

# A Briefing on Strengthening the School Leadership Pipeline and Connections to Federal Policy



Bob Bender, a principal in NYC,  
working with teachers.

**Will Miller**

President, The Wallace Foundation

Briefing for U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

May 11, 2018

# Introductions

- **Paul Fleming**, assistant commissioner, Tennessee Dept. of Education
- **Wendy Robinson**, superintendent, Fort Wayne Community Schools
- **Steve Tozer**, director, Center for Urban Education Leadership, University of Illinois at Chicago
- **LaTarsha Green**, principal, Dawes Elementary School, Evanston/Skokie School District

# Today's discussion

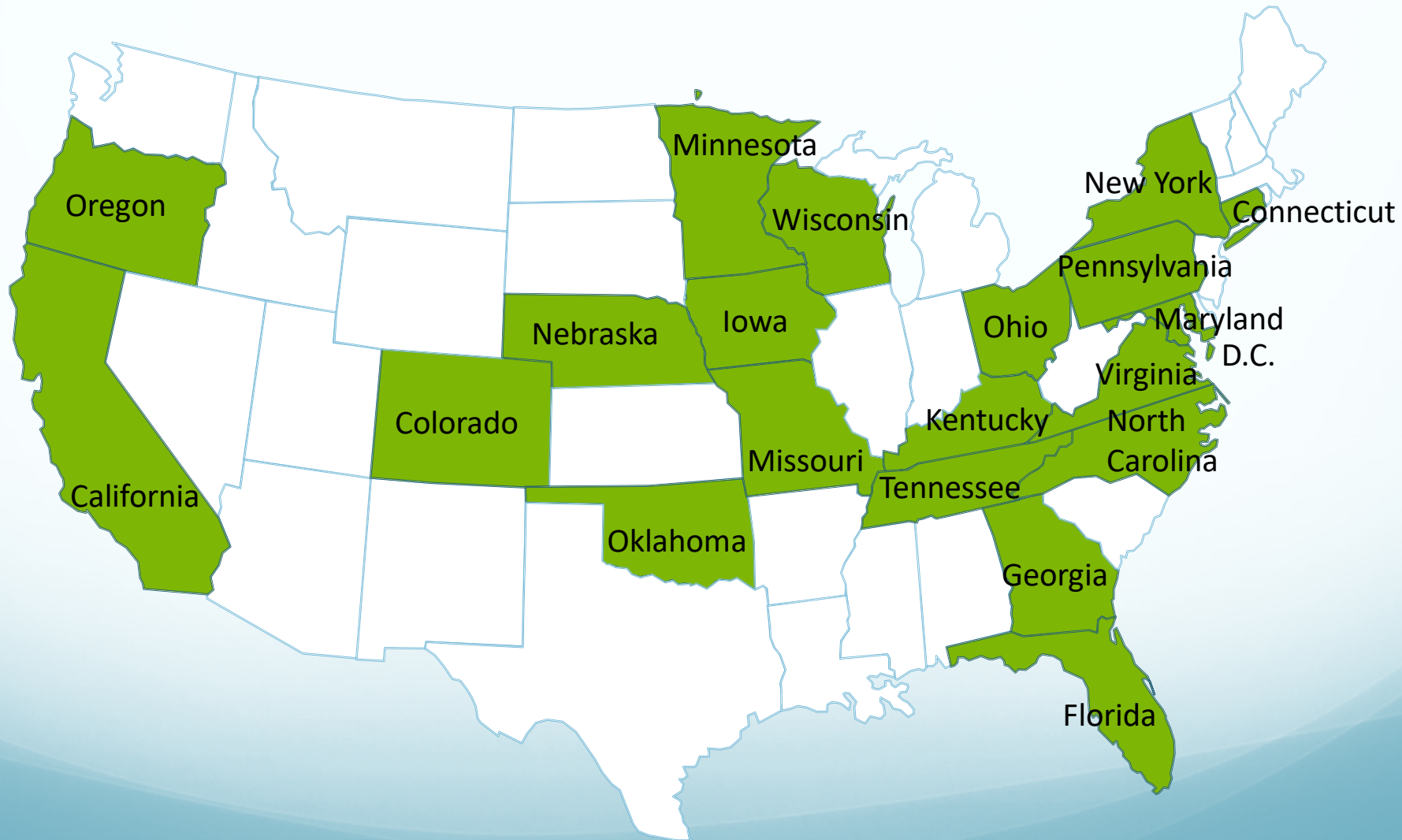
- The Wallace Foundation
- Impact of principals and other school leaders and their preparation
- How states are investing in strengthening school leadership and using ESSA to do it
- The opportunity in the HEA to improve the preparation and support of school leaders
- Specific HEA legislative recommendations
- Discussion, Q&A

