Practices to Guide the School*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Focus on the academic achievement of all students	29	-	14%	86%
b. Ensure that my school has a standards-based instructional system that is aligned with high performance standards	29	3%	21%	76%
c. Discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision	29	-	21%	79%
d. Develop or improve curricula or academic programming.	29	-	31%	69%
e. Be involved in professional development, instruction, and coaching	28	-	11%	89%
f. Organize or contribute to productive professional learning communities (PLCs)	28	4%	21%	75%
g. Make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student result	28	-	50%	50%
h. Use student achievement data to help make decisions	28	-	32%	68%

Individuals were also asked to indicate the extent to which their participation improved their ability to perform a set of 11 instructional leadership practices used with teachers in their schools, such as leading discussions with teachers about topics such as equity, data use, and instructional improvement; monitoring and evaluating teachers; and motivating teachers to consider new practices. In all 11 areas, over 95% of respondents indicated that their practices had changed either *somewhat* or *to a great extent.* The area in which the greatest number of respondents reported changing their practices *to a great extent* was discussing instructional issues with teachers (item c; 90% changed *to a great extent*); this was also the area of greatest change across all items on the survey. This was followed by a change in respondents' ability to visit classrooms to monitor the

effectiveness of instructional practices (item b; 86% changed *to a great extent*) and in their ability to give teachers specific ideas to improve their instruction (item d; 86% changed *to a great extent*). In one area—the ability to motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices (item h)—more respondents reported that their practice had changed *somewhat* (57%) compared to *a great extent* (39%).

Table 2. *Self-Reported Changes in Instructional Leadership Practices Used with Teachers*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Discuss equity issues or culturally-responsive instruction with my teachers	29	-	34%	66%
b. Visit classrooms to monitor the effectiveness of instructional practice in the school	29	-	14%	86%
c. Discuss instructional issues with my teachers	29	-	10%	90%
d. Give teachers specific ideas for how to improve their instruction	29	-	14%	86%
e. Model instructional strategies for teachers	29	3%	45%	52%
f. Provide or locate resources to help staff improve their teaching	29	3%	28%	69%
g. Communicate my expectation that teachers will regularly meet to assess student work against the standards	28	4%	21%	75%
h. Motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices	28	4%	57%	39%
i. Talk to teachers about their use of data in instructional decision-making	28	-	18%	82%
j. Conduct teacher evaluations and lead feedback conversations	28	-	25%	75%
k. Communicate to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards	28	-	29%	71%

Changes in Transformational Leadership Practices

Next, respondents were asked a set of 6 items about how their participation in the MPA improved their transformational leadership practices. These items related to developing a shared vision for the school, generating enthusiasm and a sense of collaboration among staff members, improving distributed leadership practices, and sharing resources with staff members. As with prior items on the survey, in all 6 areas, over 90% of respondents indicated that their practices had changed either *somewhat* or *to a great extent.* In particular, 79% of respondents reported that their ability to share evidence-based practices and research with their staff had changed *to a great extent* (item f). The area that changed the least (relative to the other transformational leadership practices) was respondents' ability to generate enthusiasm among teachers for shared school goals (item b; 61% changed *to a great extent* and 32% changed *somewhat).*

Table 3. *Self-Reported Changes in Transformational Leadership Practices*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Develop a shared vision for the school	28	4%	25%	71%
b. Generate enthusiasm among teachers for shared school goals	28	7%	32%	61%
c. Develop a safe and collaborative working environment among staff	28	-	29%	71%
d. Develop teacher leaders	28	-	25%	75%
e. Use a school leadership team to improve decision-making processes	28	-	25%	75%
f. Share evidence-based practices and research with my staff	28	4%	18%	79%

Changes in Strategic Leadership Practices

Individuals were asked a set of 9 items about how their participation in the program improved their strategic leadership practices. In all 9 areas, over 95% of respondents indicated that their practices had changed either *somewhat* or *to a great extent.* The area of greatest change was respondents' ability to provide a rationale for selecting certain improvement actions (item e), with 86% of respondents indicating that this had changed *to a great extent*. The area that changed the least (relative to the other strategic leadership practices) was respondents' ability to synthesize their vision in a School Improvement Plan (item h; 57% changed *to a great extent* and 39% changed *somewhat*).

