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Implementing for Sustainability

Principal Pipelines in Four Districts

Ellen Goldring
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Mollie Rubin
POLICY STUDIES ASSOCIATES

Kathryn James McGraw
VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

VANDERBILT Peabody College
POLICY STUDIES ASSOCIATES
Wallace

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Executive Summary

Central office leaders continually implement strategic initiatives to address goals and improvement efforts. One such area of ongoing change efforts relates to developing strategic and systematic approaches to recruiting, hiring, and supporting effective school leaders. In the face of principal turnover and waning interest in the education profession, principal pipelines are one approach to support and develop effective school leadership (Gates et al., 2020; Snodgrass Rangel, 2018).

In September 2019, The Wallace Foundation convened 84 school districts to participate in the Principal Pipeline Learning Community (PPLC) to plan, develop, and learn from one another about principal pipelines. The learning community was formed around the evidence that teacher and student outcomes can improve when districts develop principal pipelines (Gates et al., 2019). PPLC districts received support to develop and plan for pipeline improvement, but they received no funds to implement changes. Importantly, not all districts began at the same place; for example, some had longstanding programming and district leaders wanted to ensure that programs were evidence-based and that programming components were aligned both with each other and the overall vision of the district. Other districts started from scratch. Regardless of where districts began when joining the PPLC, they all went through a formal process early on to help prioritize their areas of need and focus. Over time, districts transitioned from designing principal pipelines to implementing them.

In this report, we ask:

- How do central office leaders sustain principal pipelines in the face of ongoing and changing contexts?
- What actions, contexts, and approaches contribute to sustainable pipelines?

Sustainability refers to "a change that perpetuates itself as the 'new normal' that is sustained by local actors beyond the project" (Woltering et al., 2019, p. 4).

We present case studies of four districts as examples of districts whose pipelines demonstrate implementation of sustainability. The four districts are the Newark Board of Education, Greenville County Schools, the School District of Philadelphia, and Cumberland County Schools. These districts were selected based on earlier rounds of data collection as well as additional interviews with central office leaders and the consultants who worked with the PPLC districts.

This report presents a guiding framework for implementation of new initiatives, including creating and improving principal pipelines (see Figure 3, page 6). Although the framework is applied to principal pipelines, it can guide district actions toward sustainability in other

realms as well. This report highlights the importance of implementing for sustainability early in a change process as an ongoing part of planning and developing principal pipelines.

The district case studies detail how they each approached implementing principal pipelines for sustainability. The report concludes by describing common approaches and actions across the four districts to offer recommendations for districts seeking to implement principal pipelines—or other improvement initiatives—in a sustainable manner (summarized in Figure 11, pages 42-43).

The four district case studies suggest recommendations for implementing principal pipelines for sustainability. Sustainable principal pipelines include:

- **A vocal champion who communicates the vision for leadership pipelines**. In every district, high-level district leadership—such as the superintendent and/or deputy and assistant superintendents—set the tone that the pipeline was a central path through which to achieve the district's improvement goals. This organizational awareness reinforced a culture of valuing leaders and leader development.
- **A pipeline leader who acts as the "hub."** Each district had a single, key leader in the central office who coordinated across different departments. This leader had clear responsibility and authority within the district's organizational chart and had access to resources to align the work of pipelines across multiple departments.
- **Central office coordination, including revised job descriptions to foster collaboration around the pipeline**. Central office departments worked to break down silos and create cross-departmental coordination—such as between human resources and school support—which created coherence around the pipeline goals, programming, and desired outcomes. Multiple districts specifically linked refocusing the role of principal supervisors (i.e., developing a principal's instructional leadership) with the continuum of pipeline programming. Districts gave staff in central office and schools resources (e.g., time, stipends, etc.) for pipeline work.
- **Alignment of pipeline evaluation metrics to broader district strategic goals and planning**. Districts relied on varying forms of pipeline evaluation data. This ranged from formal personnel tracking systems including longitudinal data on pipeline programming participation and principal retention, evaluation, and placement, to focus groups with pipeline participants and their supervisors. The data each district collected related to their specific goals for their pipeline actions and programs and documented "return on investment." The focus on return on investment rooted in data supported the continual allocation of resources for

principal pipelines. Districts used data about principal pipelines to continuously adapt the pipeline as needed.