# About The Wallace Foundation

- The mission of The Wallace Foundation is to foster
  - improvements in learning and enrichment for disadvantaged children and
  - the vitality of the arts for everyone.
- We work with grantee partners to develop -- then broadly share -- evidence-based, practical insights in our focus areas



# Current work in education leadership in 20 states and Washington, D.C.



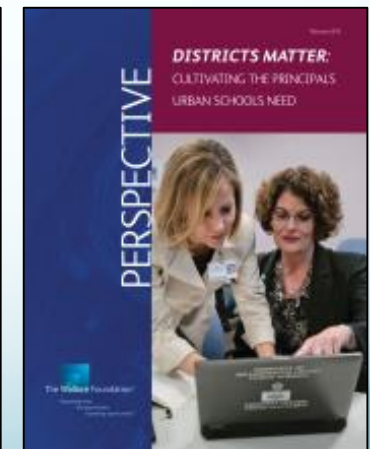
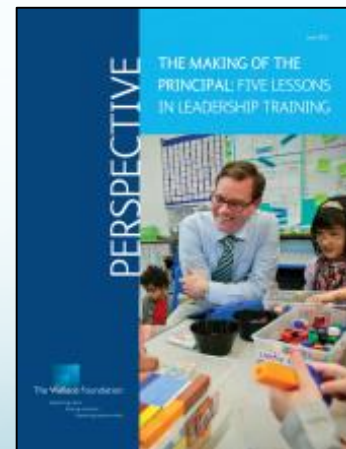
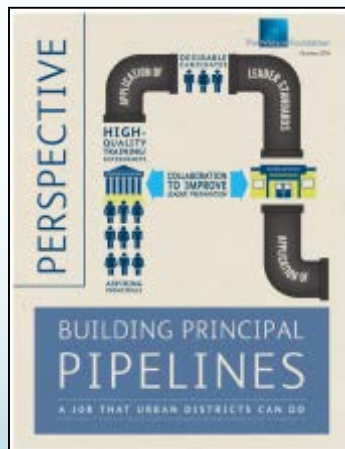
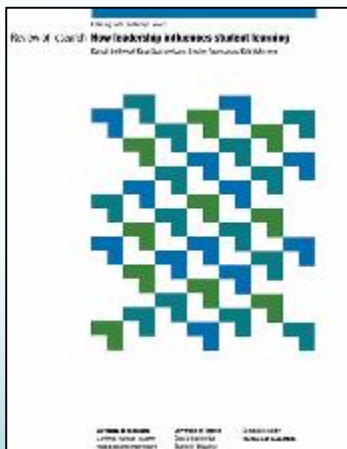
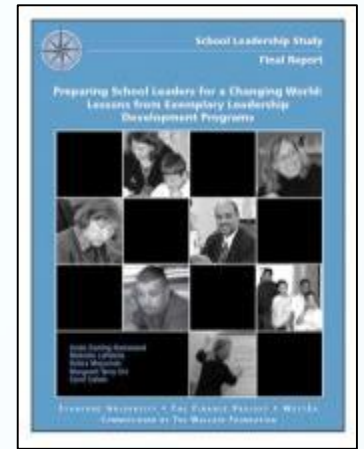
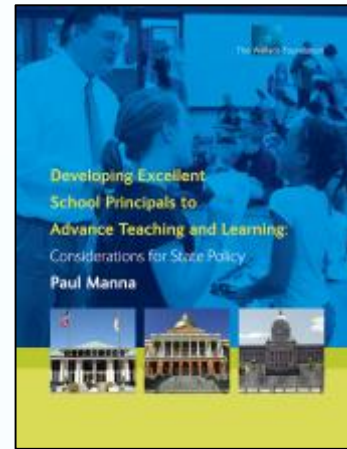
# Wallace's policy engagement principles