Table 4. *Self-Reported Changes in Strategic Leadership Practices*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Identify specific performance problems to address at my school	28	-	39%	61%
b. Use research evidence in my decision-making	28	-	18%	82%
c. Use current research to determine improvement actions	28	4%	18%	79%
d. Establish a set of improvement actions to address the problem(s) I have identified	28	4%	29%	68%
e. Provide a rationale for selecting certain improvement actions	28	4%	11%	86%
f. Identify the intended outcomes of certain improvement actions	28	-	29%	71%
g. Communicate the identified actions and rationale to my school community	28	4%	29%	68%
h. Synthesize my vision in a School Improvement Plan	28	4%	39%	57%
i. Understand how my school's performance problems are interrelated and contribute to my school's success as a whole	28	-	21%	79%

Primary Focus for 2018–19 School Year

In addition to the closed-ended items, respondents were asked to provide feedback on two open-ended survey items. First, respondents were asked to share the primary area that they chose to focus on during the 2018–19 school year (the second school year after completing the MPA) and how their participation in the MPA helped in that endeavor, if at all. Of the 29 respondents, 23 provided input on this item (79%). The primary focus for respondents in 2018–19 was on areas of instruction (19 of the 23, or 83%, of respondents to this item), followed by a focus on transformational leadership (22%; *n*=5), and a focus on school vision and culture (13%; *n*=3) (recall that responses could be coded into more than one theme). Finally, two comments did not fall into any category and are included in an "other" section below.

A focus on instruction. The majority of the 23 respondents who provided feedback on this item (83%; *n*=19) reported that they focused on instructional practices during the 2018–19 school year. These practices varied, but included a focus on the development of professional learning communities (PLCs) or learning teams (*n*=5); the foundations of how people learn and how that can guide professional development (*n*=4); standards alignment (*n*=3); equity/culturally responsive instruction (*n*=3); teacher feedback, coaching, or modeling (*n*=3); the development of a new student program or intervention (*n*=2; both interventions focused on reading/literacy); and social-emotional learning (*n*=1). Exemplar quotes in this area include the following:

> *In 2018–19, my focus has really been on elevating the instructional practices in our building – using PLCs [Professional Learning Communities] to have data-driven conversations that result in changing teaching so it increases student learning. I learned so much in the MPA about how people (students and teachers) learn, and*

have used that to enhance our professional development about the essence of teaching and learning. It has bled into conversations that also encompass changes to how we grade and how we implement culturally responsive practices in each content area.

Helping teachers understand how people learn- and using those same understandings while developing staff development opportunities.

I was focused on developing an instructional model for our school that would establish how learning happens and the methods we would use as a school to achieve learning growth for all students. It helped me to see the methods I needed to use to get to the place where my teachers could see that there were some commonalities in how learning happens. This included some research, some demonstrations, and some long discussions.

We focused on initiatives related to educational equity and standards alignment. I have focused my work on using an equity lense to view all aspects of my school. How to provide support and resources to those students that need them most rather than equally spread out and provided to students whether they need them or not. This has drawn on a wide array of topics and resources provided by the MPA.

Using walk-through evaluations to provide teachers with effective feedback. The MPA provided the opportunity to look at instruction and practice effective forms of communication to provide that feedback.

We implemented a school-wide intervention in reading for all of our students. It has been one of the best things we have created for our students. Four days a week of high intense intervention and 1-day progress monitoring. [The MPA] gave me the courage and the tools to make a school-wide change.

A focus on transformational leadership. Five of the 23 respondents to this item (22%) shared that they chose to focus on distributing their leadership during the 2018–19 school year, particularly among teachers or through a leadership team. For example, one person explained that they focused on "*the Gradual Release of Responsibility*" and another shared that they focused on "*building a leadership team.*" Another respondent explained this further, sharing:

Our focus this year has been around developing teacher leadership and ensuring our curriculum is aligned to state standards. The MPA has had a huge impact on how I approached both of those things. Our teacher leadership development has been focused around creating a shared vision and increasing academic dialogue among teachers. Implementing instructional rounds is going to be a big piece of that for us.