This report presents a framework to implement for sustainability, highlighting the importance of implementing for sustainability early in a change process as an ongoing part of planning and developing principal pipelines. Districts implementing for sustainability enacted an ecology of sustainability. The four district case studies highlight how districts adapt principal pipelines for sustainability and respond to changing needs, goals, and district contexts. The cases illustrate the sustainability framework in the context of principal pipelines, but the framework and these themes apply across district change initiatives.

Introduction

PURPOSE AND ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

Central office leaders regularly implement strategic initiatives to address goals and improvement efforts. Principal pipelines are one such initiative that continues to gain widespread interest as an approach to support and develop school leadership, ensuring all schools have effective leadership—especially in the face of principal turnover and waning interest in the education profession (Gates et al., 2019).

The purpose of this report, the second in a series on the implementation of principal pipelines (see Goldring et al., 2023), is to investigate the strategies and actions that districts employed to sustain durable principal pipelines. The research reported here addresses two questions:

- How do central office leaders sustain principal pipelines in the face of ongoing and changing contexts?
- What actions, contexts, and approaches contribute to sustainable pipelines?

In September 2019, 84 school districts came together to participate in learning to plan, develop, and learn from one another about principal pipelines. Participants in The Wallace Foundation's Principal Pipeline Learning Community (PPLC) included central office district leaders involved in leadership development and human resources. The learning community was formed on the evidence that teacher and student outcomes can improve when districts develop principal pipelines—a systematic approach to cultivating and maintaining a corps of effective school principals (Gates et al., 2019). Prior research in six districts documented strong evidence on the impact of principal pipelines on student achievement; pipeline-district schools with newly placed principals outperformed comparison schools in other districts after three years. The difference in student achievement was more than 6 percentile points in reading and almost 3 percentile points in math (Turnbull et al., 2013; Gates et al., 2019).

Research documents that while many district initiatives thrive on a smaller scale, their success cannot always be replicated on a larger scale (Coburn, 2003; Elmore, 1996). The PPLC was geared toward planning and developing principal pipelines in a broad set of districts. The PPLC included supports for districts as they engaged in pipeline planning and implementation (see Figure 1), but it did not provide financial support to the districts.

Districts engaged with the PPLC to make progress across the seven domains of principal pipelines as described in Figure 2.

Figure 1. PPLC Supports

Districts in the PPLC learning community engaged with numerous supports around their pipeline planning and development work:

- **Self-study guide**. *The Principal Pipeline Self-Study Guide for Districts* is a guide that central office leaders use to take stock of and improve their policies, processes, and structures around pipeline development. The guide, developed by Policy Studies Associates, steers districts through a holistic assessment of the current status of each domain of the principal pipeline, providing rubrics and guiding questions based on evidence-based indicators of implementation of each domain.
- **Early win**. Based on insights from the self-study assessment, districts weighed their needs and priorities, then selected and carried out a smaller, feasible task aligned with their overall change strategy. Districts wrote brief descriptions to document their work.
- **Workplan**. Each district was expected to complete a workplan based on the self-study guide, in which they set one-, three-, and five-year goals for pipeline domains.
- **Consultant**. Each district worked with a consultant provided by The Wallace Foundation who gave guidance periodically. Consultants met with district leaders to support their self-study, workplan, and ongoing development and implementation of pipeline domains.
- **Convenings**. Central office leaders from across districts came together in-person or virtually for discussions, support, and resources around pipelines. Convenings typically included presentations, as well as smaller breakout sessions for participants.
- **Knowledge-based resources**. Leaders were provided research-based resources, such as *What It Takes to Operate and Maintain Principal Pipelines* or *Changing the Principal Supervisor Role to Better Support Principals: Evidence from the Principal Supervisor Initiative* at convenings or through their consultants.
- **Statewide networks**. Districts from the same state were organized together to meet with their consultants to determine a statewide focus around principal pipeline development. These occurred in states with large numbers of participating districts.

