

Collaborating on University Principal Preparation Program Redesign

A Summary of Findings for
University Principal Preparation
Program Providers

Rebecca Herman, Elaine Lin Wang, Susan M. Gates



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About This Report

This targeted report summarizes key lessons for university principal preparation program providers about partnering with school districts to improve principal preparation and principal quality from The Wallace Foundation’s University Principal Preparation Initiative (UPPI). From 2016 to 2021, seven university principal preparation programs, with their district and state partners, fundamentally reshaped their principal preparation programs under UPPI.

The RAND Corporation conducted a study of the effort. Initial implementation findings are reported in *Launching a Principal Preparation Program: Partners Collaborate for Change* (Wang et al., 2018; www.rand.org/t/RR2612), and findings on the state role in supporting change are reported in *Using State-Level Policy Levers to Promote Principal Quality: Lessons from Seven States Partnering with Principal Preparation Programs and Districts* (Gates, Woo, et al., 2020; www.rand.org/t/RRA413-1). Final findings are reported in a series of five reports:

- three reports targeting specific audiences:
 - principal preparation programs (this report)
 - school districts: *District Partnerships with University Principal Preparation Programs: A Summary of Findings for School District Leaders* (Wang, Gates, and Herman, 2022; www.rand.org/t/RRA413-6)
 - state education organizations: *State Partnerships with University Principal Preparation Programs: A Summary of Findings for State Policymakers* (Gates, Herman, and Wang, 2022; www.rand.org/t/RRA413-7)
- a report in brief reporting findings for a range of readers: *Redesigning University Principal Preparation Programs: A Systemic Approach for Change and Sustainability—Report in Brief* (Herman, Wang, et al., 2022; www.rand.org/t/RRA413-4)
- and a full report: *Redesigning University Principal Preparation Programs: A Systemic Approach for Change and Sustainability—Full Report* (Herman, Woo, et al., 2022; www.rand.org/t/RRA413-3). The full report is primarily intended as a secondary resource for readers who would like more detail about the study’s findings and methods.

This study was undertaken by RAND Education and Labor, a division of the RAND Corporation that conducts research on early childhood through postsecondary education programs, workforce development, and programs and policies affecting workers, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy and decisionmaking. The study was commissioned by The Wallace Foundation, which seeks to foster equity and improvements in learning and enrichment for young people and in the arts for everyone.

More information about RAND can be found at www.rand.org. Questions about this report should be directed to bherman@rand.org, and questions about RAND Education and Labor should be directed to educationandlabor@rand.org.

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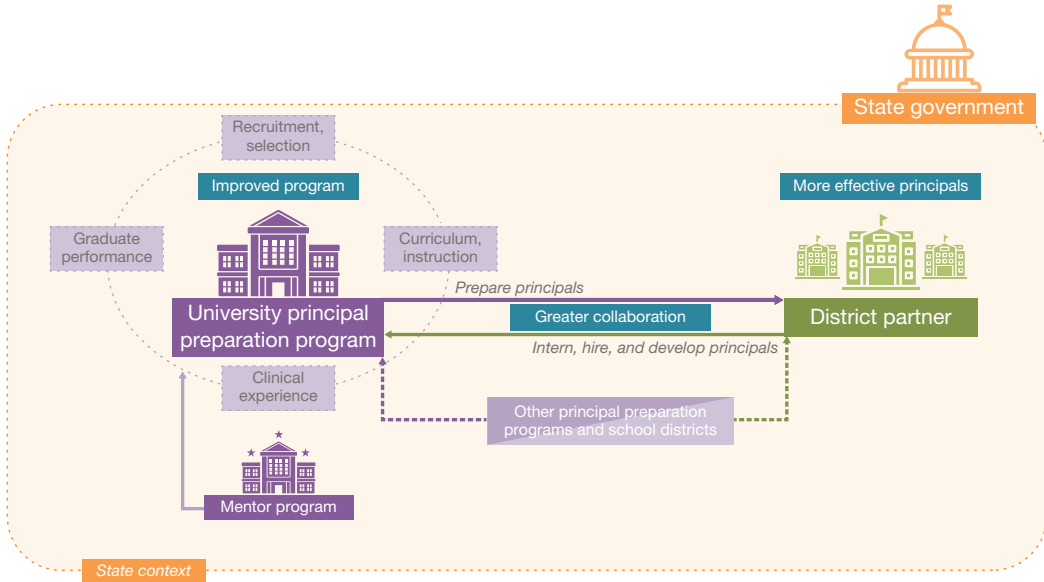
Collaborating on University Principal Preparation Program Redesign: A Summary of Findings for University Principal Preparation Program Providers

The job of the school principal has become much more complex and demanding over the past several decades (Tintoré et al., 2020). Principals must know how to meet the needs of learners in an increasingly diverse population and a technologically complex environment (Farley, Childs, and Johnson, 2019; Richardson et al., 2016; Riehl, 2000). Federal policy articulated in the two most recent reauthorizations of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (the No Child Left Behind Act and the Every Student Succeeds Act) held districts—and by extension, principals—accountable for improved student academic outcomes (Farley, Childs, and Johnson, 2019). Beyond academics, social and policy changes—such as developing equitable conditions for learning and fostering social and emotional skills—play out under the direction of school leaders. Goodwin, Cunningham, and Eagle (2005) frame the change in the principal’s role as “an accumulation of expectations that have increased the complexity of the position” (p. 1).

The lion’s share of preparing principals for these responsibilities falls on university-based principal preparation programs (PPPs; Briggs et al., 2013). Research has shown that programs with the following qualities are associated with positive principal, teacher, and student outcomes: proactive recruitment of candidates into the program; authentic learning opportunities for principal candidates; course content on developing instruction, personnel, and organizational features of the school; a cohort structure to provide collegial support; problem-based pedagogy; clinical experiences, and experienced mentors or coaches (Darling-Hammond et al., forthcoming; Darling Hammond et al., 2007; Davis and Darling-Hammond, 2012; Orr and Pounder, 2010; Perrone and Tucker, 2019). According to recent research, the curriculum focus areas of strong preparation programs are now in use in many programs across the county; however, other features (such as clinical experiences, active pedagogy, and mentoring) are less common (Darling-Hammond et al., forthcoming; Grissom, Mitani, and Woo, 2019; Hess and Kelly, 2007; Ni et al., 2016). PPPs based in universities have room to grow (Bottoms and O’Neill, 2001, Briggs et al., 2013; Manna, 2015).