A focus on school vision and culture. Three of the 23 respondents (13%) described how they focused on aspects of their school vision and culture during the 2018–19 school year. One explained how this was integrated with their teacher leadership development focus, and said "*Our teacher leadership development has been focused around creating a shared vision and increasing academic dialogue among teachers.*" Another shared that they were "*able to do more with vision.*" The third respondent further shared:

This was a transition year, having 9th grade join our high school after a large remodel. The focus this year and continuing into next is culture as it relates to the classroom and the importance of relationships with our students and staff.

Other. In addition to the areas of focus described above, one respondent wrote that participating in the MPA has "*provided me with background knowledge to further my leadership.*" Another wrote that, "*The academy gave me the skills to be confident in leading the transition to evidence-based practices.*"

Participants' Successes

The second open-ended survey item asked respondents to share the greatest success they have experienced related to what they learned in the MPA. Of the 29 respondents, 20 individuals provided input on this item (69%), and their responses fell into 6 primary themes: the respondents described ways in which they are now better instructional leaders (8 of the 20, or 40%, of respondents to this item); how they are more strategic leaders (30%; n=6); how they now have access to a greater network and more resources (25%; n=5); how they are better transformational leaders (15%; n=3); how they now have more confidence to make changes (15%; n=3); and how they are leading equity work in their schools (10%; n=2). As a reminder, feedback may have been coded into multiple themes if the respondent discussed multiple successes. Each area is discussed below.

Improved instructional leadership. Reflecting respondents' feedback that they primarily chose to focus on areas of instruction in 2018–19 (as described above), 8 of the 20 respondents who provided feedback on this item (40%; n=8) described an area of success for them as it related to their progress as an instructional leader. For example, 4 respondents shared that they now have a better understanding of the content areas, which has increased their confidence and abilities to have content-specific conversations with teachers to improve instruction. For example, some of these leaders shared:

Deeper understanding of instructional best-practices across content areas. I feel much more equipped to engage in critical growth discussions with individual teachers and PLCs who work in content areas outside of my original content area.

Confidence to have content-specific conversations with all content areas.

I feel far more confident in approaching my teachers in ELA, Science, and Math with questions about their approach to instruction and challenging ineffective methods.

In addition, respondents shared that they are better instructional leaders in general (n=2), that they make better use of PLCs (n=1), and that they have improved their ability to guide standards-based planning (n=1) and their ability to seek out resources for teachers (n=1). As some of these respondents explained:

Being a better academic leader.

My greatest success has been working with teachers to develop their practice and find ways to critically hone their craft through the use of PLCs. When I started, PLCs were a formality, teachers went through the motions but were only using it as a place to highlight "projects" they were doing in their classrooms. With my experiences in the

MPA I was able to research PLC formats and find one that would be useful to my staff to provide peer-initiated feedback in a safe and productive manner.

In the role I have right now, the ability to seek out resources for reading and math teachers as well as guide standards-based planning and scope and sequence work are my successes from learning in the MPA.

Improved strategic leadership. Six respondents explained their greatest success was an improved ability to act as a strategic leader. Two (n=2) talked about the importance of school vision, and one respondent (n=1) stated that they are now better able to focus on what needs to be improved and how to approach this work. Exemplar quotes include:

Be clear in our vision.

The ability to focus my work on improving my school. Knowing what to focus on, having tools to support that focus, and not being overwhelmed by the process and scale of the work.

Other leaders (n=3) shared that they are now a more "*scholarly leader*," making more informed decisions based on available research. Two of these respondents described their successes as follows:

I have become a much more scholarly leader. I read the research behind the blog posts and ensure that when I am offering a direction to our staff, it is based on current best practices.

I carry with me the credo that we are to be "scholarly leaders," basing our actions on deep research rather than prevailing trends. I feel more equipped and confident in accessing research-based resources for putting this mindset into regular practice.

Greater network and resources. Five of the 20 respondents to this item (25%) shared that the greatest success of their participation in the MPA has been the access to a greater network of colleagues and useful resources. The respondents valued knowing they had people to turn to for support, and they appreciated the extensive resources that were now available to them. Some of these respondents explained:

For me, in a year of transitions following my time in the MPA, the greatest success I found was to be able to interact with many different people about many different subject areas and be able to bring something to the table.