- Full compliance with the law, in letter and spirit
- Say more only as we know more
- Support flexible approaches that allow for adaptation to local context

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# Wallace has funded a wide array of research on school leadership





# Principals are key to student learning

- Principals are “**second only to classroom instruction** among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school.”

-- *How Leadership Influences Student Learning*,  
Kenneth Leithwood, et al, University of  
Minnesota, University of Toronto, 2004

- “Principals are multipliers of effective teaching.”

-- *Developing Excellent School Principals to Advance Teaching and Learning: Considerations for State Policy*, Paul Manna, The Wallace Foundation, 2015

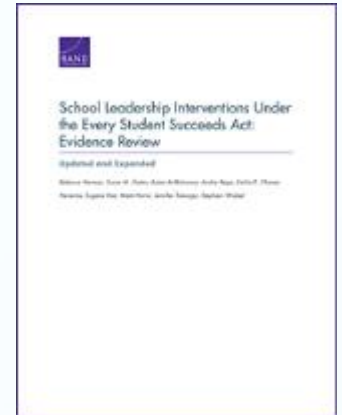


Students in a science class at Pittsburgh Public Schools.

# Principals are key to retaining good teachers

“**Teacher turnover is lower** in schools led by high-quality principals.... Research further indicates that principal turnover leads to lower teacher retention and lower gains for students.”

-- *School Leadership Interventions Under the Every Student Succeeds Act: Evidence Review*,  
Rebecca Herman, et al, RAND, 2016



“Principal effectiveness is associated with greater teacher satisfaction and a lower probability that the teacher leaves the school within a year. Moreover, the positive impacts of principal effectiveness on these teacher outcomes are **even greater in disadvantaged schools.**”

-- *Can Good Principals Keep Teachers in Disadvantaged Schools? Linking Principal Effectiveness to Teacher Satisfaction and Turnover in Hard-to-Staff Environments*,  
Jason A. Grissom, Teachers College Record, 2011



# Principal pipelines are cost effective

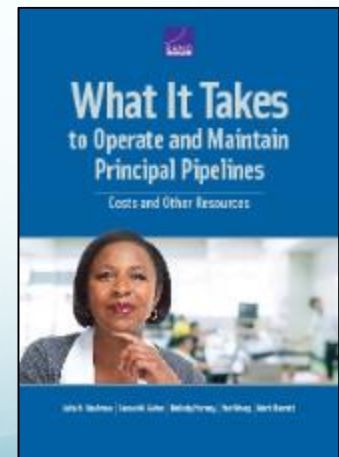
- Because of leaders' influence on schools, "efforts to improve their recruitment, training, evaluation and ongoing development should be considered highly cost-effective approaches to successful school improvement."

– *How Leadership Influences Student Learning*, Kenneth Leithwood, et al, University of Minnesota, University of Toronto, 2004

- New RAND study finds principal pipelines are affordable

- Pipelines are 0.4% of annual district budgets, according to study of six districts
- Minimal cost for two "quick wins" – leader standards and selective hiring
- Coaching/Mentoring: Average cost \$1,500 per principal