In 2016, The Wallace Foundation began a five-year effort to support a systems approach to improving principal preparation (see Figure 1, Box 1, and Table 1) through its University Principal Preparation Initiative (UPPI). The RAND Corporation conducted a study of UPPI for The Wallace Foundation. Our primary sources of information were interviews and focus groups conducted between 2017 and 2021, as well as a survey of UPPI and comparison program leaders called the Initiative for Systemic Program Improvement through Research

FIGURE 1
The Principal Preparation System



in Educational Leadership (INSPIRE), conducted in 2019 and 2021. This report documents what the seven sites were able to accomplish, their key processes, and their collective lessons learned in redesigning their programs and spreading change throughout the local and state environments.

We found that it was feasible for universities and their partners to improve PPPs to reflect the best available evidence. Programs made changes in the targeted areas: collaboration on targeted improvement; more coherent and practice-based curriculum, instruction, and clinical experiences; and greater use of cohorts. Partners worked together collaboratively, and activities such as developing a common vision, self-assessments, and support from mentor programs that have been through redesigns themselves helped both the work and the partnership. And the strategies used in the UPPI redesigns spread across districts and programs.

The primary purpose of this report is to help other preparation programs and their partners within the university, districts, and states on their own paths toward improving the preparation and development of principals. For more information on UPPI and this research, please see the full report on which this brief report is based (Herman et al., 2022) and the other reports in this series, described previously in the “About This Report” section on p. iii.

Redesigning program components

Our study demonstrated that UPPI teams were able to redesign key components of their programs’ recruitment and selection, curricula and instruction, clinical experiences, and use of

BOX 1

The University Principal Preparation Initiative

In 2016, The Wallace Foundation awarded grants to seven public universities to redesign their principal preparation programs, with the help of partner districts and state agencies responsible for credentialing preparation programs and licensing principals, as well as mentor programs which have carried out similar redesigns. UPPI programs are located in states with policies supportive of improved principal development and had district partners that served a high-need population. UPPI programs and their partners were asked to redesign their programs to align with evidence-based practices. To catalyze continuous feedback, the grant funded districts to develop leader tracking systems (LTSs) for programs and districts to share information about program participants.

As a group, the selected universities and their partners participated in a common process and had access to supports coordinated and funded by The Wallace Foundation that defined UPPI. The processes and supports included the following:

- **Quality Measures** (QM; Education Development Center, 2018). QM is a research-based program self-assessment tool and process. Programs participated in QM multiple times as part of the grant.
- **Logic model development.** Early on, each team developed a logic model in which they mapped program redesign features to their vision for quality program graduates.
- **Alignment to standards.** All programs aligned their redesign effort to existing national or state standards, including the Professional Standards for Education Leaders (PSEL; National Policy Board for Educational Administration, 2015).
- **Mentor programs.** Each program selected a mentor program that had been through a redesign itself to support its redesign effort.
- **Technical assistance providers.** UPPI teams had access to technical assistance providers who could help with specific tasks, including the design of their LTS.
- **Professional learning communities** (PLCs). About twice a year throughout the initiative, The Wallace Foundation hosted cross-site, cross-role PLCs as well as separate role-specific PLCs.

Using these processes and supports, the UPPI partnerships had the flexibility to design the program components (e.g., curriculum, clinical experience) as they envisioned, applying available evidence to date about effective PPP practices to their own context..

cohorts. While the emphasis and timing varied, each site made changes in each of the four areas, as well as progress on using data to improve programs. Table 2 summarizes the major changes we observed.

TABLE 1
UPPI Universities and Partners

University	District or Consortium Partners	State Partner	Mentor Program(s)
Albany State University (ASU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calhoun County • Dougherty County • Pelham City 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Georgia Professional Standards Commission^a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality-Plus Leader Academy • The Leadership Academy
Florida Atlantic University (FAU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broward County • Palm Beach County • St. Lucie County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florida Department of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Denver
North Carolina State University (NC State)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Johnston County • Northeast Leadership Academy Consortium • Wake County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Carolina Department of Public Instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Denver
San Diego State University (SDSU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chula Vista Elementary • San Diego City Unified • Sweetwater Union High 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • California Commission on Teacher Credentialing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Washington
University of Connecticut (UCONN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartford • Meriden • New Haven 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecticut State Department of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Illinois at Chicago • The Leadership Academy
Virginia State University (VSU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henrico County • Hopewell City • Sussex County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virginia Department of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality-Plus Leader Academy
Western Kentucky University (WKU)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green River Regional Educational Cooperative, with representation from five member districts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bowling Green Independent – Daviess County – Owensboro Independent – Simpson County – Warren County 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kentucky Education Professional Standards Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Illinois at Chicago

^a The Georgia Department of Education and the University System of Georgia also acted as informal partners by sharing learnings from UPPI across the state.

Intentional collaboration with districts led to more targeted recruitment

Districts increased their involvement in nominating and selecting applicants from 2019 to 2021; comparison programs increased involvement only in nomination. In interviews and focus groups, UPPI district staff reported participating in candidate recruitment and assessment events or serving as selection-committee members. Some districts led the first round of recruitment, actively encouraging promising candidates to apply. Some programs obtained district input by asking districts to endorse high-potential applicants. District leaders said that they reasoned that by engaging in recruitment and selection, they improved the chances

TABLE 2
Major Program Redesign Changes

	Before UPPI	After UPPI
Recruitment and selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University-driven • General recruitment of applicants meeting prerequisites • Less involved selection process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active district engagement • Targeted recruitment • More rigorous and evidence-based selection process, involving performance-based tasks
Curriculum and instruction	<p>Stand-alone courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligned to former standards • Courses delivered in any sequence • Stand-alone, based on distinct topics, with some redundancies <p>Greater focus on theory in instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little to no input from districts • Lectures and discussions • Instructors were assigned to or assumed sole ownership of particular courses • Courses tended to be taught by university faculty, some without school or district administration experience 	<p>More coherent curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligned to current national or state standards • Intentionally sequenced courses that scaffold and build on each other • Courses are connected by topics and themes and sometimes by key assessments spanning courses <p>Greater focus on practice in instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oriented toward practical application of concepts • Informed by district input and needs to ensure relevance • Used more-interactive, experiential learning strategies (e.g., role-play, simulations) and application of adult learning principles • Instructors collaborated on course development and course delivery • Greater use of adjuncts—retired or practicing school or district administrators
Clinical experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Checklist approach” to completing required experiences • Passive, often “one-shot” experiences (e.g., shadowing, observing) • Disconnected from coursework • Supervision model • Limited supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate experiences to support growth in leadership competencies, personalized to meet candidate needs • Authentic experiences reflecting real work of principals on the ground • Aligned with course learning, applying theories and concepts in context • Leadership coaching model with greater opportunities for feedback and reflection • Additional supports (e.g., university-based clinical director, district-based coordinator)
Cohort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some full, closed cohort, some noncohort enrollment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All programs had at least one full, closed cohort; no noncohort
Data use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of robust data on inputs and principal candidate outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intention to systematically collect and use data to assess candidate progress and program quality

that the strongest candidates would participate in the program. In addition, district leaders said that they believed their involvement bolstered program graduates’ likelihood of staying in the district and taking on a leadership role.