I developed a great network of admin that I can draw on in times of difficulty.

The networking of people and the breadth of resources shared is invaluable to me. It is the knowing where to go when I have a question that has helped numerous times.

Improved transformational leadership. Three of the 20 respondents to this item (15%) decribed their greatest success in terms of their development as a transformational leader. These respondents discussed engaging more stakeholders in the decision-making processes at their school (n=2) and developing teacher leaders at their school (n=1). These respondents shared the following:

There have been many successes, but the one that "leaps to mind" at the moment is the stronger parent engagement we have fostered after participating in the MPA. The parent stakeholders have been very active in the last year to help us determine areas of improvement specifically related to educational equity.

Voice, when decisions and direction are driven by data and all stakeholders have an opportunity to work with that data it gives great voice to all.

It's hard for me to claim "success" since our work is still in progress, but I would say that developing teacher leadership and developing safety nets have been a major focus and the MPA has been instrumental in that.

Greater confidence to lead change. Three of the 20 respondents to this item (15%) decribed their greatest success in terms of increased "*confidence to lead change*" in their schools and their "*courage to make systematic changes*."

Improved equity work. Finally, two of the 20 respondents (10%) decribed their greatest success in terms of the equity work they are doing in their schools. One respondent noted that their participation has led to more "*impactful*" equity work in their school (*n*=1); the other respondent (also mentioned above in connection with transformational leadership) described working with parent stakeholders to "*determine areas of improvement specifically related to educational equity*."

Participants' Recommendation of the Minnesota Principals Academy

A final item on the survey asked respondents whether or not they would recommend the MPA to other school leaders and to explain why or why not. Of the 29 survey respondents, 28 shared that they would recommend the program to other school leaders (97%), and one person did not provide a response.

Of the 28 respondents who would recommend the program, 15 elaborated on their response to explain why. The primary theme that emerged from 12 of the respondents (80% of the 15 who commented) was that they would recommend the program because it provided high-quality, in-depth professional development for school leaders. Other reasons provided were because of the valuable cohort model (13%; *n*=2), because the program helped participants develop the tools to be better instructional leaders (13%; *n*=2), and because the program helped to change their practices in general (7%; *n*=1). In addition, three respondents (20%) indicated that they encouraged other leaders to apply to the program, with one noting, "*I have encouraged and now have one other administrator from our school participating in the current cohort of the MPA.*"

The Minnesota Principals Academy provided high-quality, in-depth professional development for school leaders. The majority of respondents (12 of the 15, or 80%, of respondents to this item) indicated that they would recommend the MPA to others because of its high-quality programming. Many of these respondents described the program as the "*best professional development*" they had ever received, with others writing that it was "*in-depth*," "*insightful and practical*," and "*the most beneficial and effective professional development currently being offered to principals*." Some respondents further explained that they enjoyed the opportunity to be a learner and to think more critically about leadership. Many of the comments from respondents in this area are shared below:

The MPA is far more in depth than any principal licensure preparation program.

I have recommended my current principal to apply. It was really the best professional development I have ever had. Especially in the role of school leader, when you are often presenting or guiding, it was refreshing and powerful to be a learner and participant. I felt like I learned something at each session that had immediate and long-term impact on me professionally.

It has been the best administrative PD I have had. It goes far beyond management and has pushed me to examine the critical role of leadership.

It remains the best professional development I have ever experienced…I loved it all.

Like most people have said, MPA is the best PD I've ever had.

The MPA was the best Professional Development that I have experienced as a principal.

Without question, this was among the highest quality professional development I've experienced.

Although it was tough to carve out the time, it was worth the professional development.

Great professional development and best practice approach to teaching and learning.

The cohort model of the Minnesota Principals Academy was valuable. Two respondents to this item (13%) specifically noted that spending time with other school leaders is an asset of the program that enhanced their experience. As these respondents shared:

The cohort model is amazing and has brought me wonderful colleagues to reach out to whenever I need advice.

The time together with other admin was invaluable.

The Minnesota Principals Academy helped participants develop the tools to be better instructional leaders. Two of the 15 respondents to this item (13%) described the ways in which their participation in the program has helped them to develop their tools and confidence as instructional leaders. As they explained,

It gives you tools to help you become a more instructional leader.
I have developed the confidence to address ineffective practices in our school with researched-based solutions that bring results.