As the PPLC initiative comes to an end, this report presents four district case studies to illustrate their approaches to implementing principal pipelines for sustainability.

The report first presents a guiding framework for districts to consider when implementing for sustainability. The report then presents four district case studies illuminating their implementation approach for sustainability of their principal pipelines, aligned to the framework. Although we apply the framework to principal pipelines in this report, the framework can also be useful to guide district actions toward sustainability in other realms.

The sustainability framework provides guidance on actions, practices, and approaches to implementation likely to lead to enduring and more durable change initiatives, especially when project funding and external support and expertise exit, and district leaders take ownership of the initiative. The premise of the framework is that sustainability grows alongside specific implementation actions and decisions.

Figure 2. Domains of Principal Pipelines

The seven domains of principal pipelines:

- **Leader standards**. Articulate what principals should know.
- **High-quality preservice principal preparation**. Develop programming internally or with university partners to ensure training and certification programs are aligned with district priorities and leader standards.
- **Selective hiring and principal placement**. Revise hiring and placement processes to be systematic and tied to leader standards.
- **On-the-job evaluation and support**. Align evaluation with leader standards and provide actionable feedback for improvement. Develop coaching and mentoring to promote growth.
- **Principal supervisors**. Improve support for principals.
- **Leader tracking systems**. Develop data management systems to streamline and leverage employee information to identify and support future leaders.
- **Systems and capacity to support and sustain principal pipeline**. Create a position or office specifically dedicated to leadership development and pipeline support.

Defining Sustainability

"A change that perpetuates itself as the 'new normal' sustained by local actors beyond the project." (Woltering et al., 2019, p. 4)

"How to ensure that what starts as an initiative (for example, to build an effective principal pipeline) becomes a system with the staying power to function well and produce benefits for years to come." (Anderson et al., 2023, p. 1)

IMPLEMENTATION OF PRINCIPAL PIPELINES FOR SUSTAINABILITY: AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH

School districts are complex systems that face continual change. New superintendents, turnover among central office leadership and staff, resource shifts and constraints, changing goals and priorities, and new or different political and policy contexts are part of the normal environments of central office leadership. Alongside these turbulent forces, districts continue to implement new initiatives to address improvement goals.

District principal pipelines are one such initiative to meet the goals of ensuring every school has highly effective school leaders. Principal pipelines are talent management structures focused on preparing, selecting, and developing effective school leaders to ensure a pool of educators who are well prepared to step into leadership roles (Turnbull et al., 2015). Because research documented that principal pipelines have measurable effects on student achievement and principal retention for relatively low cost (Gates et al., 2019), a growing number of districts across the country are planning and implementing principal pipelines as a leadership development strategy for their own districts (Diliberti et al., 2024).

Implementation for sustainability is a forward view of implementation that, early in the development of new initiatives like developing principal pipelines, considers how change can be embedded in a district's ongoing work and culture, leading to lasting benefits. The approach embeds sustainability and durability questions and considerations from the outset of the change process and integrates sustainability planning and actions throughout to ensure new initiatives can withstand and even flourish amid inevitable district and central office transitions. Unlike some change models that view sustainability as the final stage of the change process (e.g., Fullan, 2016), this approach conceptualizes sustainability as being present from the early stages of implementation (Adelman & Taylor, 2003; Hubers, 2020). Scholars emphasize the need to "escape the project mentality" (Adelman & Taylor, 2007, p. 57).