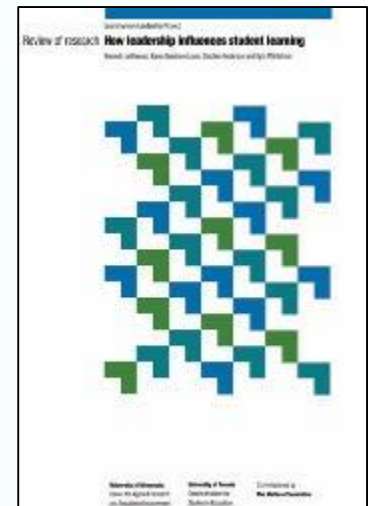
-- Source: *What it Takes to Operate and Maintain Principal Pipelines*, Julia H. Kaufman, et al, RAND, 2017



# Principals are critical to improving struggling schools

- “...there are **virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader**. Many other factors may contribute to such turnarounds, but leadership is the catalyst.”
- “There seems little doubt that both district and school **leadership provides a critical bridge between most educational-reform initiatives, and having those reforms make a genuine difference for all students.**”

-- *How Leadership Influences Student Learning*, Kenneth Leithwood, et al, University of Minnesota, University of Toronto, 2004



# Principal supervisors play an important role in supporting principals

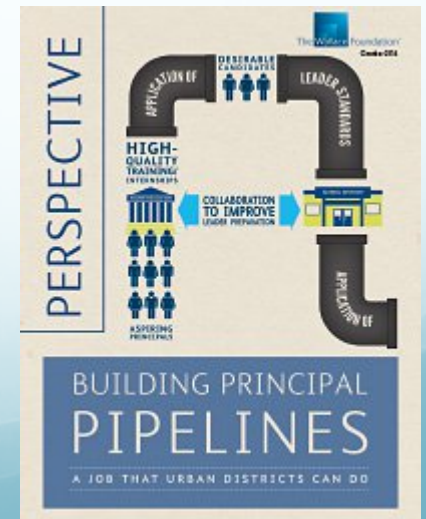
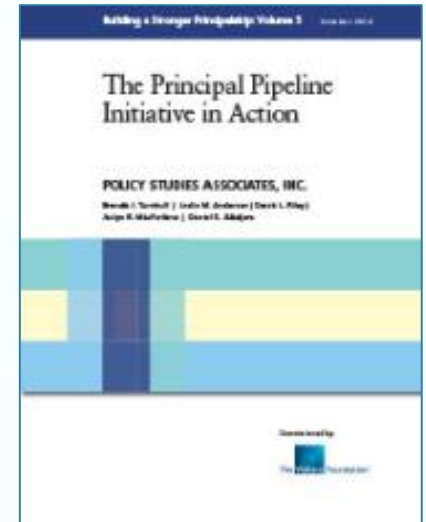
- Principals need support from principal supervisors, including relevant evaluation, in order to maximize their impact
- A focus on strengthening teaching and learning is crucial
  - Representative survey of principals nationwide finds principals value their supervision and mentoring more when it's focused on instruction
- 86% of principals in six urban districts who were advised to improve received support to do so from their supervisors



D.C. Principal Supervisor Janice Harris visits with third-graders at Hyde-Addison Elementary School prior to discussing instruction with the principal.

# Principal pipelines benefit both districts and new principals

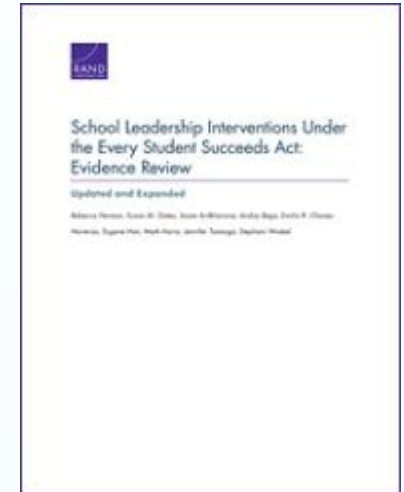
- Districts can do it
- The benefits for both districts and new principals are substantial
- Leader standards are important
- Leader evaluation systems seen as ‘fair’
- Mentors and principal supervisors are the most valued supports among novice principals



Source: *The Principal Pipeline Initiative in Action*, Building a Stronger Principalship Vol. 5, Brenda Turnbull, et al, Policy Studies Associates, 2016; *Building Principal Pipelines*, The Wallace Foundation, 2017.