Other. Finally, one person (7%) explained that they would recommend the MPA because of the way that it has affected their professional practices, sharing that the MPA "*changed my practice and focus of my principalship.*"

Summary

In this report, we summarized the results of a survey designed to better understand how participation in the MPA has had an impact on alumni participants' practices in their schools and districts two years after participating in the MPA. The survey was administered in Spring 2019 to two cohorts of participants who completed the program in June 2017 – the Northwest (NW) Cohort and the Twin Cities (TC) Cohort. Of the 53 MPA participants from the 2015–17 cohorts who are still in the field of education, 29 individuals completed the survey for a response rate of 55%.

First, almost all of the respondents indicated that participating in the MPA improved their own instructional leadership practices either *somewhat* or *to a great extent.* For example, most of the respondents said they had changed *to a great extent* in their discussions with teachers about instructional issues and in their involvement in professional development, instruction, and coaching.

Next, individuals were asked about how their participation in the program improved their transformational and strategic leadership practices, with almost all respondents reporting that these practices had changed either *somewhat* or *to a great extent.* The area of greatest change across transformational leadership practices was respondents' ability to share evidence-based practices and research with their staff. The area of greatest change across strategic leadership practices was respondents' ability to provide a rationale for selecting certain improvement actions.

Respondents also shared open-ended feedback about the primary area that they chose to focus on in 2018–19 (the second year after completing the MPA) and the greatest success they have experienced related to what they learned in the MPA. Respondents indicated that their primary areas of focus included instruction, transformational leadership, and school vision and culture. Respondents explained that their greatest successes, meanwhile, are that they are now better instructional, transformational, and strategic leaders and that they now have access to a greater network and more resources.

Finally, 28 of the 29 survey respondents shared that they would recommend the MPA to other school leaders (the remaining respondent did not answer this item). The primary theme that emerged from 12 of the 15 respondents who provided explanations for their response was that they would recommend the program because it provided high-quality, in-depth professional development for school leaders. Other reasons were because of the valuable cohort model, because the program helped participants develop the tools to be better instructional leaders, and because the program helped them to change their professional practices in general.

Appendix A: Northwest (NW) Cohort Results

Table A1. *NW Cohort – Self-Reported Changes in Instructional Leadership Practices to Guide the School*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Focus on the academic achievement of all students	12	-	25%	75%
b. Ensure that my school has a standards-based instructional system that is aligned with high performance standards	12	8%	8%	83%
c. Discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision	12	-	17%	83%
d. Develop or improve curricula or academic programming	12	-	42%	58%
e. Be involved in professional development, instruction, and coaching	12	-	25%	75%
f. Organize or contribute to productive professional learning communities (PLCs)	12	8%	33%	58%
g. Make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student results	12	-	58%	42%
h. Use student achievement data to help make decisions	12	-	42%	58%

Table A2. *NW Cohort – Self-Reported Changes in Instructional Leadership Practices Used with Teachers*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Discuss equity issues or culturally-responsive instruction with my teachers	12	-	42%	58%
b. Visit classrooms to monitor the effectiveness of instructional practice in the school	12	-	25%	75%
c. Discuss instructional issues with my teachers	12	-	17%	83%
d. Give teachers specific ideas for how to improve their instruction	12	-	17%	83%
e. Model instructional strategies for teachers	12	8%	33%	58%
f. Provide or locate resources to help staff improve their teaching	12	8%	25%	67%
g. Communicate my expectation that teachers will regularly meet to assess student work against the standards	12	8%	25%	67%
h. Motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices	12	8%	58%	33%
i. Talk to teachers about their use of data in instructional decision-making	12	-	33%	67%
j. Conduct teacher evaluations and lead feedback conversations	12	-	25%	75%
k. Communicate to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards	12	-	33%	67%

Table A3. *NW Cohort – Self-Reported Changes in Transformational Leadership Practices*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Develop a shared vision for the school	12	8%	33%	58%
b. Generate enthusiasm among teachers for shared school goals	12	17%	33%	50%
c. Develop a safe and collaborative working environment among staff	12	-	50%	50%
d. Develop teacher leaders	12	-	42%	58%
e. Use a school leadership team to improve decision-making processes	12	-	33%	67%
f. Share evidence-based practices and research with my staff	12	8%	33%	58%