Programs recruited candidates with specific qualifications. Instead of recruiting applicants who generally met university pre-requisites, programs asked districts to identify educators in good standing who would be excellent candidates and could benefit from a rigorous

preparation program. Programs also recruited candidates whose career goals aligned with the district's mission—for example, applicants seeking to be equity-driven leaders and whose goal was to become a principal rather than use the credential to get a salary bump in their current position. Multiple programs considered the diversity of their applicant pool, seeking to encourage educators from historically underrepresented populations to pursue jobs in school administration. For example, one program identified communities where the school leadership did not represent the diverse student and teacher population, aiming to promote the preparation program especially in those communities.

Some UPPI programs described greater use of performance-based tasks in the application and selection processes. One program (see Box 2) moved from just interviewing applicants to asking applicants to perform tasks reflecting the real work of principals. Another program with many applicants pointed to a key challenge in managing the scope of a rigorous, performance task-based selection process: “You want to make sure you get the information you need [to make the decisions with] with the fewest questions or scenarios as possible. . . . But you want it to be rich data.” The program reported continuously revisiting and adjusting its application and selection process.

BOX 2**NC State's Candidate Assessment Day Engaged Districts and Used Performance-Based Tasks**

NC State adapted the procedures and tools from one of its PPPs to apply across its programs, and expanded the district role in the process. Prior to UPPI, NC State selected applicants for the Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA) via Candidate Assessment Day (CAD), a day-long interview and performance assessment event. In the redesign, NC State expanded CAD to include applicants from all of its cohort programs. In addition, NC State revised the original process, adding rubrics aligned to the program's leadership standards to standardize the selection criteria and role-play scenarios intended to assess leadership-related competencies (e.g., growth mindset, active listening, and dealing with uncertainty).

CAD uses performance-based tasks such as writing prompts, one-on-one interviews, and role-play scenarios (e.g., coaching a teacher on instruction or interacting with a concerned parent). For example, in one CAD task, the applicant conducted a PLC meeting to review a grade-level team's recent test performance data. An actor leading the role-play was instructed to adamantly maintain that the test data were fine, indicating no significant areas for improvement. NC State provided the evaluation teams with detailed background information on the purpose of the PLC role-play and an accompanying rubric. In addition to new role-play scenarios, NC State assessed leadership capacities based on informal interactions between applicants and actors throughout CAD.

NC State expanded the role for partner districts in the application and selection processes. District leaders work with NC State staff in small teams for each CAD task. NC State also solicited district partners' feedback on applicants to make selection decisions.

Curriculum and instructional changes improved program coherence

Universities aligned their instructional programs to the most current national standards and state requirements for preparation programs. For example, two universities aligned their programs to their state licensure assessments. Programs worked to ensure alignment to standards down to the level of course syllabi modules, assignments, and assessments.

As part of the redesign, each site developed an overarching framework and used it to guide the redesign of the curriculum (see Table 3). The frameworks identified broad themes to guide program courses and experiences and articulated a set of core beliefs and values around which sites could build their program (see Box 3). While each site developed its frameworks independently, there are notable similarities across the frameworks, perhaps due to alignment with standards. Most UPPI programs' frameworks emphasized equity. Collaboration, relationship-building, and developing teachers and other school staff were also featured in nearly all of the UPPI programs' frameworks. Notably, the redesign did not change the topics addressed in the pre-redesign curriculum. Rather, the major shift appeared to be in how UPPI programs explicitly called out the themes and organized or structured concepts and topics to engender greater program coherence.

All redesigned programs sequenced courses to better support principal candidates' learning. According to program staff, courses built on each other by enabling candidates to progress logically in their understanding of concepts (e.g., introduction, development, mastery) and to use the knowledge and skills acquired in other courses or tasks throughout the program.

With respect to instruction and program delivery, programs tended to prioritize some types of interactive and engaging forms of pedagogy—such as role-playing and other small group techniques—over passive lecture formats. Interview data also suggested a shift toward experienced-based assessments, such as capstone projects, and away from pen-and-paper exams at specific points in the courses. Most UPPI programs also used formative assessments that require candidates to demonstrate knowledge and skills developed across a set of courses. Note that data from the survey of program directors are more ambiguous than findings from the interviews, showing increases in some but not all types of experiential assessments.

UPPI sites emphasized practical experience by changing the types of instructors they used in the program (see Table 4). UPPI sites as a whole moved toward greater involvement of faculty with recent experience in K–12 education and moved away from the use of tenured or tenure-track faculty as instructors. Most universities built processes to maintain the quality and consistency of instruction through practitioner-instructors, such as pairing new instructors with core university faculty, scheduling regular times for instructors to meet about their shared courses, and providing professional development (PD) on instructional strategies. While UPPI stakeholders did not raise this issue, prior literature identifies potential trade-offs with using tenure-track research faculty versus district-based adjunct instructors, such as costs and turnover.