Sustainability of new initiatives requires substantial transformation of everyday practice so these practices can persist over time and result in improved outcomes (Hubers,

2020). Sustainability also implies continued review, acknowledging the importance of ongoing data collection and feedback to address changing contexts and make course corrections. Sustainable initiatives are rooted in ongoing formative feedback with flexible design thinking rather than a static model of fidelity of implementation.

Framework for Sustainability

> "If the outcome is important, attention to sustained use of effective practices becomes relevant. If the outcome is no longer viewed as important or relevant (e.g., a shift in priorities takes place), the practice is likely to be reevaluated and abandoned. One message is that first identifying an important, valued outcome and then identifying a practice that can produce the outcome may lead to more sustainability than identifying a practice and then determining how it can be sustained."
>
> —(McIntosh, Honer, & Sagai, 2008, p. 329)

Our framework for the sustainability of principal pipelines presents a set of features, or building blocks, to support sustainability, durability, and the "stickiness" of pipeline initiatives (see Figure 3 and Figure 11).

The sustainability framework is based on one developed by Adelman and Taylor in 2003. We modified and added to that framework based on our ongoing engagement with PPLC districts, learning from their challenges and successes, and the broader literature on system change. The framework guided district selection, interview protocol development, and analysis.

The framework suggests districts plan and work within four broad dimensions or pillars when implementing for sustainability:

- Ensuring Strategic Alignment
- Communicating Clarity in Intent
- Aligning Institutional Elements and Supports
- Maintaining Priority

Each dimension is defined by specific key facets that activate the dimension in practice. Applying and fulfilling these facets will, more often than not, help district leaders sustain principal pipelines. Figure 11 (pg. 42-43) outlines actions taken within each dimension and facet to promote the sustainability of pipelines.

Figure 3. Implementing for Sustainability Framework

DIMENSIONS	KEY FACETS	DEFINITION
Ensuring Strategic Alignment[3, 4]	Vision and Policy[1, 2, 3, 4]	◢ Articulating a clear, shared vision[1] ◢ Ensuring major policy commitment from all participating partners[1]
Communicating Clarity in Intent[3, 4]	Social and Organizational Awareness (Marketing)[1, 2, 3]	◢ Communicating the importance, need, and value of the change to stakeholders[1, 4] ◢ Raising awareness of needs and benefits[1, 4] ◢ Sharing of potential solutions[4]
Aligning Institutional Elements and Supports[2, 3]	Leadership Designation[1, 2, 3]	◢ Assigning a leader[1, 4] ◢ Empowering leaders[3, 4]
	Partnership Negotiation[1, 2, 3]	◢ Negotiating partnership agreements[1] ◢ Accessing external expertise[2]
	Resources (e.g., time, space, funds)[5, 1, 2, 3]	◢ Redeploying or adapting existing resources[1, 4] ◢ Acquiring new resources[4]
	Capacity Building (e.g., development of personnel and addressing personnel mobility)[5, 1, 2, 3, 4]	◢ Utilizing original personnel[1] ◢ Adding incoming personnel to account for inevitable turnover/ mobility and evolving needs[1, 2] ◢ Providing consistent and representative team leadership[4] ◢ Supplying ongoing training for change agents[3, 4]
	Infrastructure Enhancements/ Development (e.g., mechanisms for governance, steering, operation, coordination)[5, 1, 2, 3, 4]	◢ Articulating clearly essential functions[1] ◢ Mapping resources[1] ◢ Redesigning and/or restructuring central office governance and communication to support change[3, 4] ◢ Redesigning and/or restructuring central office practices and responsibilities to support change[3, 4]
	Policy Change[3, 4]	◢ Institutionalizing ownership, support, implementation, and coordination in organizational policy[2, 3]
Maintaining Priority[2, 3, 4]	Stakeholder Engagement[2, 3, 4]	◢ Facilitating ongoing and continuous internal and external stakeholder development and empowerment[2, 3, 4]
	Organizational Culture[2, 3]	◢ Fostering staff and stakeholder ownership of change[2, 3] ◢ Institutionalizing communities and networks to support the change[1, 2, 3]
	Evaluation and Accountability[3, 4]	◢ Establishing standards, evaluation processes, and accountability procedures[1, 3, 4] ◢ Evolving evaluation systems by staff managing change together with organization leadership[3, 4]