# 30+ studies on school leadership meet ESSA evidence requirements

- 18 meet Tiers I through III evidence requirements
- Key conclusions:
  - “School leadership can be a powerful driver of improved education outcomes.”
  - “Activities designed to improve school leadership demonstrate positive impact on student, teacher, and principal outcomes....”



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- Impact of principals and other school leaders and their preparation
- **How states are investing in strengthening school leadership and using ESSA to do it**
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# Growing recognition of the importance of school leadership

- The Education Commission of the States reports that 37 states introduced or passed legislation related to school leadership in 2017
- 48 states have adopted or adapted voluntary national leader standards
  - 12 states have adopted the 2015 national Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL)

# ESSA is being used by states to strengthen leadership

- All 50 states (plus DC and Puerto Rico) have included school leadership in their ESSA plans (New Leaders: 2018)
- 24 states are using ESSA Title II Part A optional 3% set-aside for school leadership for:
  - Leadership academies, especially skills to turn around high-needs schools
  - University-district partnerships to develop new programs
  - Networks of learning communities among districts and local communities
  - Improving principals' teacher evaluation skills
  - Programs for principal supervisors

# ESSA Leadership Learning Community

- 10 participating states with teams from:
  - SEA, urban districts, other districts, civil rights community, universities
- Each state working on its own local priorities for improving principals and other school leaders to turn around the highest-needs schools. Examples:
  - Tennessee's *Leadership for Equity Playbook*
  - Minnesota's learning networks to support high-needs schools in partnering with local communities to tackle specific inequities, such as discipline policies and access to rigorous coursework
- National partnership among Wallace, Council of Chief State School Officers, Council of the Great City Schools and the National Urban League

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# HEA can help scale effective leader preparation through evidence and tools

- Most principals receive their leadership training from university programs
- Both superintendents and university officials agree that those programs need to be improved to better reflect the reality of the job today
- Strong district/university partnerships are essential (and rare)
- Courses need to be based in the reality of the job



Aspiring principals in Denver's Ritchie Program for school leaders take part in an exercise to hone their skills in communicating with teachers.

# Specific legislative recommendations for HEA Title II, Part A

- Include the phrase “principals and other school leaders” in addition to “teachers,” as was done in the Every Student Succeeds Act
- Provide additional flexibility and options to states and universities to prioritize education leadership
  - Ensure that eligible entities have the option to focus their Title II, Part A grant on leader preparation activities or teacher preparation activities or a combination
- Encourage the use of evidence-based strategies
  - Include definitions of induction programs, mentoring, residency programs and school leadership skills appropriate for principals and other school leaders
  - Create a set of priorities in competitive grants

# For more evidence and information – wallacefoundation.org

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying "School Leadership". The page header includes "The Wallace Foundation" logo, a "News and Media" button, and navigation links for "Knowledge Center", "How We Work", and "About Wallace".

**KNOWLEDGE CENTER**

## School Leadership

School leadership is second only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student learning, according to research. Moreover, principals strongly shape the conditions for high-quality teaching and are the prime factor in determining whether teachers stay in high-needs schools. High-quality principals, therefore, are vital to the effectiveness of our nation's public schools, especially those serving the children with the fewest advantages in life.

Browse the reports and other resources on these pages for insights into school leadership and how to improve it.

**IN THIS SECTION**

- School Leadership
- Principal Training
- District Policy and Practice
- State and Federal Policy
- Effective Principal Leadership
- Principal Evaluation
- Principal Supervisors
- Principal Pipelines
- ESSA

**School Leadership Feature**

Review of research **How leadership influences student learning**

Leadership is second only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student success, according to this landmark examination of school leadership.

**Our School Leadership Resources**

- Getting Inreational About Principal Evaluations**  
May 2017  
Six school districts work to make principal performance reviews a vehicle for playing more effective school leadership.
- Principals and other school leaders: The evidence base for their critical role in ESSA**  
May 2017



## Discussion, Q&A

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