TABLE 3
Post-Redesign Program Frameworks

University/Name of Framework	Framework Components
ASU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity • Turnaround Leadership • Data-Informed Processes and Use • Reflective Leadership • Alignment to Regulatory Context
FAU Five	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leader of Leaders and Learning • Reflective Practitioners • Transformative Decision-Makers • Relationship Builders • Visionaries with High Expectations
NC State Heart of Great Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity-Focused Leadership and Building Relationships • Leads with Vision and Sets Culture • Leads Quality Teaching and Learning • Leads Innovative Systems • Leads by Empowering Others
SDSU Five Types of Equity-Driven Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity-Driven Systems Thinking • Equity-Driven Data and Design Thinking • Equity-Driven Culture and Climate Thinking • Equity-Driven Learnership Thinking • Equity-Driven Operational Thinking
UCONN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional Leadership • Organizational Leadership • Talent Management
VSU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Self-Exploration and Knowledge of Self – Cultural Responsiveness – Trauma-Informed Care – Equity, Diversity and Inclusion • Core Competencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Instructional Leadership – Organizational Leadership – Transformational Leadership
WKU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity • School Improvement • Instructional Leadership • Communication

UPPI programs increased their focus on “authentic work,” in both coursework and internships. Programs used problem-based, hands-on assignments based on actual school data. Stakeholders described the redesigned program experience as more “active,” “immersive,” “practical,” “real-world,” and “performance-based.” For example, instead of observing meetings, candidates had opportunities to participate on school or district committees, including being involved in teacher hiring and interviewing or instructional coaching. Most redesigned programs also required that candidates conduct a school improvement project tied to a school’s specific needs and engage a team of school staff or facilitate professional

BOX 3

UCONN Used Its Framework to Structure Its Core Assessments

At UCONN, three main competencies inform program features: instructional leadership, talent management, and organizational systems. Courses within the curriculum are organized around these three competencies, with tasks and assessments designed to build each competency. For example, the courses on instruction and intervention as well as curriculum and assessment are contained within instructional leadership, while talent management includes courses on supervision and performance evaluation, and organizational leadership includes culture and parent and community engagement. The cross-course assessments, described below, are also keyed to these three competencies.

Instructional Leadership	Talent Management	Organizational Leadership
<p>Tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead professional learning on Tier I instruction 2. Coach teacher(s) on Tier II/III instruction 	<p>Tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct instructional supervision cycle 2. Lead school improvement plan/district improvement plan-aligned professional learning 	<p>Tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess family-school-community (FSC) engagement 2. Diagnose improvement priorities 3. Report on school improvement initiative
<p>Deliverables (Artifacts):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professional learning planning memo 2. Professional learning report 3. Coach planning memo 4. Coaching report 	<p>Deliverables (Artifacts):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Observation calendar and pre-conference materials 2. Observation report 3. Professional development planning memo 4. Professional learning report 	<p>Deliverables (Artifacts):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Communication tool for key FSC assessment findings 2. Presentation of process and FSC recommendations 3. School improvement priorities memo 4. Infographic 5. School improvement report

SOURCE: University of Connecticut Administrator Preparation Program, *Student Handbook 2019–2020*, 2019.

learning communities to implement their plan. Overall, the redesigned clinical component aimed to develop principal candidates’ perspectives on school improvement and their skills in making decisions and leading others.

Clinical experience became more authentic, intentional, and personalized

Redesigned programs typically required a core set of clinical experiences, to give candidates an opportunity to practice critical leadership skills. Programs selected these experiences because they aligned with state leadership standards, state assessments for principal licensure, and the program’s conceptual framework or priorities. For example, in some pro-

TABLE 4
Personnel

Personnel	2019		2021	
	UPPI	Comparison	UPPI	Comparison
What proportion of the program courses are taught by the following personnel?				
Adjunct, part-time faculty and instructors	34%	24%	51%	31%
Full-time clinical faculty and instructors	18%	41%	36%	21%
Other practitioners	5%	11%	10%	22%
Tenured or tenure-track faculty	59%	67%	44%	56%

NOTE: Because some courses might be taught by teams, percentages might total more than 100 percent.

grams, candidates conducted equity audits or school climate audits as the courses addressed the topic. Some programs intentionally placed candidates in schools that were not their home schools for clinical experiences, to expose them to different contexts and leadership styles.

Programs personalized clinical experiences. While requiring candidates to engage in a core set of field experiences, programs also personalized clinical learning drawing on data collected during the candidate application and selection process, personalized professional growth plans, and conversation with candidates. Program and district staff—clinical instructors, supervisors, coaches, and other supporters—proposed specific experiences to support candidates’ leadership development.

Programs also personalized clinical experience by restructuring, strengthening, and expanding the candidate support system. Prior to redesign, candidates in most programs had access to university faculty and a school- or district-based mentor. As part of the redesign, some programs worked with districts to nominate, vet, select, and train mentor principals who had a track record as effective leaders. Two redesigned programs added a formal clinical supervisor or director/coordinator and two programs added a district-based cohort coordinator. All but one program had a university- or district-based clinical coach. Under UPPI, some clinical coaches’ role shifted from compliance monitoring to supporting candidates’ individual development. The university-based UPPI leads and program leaders at some of the sites established a low ratio of candidates to clinical coaches (around one coach for two to six candidates) to ensure frequent touchpoints, enable relationship-building, and facilitate substantive coaching conversations (see Box 4). Beyond coaching to support candidates’ skills development, clinical coaches reported being vested in the candidate as a whole person. They talked about being accessible (e.g., via phone or text) throughout the day to counsel candidates. They developed professional and also caring and trusting relationships with the candidates because, as one clinical coach put it, “being a principal is a lonely job.” Candidates from

different programs acknowledged the multiple important roles of coaches in their leadership development journey.

UPPI programs strengthened the use of cohorts

While UPPI programs had experience with the cohort model prior to the redesign, **they deepened their use of cohorts**. Initially, some programs offered non-cohort options, in which candidates entered the program individually at any point in the program cycle. Some programs offered de facto cohorts, in which individual applicants from multiple districts entered

BOX 4

ASU's Redesigned Clinical Component Is Characterized by Increased Candidate Support

Prior to redesign, ASU candidates fulfilling clinical requirements were largely supervised by a university-based research faculty member, who also evaluated candidates' performance, and an on-site mentor principal. Each faculty member supervised up to ten candidates, visiting each candidate on site about three times per year to observe, provide feedback, and touch base.

Post-redesign, each ASU candidate had the support of a full Leadership Candidate Support Team, which is composed of the on-site mentor, ASU leadership coach, and ASU clinical director. According to the Leadership Candidate Support Team Guide, this team

- meets at least two times each semester
- creates performance tasks to ensure that the clinical work is aligned with the Georgia Educational Leadership Standards
- examines the work of the candidate collected in a portfolio to provide feedback to support growth
- evaluates the progress of the candidate and establishes areas that need to be addressed,
- determines whether the candidate has completed the requirements of the clinical experience satisfactorily and makes recommendations for additional work, if necessary.