1 Adelman & Taylor, 2003; 2 Andreou et al., 2014; 3 Adelman & Taylor, 2007; 4 McIntosh et al., 2009; 5 Adelman & Taylor, 2003, p.4

Phases of Sustainability

Sustainability is embedded in the ongoing work of implementation—implementation and sustainability are intertwined, like a DNA helix. Consequently, sustainability proceeds in four phases (Adelman & Taylor, 2003):

- Creating readiness for sustainable change (Dimensions: Strategic Alignment and Clarity in Intent)
- Initial implementation (Dimensions: Clarity in Intent and Institutional Elements)
- Institutionalization (Dimensions: Institutional Elements and Maintaining Priority)
- Ongoing evolution and creative renewal (Dimension: Maintaining Priority)

The framework is intended to be a guide rather than an inflexible prescription. By following this framework, district leaders can fortify principal pipelines so they become a lasting and effective component of their leadership development strategy.

Methodology

CONTEXT

This report describes district actions and contexts that support implementation for principal pipeline sustainability in four districts. The districts participated in The Wallace Foundation's Principal Pipeline Learning Community (PPLC). The PPLC initiative lasted from 2019 to 2023. During that time, through surveys, interviews, and document analysis, the study team followed districts as they developed and implemented pipelines. Unsurprisingly, districts progressed through this work with varying degrees of success. By 2023, 45 districts remained engaged in the PPLC out of 84 who had joined in 2019. It should be noted that a global pandemic with severe school closures, disruptions, and staff turnover occurred during this time span. The PPLC also coincided with an unprecedented infusion of federal funding in the wake of the pandemic. Some districts drew upon this funding to support pipeline development.

In this second report related to the implementation of principal pipelines, the study team focused on how districts approached implementation of principal pipelines *for* sustainability, given the final year of the PPLC. The study aimed to learn from central office leaders how they had sustained their approaches and programs in their principal pipeline work. Through a series of informal discussions with PPLC consultants who had supported the districts throughout the initiative, the study team repeatedly heard that while some districts now had fully operational pipelines, others seemed to have gone back to the earliest stages of the work. Superintendent and central office turnover was one of the most salient features among this group, but there were exceptions. What allowed some districts to sustain their approaches and programs, while others were stymied? This led to the focus on sustainability to understand how in the face of ongoing change and uncertainties, some districts managed to not only continue principal pipelines but also thrive.

This report presents findings from interviews focused on sustainability with central office staff persons serving in lead roles for the PPLC initiative. The case studies presented also rely on survey and interview data collected earlier during the PPLC initiative (see Goldring et al., 2023 for details).

CASE STUDY DISTRICT SELECTION

In 2023, the study team engaged in a series of five open-ended, semi-structured focus groups with 10 consultants who were working with PPLC districts. The study team asked consultants to address their own sense of sustainability in principal pipeline work and in their vast experiences working with school district change. At that time, the team also

asked them to recommend districts that exhibited elements of sustainability and to share what those elements entailed.

These consultants provided an important lens on implementation for sustainability because they were guiding and supporting the districts throughout the initiative. For example, consultants guided districts as they developed their PPLC central office teams and engaged with the teams to work through the self-study guide and facilitated conversations about prioritizing domains of the pipeline. In many districts, consultants also served as sounding boards, guiding and mentoring central office leaders through the change process of principal pipelines. Importantly, given the turbulent times in which this work occurred, the consultants helped teams maintain focus and move forward, even when COVID-19 threatened to sideline pipeline development.

