

Preface

Singing to the choir or preaching to the congregation is an activity that elicits a lot of nods, yet the message is not new to the people who are listening. If you are reading this book, you are aware of the important roles principals play in their school communities. Yet, how well are new principals prepared and supported? Those of us who have been school principals probably carry many strong memories of our first year. How many of us had a mentor we could trust to support, teach, and encourage us during the difficult times? Perhaps it's that yearning that fuels my passion for providing new principals with strong mentoring and induction.

This book is written for people interested in developing a mentoring or induction program as well as for those who want to enhance their existing program. Part I discusses the state of the principalship and what new principals need to be successful. While you might be familiar with some of this information, you may find the ideas, facts, and examples useful as you share your concerns with others who have given less thought to the potential crisis in educational leadership that we are facing. Part II is a compilation of mentoring and induction programs throughout the United States, all presented in the same format for easy comparison. Part III invites you to think about next steps.

This book is organized as follows:

PART I. THE PRINCIPALSHIP: THE ROLE, THE PEOPLE, AND THE SUPPORTS

Chapter 1, "Making the Case for Mentoring," describes and discusses the needs of new principals, the importance of the principalship, and the need for new principals at all levels of public schools. Factors contributing to the growing need for new principals are explored, with examples from throughout the United States. The types of situations and issues new principals face are also considered, making it abundantly clear how important it is for new principals to have mentoring support as they enter school communities.

Chapter 2, "Mentoring and Induction Program Components and Considerations," suggests that mentoring and induction programs are essential to support new principals. The Standards for School Leadership, jointly prepared by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), are described as achievable and measurable standards for administrators. These standards are the foundation for many of the programs included in Part II. Stage theory is presented to assist you in supporting principals at their differing developmental stages. The key components of mentoring programs are discussed, providing a way for you to think about what kind of induction or mentoring program would be useful in your context. Consideration of the need for an equitable climate in which new principals may learn and grow is emphasized.

Two different induction programs are described: one in which there is a large team of support for the new principals, and the other in which there are leadership training modules to engage principals in solving real school problems.

PART II. MODELS OF MENTORING AND INDUCTION FOR NEW PRINCIPALS

This part is organized by chapters based on the contexts in which organization(s) and/or program providers offer support to new principals. There are resources that list some common features of programs. You may find it useful to look at Resources C1–C6 before you read Part II to help you select models that are of the most interest to you.

Chapter 3, “District and Regional Models,” features programs that are offered to new principals in their own school districts or regions.

Chapter 4, “State Models,” features programs that are offered to new principals statewide (or regionwide).

Chapter 5, “Professional Association Models,” features programs offered by administrator associations, both at the national and state levels.

Chapter 6, “University Models,” features programs that are exclusively offered through a university.

Chapter 7, “Collaborative Models,” features programs that are collaborations of several institutions.

PART III. NOW WHAT?

Chapter 8, “Planning or Enhancing Your Program,” poses clarifying questions about the beliefs and values of those people within the context of your organization. They will help you identify the program components most useful for the new principals you will support. The State Action for Education Leadership Project is described, and a call is made for redefining school leadership.

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