The leadership coach and clinical director roles are new. In its inaugural job posting, ASU described the clinical director as “the direct supervisor of leadership coaches.” In addition, “the Director coordinates with faculty, leader coaches, partner school districts, and candidate mentors to assure all components of clinical practice are planned, coordinated, implemented, evaluated, and revised as needed to provide the highest quality clinical experiences for candidates.” Meanwhile, leadership coaches “receive training on the use of performance assessment data (qualitative and quantitative) and provide specific feedback that will assist candidates in meeting performance criteria. Leadership coaches aid in the application of theory to practice through leadership work that closely aligns to [state educational leadership standards].” Leadership coaches and on-site mentors directly support candidates' individual growth by developing learning experiences that address their areas of growth as identified by a leadership skills survey.

the program at the same time and progressed more or less through the same courses. And five programs offered at least one full and closed cohort, in which candidates from partner districts entered the program together and progressed together. By the end of the grant, all UPPI programs were using the full cohort model.

The cohort structure supported the coherence of the programs and, in turn, helped candidates succeed on milestone and anchor assessments and possibly in their future role as school leaders. Instructors noted that because of the cohort structure and principal candidates' progression through a given sequence of courses, they could be more intentional in their instruction. Specifically, they could build on what candidates had learned in preceding courses, make connections to pressing topics across concurrent courses, and set up lines of inquiry to build toward later courses.

The cohort model also helped candidates develop a peer support network to sustain them through and beyond the program. According to candidates, cohort members tended to work with each other, have study groups, and help each other troubleshoot problems they encountered in their current (teaching) roles or on their clinical placement.

Collaborating on the redesign process

Collaborative partners played an active role at all stages of the redesign process

Collaborative partners actively engaged in the redesign. Table 5 summarizes the primary roles partners played at each site during the redesign process. Across sites, the university led the overall initiative. The university engaged senior leadership and faculty in the redesign process. Typically, the university-based UPPI lead, most often the director of a preparation program, facilitated the steering group of leaders across the partner organizations. These groups met, intensively at first, to develop the vision for the program, work on redesign strategies, and, later in the process, share progress updates. The university also led smaller working groups, typically involving faculty and district leadership, on redesign tasks such as developing new courses. Regular meetings and communication helped maintain partner engagement and continuity in the redesign process. Partners credited regular meetings as the drivers for their engagement.

District partner roles in the redesign effort varied across sites, stages of the redesign, and specific tasks, sometimes acting as peers at the table and other times providing input and feedback. District partners also played a role in delivering the program they had helped redesign (e.g., serving on advisory boards and teaching courses). Compared with non-UPPI programs, UPPI programs used practitioners more in every category, especially in having practitioners help assess students and develop curriculum. In contrast to comparison programs during the same period, UPPI programs also increased practitioner involvement as sole instructors, and in curriculum development as well as in assessment of students for admission and graduation.

TABLE 5
UPPI Partner Organization Roles During Program Redesign

University Roles	District Roles	State Roles	Mentor Program Roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for keeping overall redesign on track (all teams) Led steering groups (all) Led working groups, with the exception of the leader tracking system LTS (all) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served on steering groups (all teams) Served on working groups as an equal contributor (most) Led LTS development (most) Served on multiple working groups (e.g., curriculum, internship, LTS) (some) Served on only LTS working group (some) Served on working groups primarily to provide input and district perspective on the university's work on redesign (some) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served on steering groups (all teams) Convened programs (all) Served on working groups (some) Provided state expertise (some) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served in both strategic and operational roles (most teams) Served as consultants or technical assistance providers (most) Served on working groups as a member of the redesign team (most) Shared tools and strategies on the redesign process (most) Communicated and collaborated with districts directly (most) Served on steering or working groups as facilitators (some) Served on steering or working groups as thought partners (some) Interacted primarily through the university partner (few)

UPPI team members reported that having a committed team dedicated to the mission was a major driver of the work. The university-based UPPI leads used a combination of pushing and enabling to maximize partners' engagement in the redesign process. For example, the UPPI lead or another program leader pushed for active participation in regular meetings and held partners accountable for timelines and deliverables. UPPI leads also acted as facilitators, creating opportunities for engagement (e.g., inviting faculty to professional learning community convenings) and rallying the team around a common vision. To build commitment, leaders highlighted external recognition of the work and found opportunities such as hearing from renowned educators to pique enthusiasm.

Program self-assessments and the development of logic models or frameworks helped the teams work together and kept the redesign process on track

The Quality Measures (QM) process helped programs identify gaps and track progress in addressing the gaps. QM (Education Development Center, undated) is a PPP self-assessment

tool and process, based on Darling-Hammond et al.'s (2007) research on exemplary principal preparation practices. The tool is designed to help PPP leaders and others assess pre-service PPP quality on six domains: candidate admissions, course content, pedagogy-andragogy, clinical practice, performance assessment, and graduate outcomes.

UPPI programs participated in as many as four iterations of QM: (1) as part of the initial application; (2) in 2016, at the outset of the effort, to identify areas for development and establish a habit of using evidence to shape redesign; (3) in 2018, partly to pilot changes to the instrument; and (4) in 2021, near the end of UPPI, to assess progress. Typically, programs involved their district and state partners and sometimes their mentor programs in the process. Programs struggled with the first iteration or two, in part because they did not typically have the data to document their program. Programs appreciated the push to document their assumptions about the program, the conceptualization of program design features, and the visible progress seen in the 2021 iteration compared with earlier rounds.

In addition to QM, **teams re-envisioned the program in the first year** to guide the redesign over the following years. They developed expectations for leaders who would graduate from the program, assessed the strengths and needs of the existing program using QM, developed a logic model to guide the redesign, and cross-walked the program against national or state leadership standards. (See Wang et al. [2018] for examples.) These activities sometimes led to difficult conversations that helped the team reach clarity about their common goals. Four years later, the UPPI teams reiterated the importance of having some tool—logic model, theory of action, or conceptual framework—to develop and communicate the core ideas of the redesigned program.

Each UPPI program was supported by a mentor program—a preparation program that had gone through a similar redesign process and was especially strong in an area that the UPPI program prioritized for redesign. **Mentor programs supported UPPI redesign, with the specific role shaped by the needs of the university and its stage in the redesign process.** Mentor programs served in one or more of the following six roles:

- *Member of the redesign team:* Participate in alignment activities (e.g., curriculum with standards or other key documents) and providing feedback on documents, as was required of all partners. At one site, the mentor program felt that it was “definitely a part of the core team. . . . I’m brought into all of the decisions.”
- *Facilitator:* Provide general support to the project director in managing operational aspects of the redesign process, such as facilitating work sessions, supporting planning and development of timelines, and documenting the work of the redesign team.
- *Consultant/technical assistance provider:* Primarily provide requested information and content or perform discrete tasks to support the redesign work.
- *Thought partner:* Help the university program redesign team and faculty to inquire and reflect deeply to arrive at decisions.
- *Network broker:* Help connect the university to other entities that could offer the information or support the university program needed.