Table A4. *NW Cohort – Self-Reported Changes in Strategic Leadership Practice*s

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Identify specific performance problems to address at my school	12	-	42%	58%
b. Use research evidence in my decision-making	12	-	25%	75%
c. Use current research to determine improvement actions	12	8%	17%	75%
d. Establish a set of improvement actions to address the problem(s) I have identified	12	8%	17%	75%
e. Provide a rationale for selecting certain improvement actions	12	8%	17%	75%
f. Identify the intended outcomes of certain improvement actions	12	-	42%	58%
g. Communicate the identified actions and rationale to my school community	12	8%	25%	67%
h. Synthesize my vision in a School Improvement Plan	12	8%	58%	33%
i. Understand how my school's performance problems are interrelated and contribute to my school's success as a whole	12	-	25%	75%

Appendix B: Twin Cities (TC) Cohort Results

Table B1. *TC Cohort – Self-Reported Changes in Instructional Leadership Practices to Guide the School*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Focus on the academic achievement of all students	17	-	6%	94%
b. Ensure that my school has a standards-based instructional system that is aligned with high performance standards	17	-	29%	71%
c. Discuss why student depth of understanding is critical to achieving our vision	17	-	24%	76%
d. Develop or improve curricula or academic programming	17	-	24%	76%
e. Be involved in professional development, instruction, and coaching	16	-	-	100%
f. Organize or contribute to productive professional learning communities (PLCs)	16	-	13%	88%
g. Make judgments about teacher performance using a variety of data sources, including student results	16	-	44%	56%
h. Use student achievement data to help make decisions	16	-	25%	75%

Table B2. *TC Cohort – Self-Reported Changes in Instructional Leadership Practices Used with Teachers*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Discuss equity issues or culturally-responsive instruction with my teachers	17	-	29%	71%
b. Visit classrooms to monitor the effectiveness of instructional practice in the school	17	-	6%	94%
c. Discuss instructional issues with my teachers	17	-	6%	94%
d. Give teachers specific ideas for how to improve their instruction	17	-	12%	88%
e. Model instructional strategies for teachers	17	-	53%	47%
f. Provide or locate resources to help staff improve their teaching	17	-	29%	71%
g. Communicate my expectation that teachers will regularly meet to assess student work against the standards	16	-	19%	81%
h. Motivate teachers who are reluctant to consider new instructional practices	16	-	56%	44%
i. Talk to teachers about their use of data in instructional decision-making	16	-	6%	94%
j. Conduct teacher evaluations and lead feedback conversations	16	-	25%	75%
k. Communicate to teachers how important it is for classroom assessments to be carefully aligned to content standards	16	-	25%	75%

Table B3. *TC Cohort – Self-Reported Changes in Transformational Leadership Practices*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Develop a shared vision for the school	16	-	19%	81%
b. Generate enthusiasm among teachers for shared school goals	16	-	31%	69%
c. Develop a safe and collaborative working environment among staff	16	-	13%	88%
d. Develop teacher leaders	16	-	13%	88%
e. Use a school leadership team to improve decision-making processes	16	-	19%	81%
f. Share evidence-based practices and research with my staff	16	-	6%	94%

Table B4. *TC Cohort – Self-Reported Changes in Strategic Leadership Practices*

	n	Not much	Somewhat	To a great extent
a. Identify specific performance problems to address at my school	16	-	38%	63%
b. Use research evidence in my decision-making	16	-	13%	88%
c. Use current research to determine improvement actions	16	-	19%	81%
d. Establish a set of improvement actions to address the problem(s) I have identified	16	-	38%	63%
e. Provide a rationale for selecting certain improvement actions	16	-	6%	94%
f. Identify the intended outcomes of certain improvement actions	16	-	19%	81%
g. Communicate the identified actions and rationale to my school community	16	-	31%	69%
h. Synthesize my vision in a School Improvement Plan	16	-	25%	75%
i. Understand how my school's performance problems are interrelated and contribute to my school's success as a whole	16	-	19%	81%