- *Supporter of faculty research:* Help the UPPI programs develop articles and reports to disseminate their UPPI learnings. This could benefit both faculty (who needed to accrue publications) and the field (with new knowledge on the redesign process).

The focus and scope of the mentor program role shifted over the life of the project. For example, a mentor program that had served largely as a thought partner during the redesign for one site took on the technical assistant role in summer 2018 as the program prepared for implementation, leading PD for the instructors. Another natural juncture was after the launch of the redesigned program. At one site, by spring 2020, one mentor program transitioned from supporting program implementation to helping the university support other programs in the state to engage in redesign.

There was no single way to sequence the redesign work

UPPI programs were tasked with redesigning the application and selection process, curriculum and instruction, and clinical experiences, as well as building leader tracking systems (LTSs) to track results for program improvement. Teams reported that the three program components were interrelated, and they often worked concurrently on redesigning multiple components. For example, ASU worked on all three components and the LTS in 2018. FAU, on the other hand, focused on curriculum and instruction before turning to clinical experiences. Moreover, UPPI design principles—using data and engaging district and state partners in shaping the program—meant that even when a program component was being used with a cohort, the team was continually improving it. Thus, development was typically not linear.

As reported in Wang et al. (2018), teams began the redesign by focusing on curriculum, alone or with a second component; however, they may have launched the redesigned components in a different order. Five teams piloted or fully implemented their new curriculum first. Another launched the clinical component first, and another the LTS. Redesigned recruitment and selection processes were implemented alongside curriculum or as the next step for four of the programs. Redesigned clinical practices tended to follow the other components, and the LTSs were launched last for all but one site. (See Box 5 for an example of iterative development.)

The leader tracking systems were developed separately from the program components.

In addition to redesigning the program itself, UPPI sites committed to creating an LTS. The LTSs were designed to serve two stakeholders: preparation programs and their partner districts. The only requirement for this part of the work was to provide information about graduates back to the programs, to help programs identify areas for improvement. However, districts seized the opportunity to create “a database with longitudinal information about current and aspiring principals that would potentially support data-driven decisionmaking regarding principal selection, hiring, and support” (Kaufman et al., 2017). UPPI teams designed their LTSs to support district decisions related to PD, evaluation, long-term principal pathway planning, and assistant principal and principal placement. UPPI LTSs incor-

BOX 5

SDSU Tested and Revised Its Curriculum Throughout the Development Period

The SDSU redesign team iterated on the development of its curriculum over the course of UPPI. This process involved redesigning and piloting individual courses, revising the courses and revisiting the curriculum structure based on feedback from students and data from the state licensure assessment, and then implementing a redesigned curriculum. Although the process began in 2017, the “fully redesigned” curriculum was not implemented until May 2020.

In early 2017, the redesign team specified the skills and knowledge that a principal needs to be effective and conducted analyses to identify potential gaps in the curriculum. By fall 2017, they had revised the syllabi and piloted it in classes. Program leaders obtained systematic feedback from faculty and students on each course, reviewed student work, and monitored results from the state licensure assessment to identify areas for further improvement on specific courses and the curriculum as a whole. They also made changes to integrate core program concepts, such as equity-driven leadership, throughout the curriculum.

The initial plan was to focus on the redesign of the curriculum during the first year of the initiative and clinical experiences during the second year of the initiative. However, the university recognized that these components are inherently linked and ended up iteratively redesigning both over the course of UPPI. Anticipating this iterative approach during the first year of the initiative, program staff stated,

I believe that as we get results from the [state licensure assessment] this spring . . . and we start to look at the implementation and the changes that we want to accomplish in our clinical, we're still going to make more curricular changes, because I think there'll be additional things we realize. For example, when they go deeper into the clinical experiences next year, we're going to say, “Oh, we need to change this in the curriculum.” Or “Wow, this [state licensure assessment] part, we missed this one—our students are all getting a bad score on this rubric piece. We need to change this in the curriculum.” So I do think it's more of a cycle of curriculum than, okay, curriculum's done. . . . So we're going to be in a multi-year curriculum revision process to get this to where it needs to be.

During the 2019–2020 school year, SDSU rolled out a version of the redesigned curriculum, with the coursework and fieldwork integrated into three major buckets—instructional leadership, change leadership, and system leadership. When student feedback indicated that the sequencing resulted in an unbalanced workload for candidates, program leaders revisited the sequencing. The launch of the “fully redesigned” curriculum in May 2020 incorporated these additional changes. Thereafter, the redesign of the curriculum slowed, although feedback from students, faculty, and district partners as well as data from the state licensure assessment continued to inform continuous improvement efforts.

porate information on school-level achievement, prior training, and preparation program assessments on a range of individuals, including sitting and prospective principals.

The partnerships evolved to support implementation

After the redesigned programs were launched, most teams reduced the number of formal, cross-team meetings to once or twice per month or even less often. The districts' role shifted from actively engaging in the redesign to supporting implementation, working on focused tasks, or getting progress reports. In the last two years, most programs shifted from frequent full-team meetings to meeting with specific districts about their cohorts. By the end of the redesign, routines had been established, formal and informal channels of communication were open, and patterns of meetings had been established, so there was little additional effort needed to continue the relationship.

Redesign and implementation processes incorporated continuous improvement

All sites recognized the importance of continuously improving their redesigned program—that redesign was not a “once-and-done” process. UPPI LTSs were designed to help programs use data for improvement. Most teams indicated in spring 2021 they would be able to use their LTS for improvement, and some had already begun the practice at that time. Programs also committed to intentionally collecting multiple forms of data from a range of stakeholders, including annual principal candidate surveys, end-of-semester candidate focus groups, candidate work products, faculty focus groups, and district partners' feedback.

Teams took steps to institutionalize the redesign features, as well as the partnership and process of continuous improvement

UPPI teams used several strategies to sustain the redesigned program: documentation of decisions and processes, hard funding from their university for additional program positions, and shifts in the faculty culture towards sharing responsibility for the curriculum. University program leaders briefed their university administrators regularly on the redesign progress and helped strategize about how administrators could use the UPPI work in their conversations with other university programs and external stakeholders. University program leaders also negotiated shifts in funding to sustain the program, such as reorganizing the fee structure to manage program costs.

Teams used external advisory groups and within-program processes, such as having staff lead data analysis and improvement activities every term, to institutionalize the improvement process. For example, one site established an advisory board of superintendents, alumnae, faculty, state leaders, and professional association leaders; the board monitors the program and provides institutional memory when there is a transition in key program staff.

Extending lessons learned

UPPI programs extended lessons learned from the program redesign efforts through their respective state principal preparation systems. For example, UPPI programs brought on new district partners, helped districts incorporate the UPPI approaches to PD up and down the principal pathway, shared lessons learned from UPPI with other programs across the state, and helped inform state policy.

Universities scaled their redesigned programs by inviting additional districts, beyond their original partner districts, to become partners. Engagement with additional districts allowed universities to expand their reach. For districts, partnership opportunities addressed a need for principal preparation that was not being met by existing pre-service providers. One way in which the UPPI programs engaged with new district partners was to branch out from an initial, discrete initiative. For example, the Long Beach School District initially reached out to SDSU to develop a certificate program for district administrators who supervise principals. The partnership between Long Beach and SDSU evolved into a more formal arrangement; now, SDSU offers a preliminary administrative services principal preparation credential program cohort for Long Beach candidates modeled on the UPPI redesigned program. Similarly, SDSU developed new programming for Garden Grove.

In addition to reaching out to new district partners, the grantees found ways to deepen the leadership development work within partner districts. UPPI programs and their partners took lessons from the UPPI program redesigns and applied them in other parts of the pathway. Most UPPI programs supported their partner districts in developing learning opportunities for aspiring or practicing leaders (“aspiring leader academies”). Some programs targeted teachers who want to develop leadership skills but do not want to be administrators. Others developed principal supervisor programs and “bridge” programs, designed to support the continuous learning of graduates until they obtain an administrative position. These new PD opportunities promoted substantive coherence across the pathway, as universities carried over their UPPI learnings and/or as districts shared lessons learned with district staff beyond aspiring administrators. This work also extended the emphasis on a partnership approach to professional learning when the university programs collaborated with district officials on the design and implementation of district PD programs. In some cases, the effort resulted in a new formal university- or district-based program that had not existed prior to UPPI.

Box 6 describes the example of a Virginia district that leveraged its partnership with VSU to build out formal, district-centered PD courses to support the entire pathway to the principalship from teacher leaders to principal supervisors.

UPPI program leaders found opportunity to play a significant role in state policy, by sharing their learnings with other programs at state convenings or sitting on—or leading—state policy committees. In all the UPPI states, there was at least one regional or statewide convening of PPPs to highlight UPPI work, and some UPPI states invited UPPI leaders to state-wide commissions in school leadership.

Challenges and mitigating strategies

UPPI teams navigated some challenges that impacted or could have impacted the program redesign. Below, we highlight challenges pertaining to recruitment, curriculum and instruction, the clinical component, and the redesign writ large. These challenges surfaced and were addressed at different points in the five-year initiative and reflected program- and university-level barriers, as well as the greater context in which the programs operate.

BOX 6

Henrico County Public Schools Built Out Professional Development Courses to Support Growth Along Every Step of Its Leadership Pathway

Henrico County Public Schools, in Virginia, credits UPPI for improving every step of its principal pathway:

I would say, it's all under one umbrella, but it was the development of a true, sustainable leadership development program in Henrico County. Beginning with teachers who aspire to be leaders, and now culminating [in] actually providing professional learning for our principal supervisors. So we have hit every level in preparation and building a true succession and pipeline in . . . four to five years.

Henrico built year-long PD courses, as follows:

- Aspiring Leader Academy for potential leaders, which was first offered within the district in 2016–2017, and which is anticipated to scale beyond the district through the region
- Assistant Principal Learning Series, first piloted in 2018–2019
- Principal Supervisor Academy, developed by Henrico, The Wallace Foundation, and the Center for Creative Leadership, which was initially offered to districts near Henrico because of the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2021) and planned to be statewide in 2021–2022.

For sitting principals, Henrico shifted from its traditional PD to a district-wide Learning and Leading Conference for principals and some teachers, first offered in 2018–2019.

According to the district leader, the UPPI work raised the visibility of school leadership in the district and created a window of opportunity where district leadership supported PD. UPPI funding supported the development of the academies, and guidance from a UPPI mentor program informed the design. Some of the topics addressed in the PD—such as leadership dispositions and equity—reflect VSU and partner district priorities discussed during the redesign. And at least one opportunity—the Learning and Leading Conference—paired a district leader with a sitting principal for each learning strand to incorporate both policy and practice.

Some faculty were reluctant to share ownership of their courses or shift courses from a theoretical to a more practical orientation

Most programs reported that some faculty members were reluctant to share ownership of program courses. Faculty were accustomed to developing and teaching their courses based on their individual expertise. In the paradigm of the redesigned program, however, multiple instructors collaboratively designed courses in line with program vision and candidates' needs. In any given semester, different instructors could teach a given course. Program content and implementation were shared and consistent across course sessions to ensure all candidates accessed the core curriculum. Some faculty felt this approach impinged on their intellectual autonomy. Some also were hesitant to deemphasize theory in favor of a more practice-focused approach in the courses that became a key feature of redesigned programs.

UPPI addressed these concerns with strategies such as shifting instruction responsibilities from tenure-track, research-focused faculty to adjuncts with more recent practical experience and less ownership of course content. In these cases, tenure-track faculty were not entirely displaced—they were reassigned to teach in other master's-level or Ph.D. programs. Programs also aimed to hire and build staff with collaborative approaches to instruction. One program released some adjuncts (i.e., not renew their contracts) who did not share in or had difficulty adjusting to the vision of the program. Another common strategy involved engaging faculty in constructing the redesigned curriculum or providing professional learning experiences to help them reorient their thinking around program goals.

The shift toward use of district-based adjunct faculty entailed orientation and supports for these instructors

The shift toward greater use of district-based adjunct faculty raised challenges for some programs. To effectively onboard these individuals, university leaders had to develop systems to orient them to big-picture elements, such as the context and purpose of the program and the redesign process, as well as specific elements of the program, including the design of the syllabi and pedagogical approaches. Programs also had to build in opportunities for district-based adjunct faculty to collaborate and meet with university-based program faculty. As one faculty member said, “Some of those courses are being taught, of course, by adjunct faculty that are right there in [the candidates'] school districts, which is a real strength, but also, there's the potential for drift that can happen.” Programs in which university-based faculty largely taught courses did not encounter this challenge to the same extent. Regarding training for faculty, one university-based UPPI lead remarked, “We really haven't done a lot of that because it's the experience of all of our core faculty; they know what we expect as far as teaching and approach.”

The most mentioned challenge, across teams, roles, and stages of development, was time to carry out the redesign work

UPPI partners noted that engaging in substantive continuous improvement takes time—time that was well spent but hard to find. They consistently reported time constraints that made it difficult to work on redesign, such as competing priorities and finding common times to meet with partners. The challenge was especially acute for small organizations, where each person had multiple roles, but larger organizations also noted this challenge. Several universities used grant funds to buy out a class, giving faculty more uncommitted time to work on UPPI. This was especially useful early in the redesign, to provide time for curriculum development. Some districts also mentioned the importance of embedding this work in district strategic plans, so the redesign work became part of their regular responsibilities.

Universities and school districts operate under different time parameters. One university, for example, talked about the difficulty of getting district partners together for meetings because district schedules are dynamic, and things often come up last minute. Some teams met virtually or on evenings and weekends to accommodate scheduling conflicts.

Partners have expressed the importance of aligning needs and goals in the process of the redesign work. Competing needs and goals within or across organizations challenged the redesign work. For example, some faculty had to balance their work on UPPI with conducting publishable research; the latter typically is important for advancement in universities. Several university-based UPPI leads helped their junior faculty develop research projects and publications out of the UPPI work, to resolve this conflict.

Turnover at all levels—university, district, and state—threatened partnerships and support for redesigned program

Teams experienced turnover at all levels of the partnership, including university project managers and faculty, district leaders, state partner leads, and state policymakers. Because the programs are at the focal point of the initiative, university partner turnover was the most crippling. Teams needed to onboard someone new, build new relationships, and align priorities. Teams developed strategies to ease turnover transitions. Most of these strategies were preemptive, including redundant staffing and cross-training staff, as well as documentation to ensure consistent processes and support onboarding.

Expanding partnerships can be challenging, highlighting the need to develop relationships between faculty and district staff

Although all universities were able to build new partnerships in addition to their original ones, not all prospective partnerships took root. Original district partners worked alongside the university in redesigning the program. That process built lasting partnerships in most cases and contributed to a program design that matched the districts' needs. Districts that joined the program after the redesign—and districts that sent candidates to the program

without a partnership in place—had less opportunity to work with the university and shape the program.

One way to ensure good relationships with partners is for the university to select partners with which it already has strong, long-standing relationships. The UPPI lead at SDSU provided PD for expansion districts for years and had strong relationships with district leaders there: “That’s why we chose those places, because we’re credible there.” When embarking upon new relationships, the university-based UPPI leads emphasized the importance of building trust and credibility with district leadership—a process that can take time and patience. UPPI leads also suggested being deliberate about potential partners. Districts dealing with internal crises and turnover may be less able to focus on building and sustaining a long-term partnership at that time.

As universities expanded to new districts, programs grappled with tensions between adaptation to meet local needs and adherence to core elements

Some programs made a strategic choice not to tailor their redesigns to the needs of specific districts. For these programs, expansion posed new questions about whether and how to adapt the redesigned program to the local needs of new partners. Program leaders had to consider how to ensure continuity and coherence across the different programs, even while they adjusted them to fit the local context. An interviewee at one such site stated that it was a challenge to ensure that each program “[reflected] the same program design, the same quality of content and pedagogy, and the same commitment for outcomes,” which is an inherent challenge with scaling up. One common approach to tailoring was to use partner district administrators as adjunct faculty. The approach posed challenges for some programs as they had to hire and train district leaders who had never taught in the program before.

To address these challenges, one site leveraged the QM process to examine each program, including those of the new district partners. This process helped to make sure that all programs reflected the same core values, structure, and high-quality instruction. To ensure the quality of instruction even with district leaders acting as new adjunct faculty, program leaders created on-boarding systems and paired these new instructors with core university faculty, and structured times for instructors to compare their course content and approaches. Overall, faculty members felt that this process of ensuring continuity and coherence across scale-up programs requires program leaders to “continually reinvest in what the program is,” by examining what is happening within the programs and “[staying] true to the program values that they’ve committed to.”

Summary and implications

Our study illustrates that it is feasible for universities—in partnership with districts, state agencies, and mentor programs that have engaged in successful redesign— to improve PPPs to reflect the best available evidence.

The UPPI required collaborative partnerships among multiple organizations, all with a stake in developing strong principals. Implicit in this approach was a recognition that the pathway to principalship is not defined by the PPP alone but rather is part of a system that includes districts and state actors.

Under UPPI, each program worked with its partners to develop an overarching framework that guided the redesign effort. The changes the teams enacted ensured the programs were more rigorous, coherent, and authentically connected to the work of on-the-ground school leaders. Throughout, the teams balanced having common objectives and structure with flexibility for their specific context and changing conditions.

PPP leaders considering a similar redesign might consider the following lessons learned from UPPI:

- Select district partners with an eye toward long-term commitment, and structure communication and work routines to build and maintain strong working relationships, especially in the early phases of the redesign.
- With partners and a research-based tool, evaluate the program’s strengths and gaps.
- Develop a common vision and plan early in the process, working through differences in perspectives.
- Commit to fundamental changes in the curriculum, instruction, staffing, and clinical experiences, if that is needed to achieve the common vision.
- Prepare for known challenges, such as turnover and conflicting priorities.
- Recognize that the flow of the redesign process may not be linear. Prepare to develop, test, and refine components of the program. Some components may need to be tackled together, others singly.
- Build systems into the work to collect data that allows the identification of areas for improvement and areas of growth.

Companion reports, listed on p. iii, provide additional findings related to school district and state leadership engagement in improving principal preparation.

Abbreviations

ASU	Albany State University
FAU	Florida Atlantic University
LTS	Leader Tracking System
NC State	North Carolina State University
PD	professional development
PLC	professional learning community
PPP	principal preparation program
QM	Quality Measures
SDSU	San Diego State University
UConn	University of Connecticut
UPPI	University Principal Preparation Initiative
VSU	Virginia State University
WKU	Western Kentucky University

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The job of the school principal has become much more complex and demanding over the past several decades. Many university-based principal preparation programs—which prepare the majority of school principals—have struggled with how to make the fundamental changes needed to prepare principals for today’s schools. To test a path forward, The Wallace Foundation provided grants to seven universities and their partners to redesign their principal preparation programs in line with research-supported practices. This targeted report shares findings from the RAND Corporation’s five-year study of The Wallace Foundation’s University Principal Preparation Initiative (UPPI), with an emphasis on findings for other principal preparation programs.

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