In addition to the consultant interviews, the study team reviewed data from two rounds of interviews conducted with PPLC central office participants in 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years and a survey administered in the 2021–2022 school year to select districts as possible candidates to examine sustainability. The study team interviewed the central office leader in charge of principal pipelines in 14 PPLC districts, based on suggestive evidence of the presence of sustainability dimensions and facets from prior surveys and interviews, as well as the consistency and depth of their engagement with the PPLC over time (such as collaboration with their consultant and participation in PPLC convenings).

The final interview guide and protocol followed the sustainability framework to explore the dimensions and facets of sustainability. The perspectives shared in this report are those of individual central office leaders and do not necessarily represent a district's overall perspective or experience with principal pipelines.

CASE STUDIES

District case studies present practices, policies, and contexts which illustrate elements of the sustainability framework. Cases also show how elements of the framework connect to one another. The districts profiled in this report—the Newark Board of Education, Greenville County Schools, the School District of Philadelphia, and Cumberland County Schools—illustrate the dimensions and facets of the sustainability framework in their implementation of principal pipelines (see Figure 4).

Each case presents contextual information about the district, an overview of the principal pipeline in the district, and descriptions of the practices and policies which sustain the pipeline in the district.[1]

1 Case studies include the seven pipeline domains (see above) when central office leaders discussed a domain(s) during the interviews, but the seven domains are not the focus of this report.

Figure 4. Sustainability Dimensions and Facets in Case Study Districts

Learn about the dimensions and facets of sustainability:

NEWARK BOARD OF EDUCATION, NEW JERSEY

Strategic Alignment
- Vision and Policy

Clarity in Intent
- Social and Organizational Awareness

Institutional Elements
- Leadership Designation
- Partnership Negotiation
- Infrastructure Enhancements/ Development

Maintaining Priority
- Organizational Culture
- Evaluation and Accountability

GREENVILLE COUNTY SCHOOLS, SOUTH CAROLINA

Strategic Alignment
- Vision and Policy

Clarity in Intent
- Social and Organizational Awareness

Institutional Elements
- Leadership Designation
- Resources
- Infrastructure Enhancements/ Development
- Policy Change

Maintaining Priority
- Organizational Culture

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Strategic Alignment
- Vision and Policy

Clarity in Intent
- Social and Organizational Awareness

Institutional Elements
- Leadership Designation
- Partnership Negotiation
- Resources

Maintaining Priority
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Evaluation and Accountability

CUMBERLAND COUNTY SCHOOLS, NORTH CAROLINA

Clarity in Intent
- Social and Organizational Awareness

Institutional Elements
- Capacity Building
- Infrastructure Enhancements/ Development

Maintaining Priority
- Organizational Culture
- Evaluation and Accountability

Case Study Findings

The Principal Pipeline in Newark: Pipelines as a Core Tool in District Strategic Planning

DISTRICT PROFILE: 2023

REGION
Northeast (New Jersey)

DISTRICT SIZE
~40,000 (41,672)

LOCALE[1]
large city

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS[2]
36% Black; 55% Hispanic; 8% White; less than 1% Asian, multiracial, American Indian, or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
24% limited English proficient
14% students with disabilities
81% free and reduced-price lunch eligible

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
66

SUPERINTENDENT TENURE
May 2018–present

JOINED PPLC
Year 1 (2019–2020)

1 National Center for Education Statistics. (2024).

2 Newark Board of Education. (2023).

KEY DISTRICT ACTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABILITY:

- Newark reached *strategic alignment*[2] by embedding the principal pipeline in the strategic plan (the district *vision* for improvement) which includes *leadership designation*, *resources*, and *evaluation* benchmarks.
- District leaders—from the superintendent to principals—create *clarity in intent* by internally and externally communicating the importance of ensuring that all schools have highly effective school leaders and emphasizing that the pipeline is the path to develop, support, and retain leaders. This fosters *social and organizational awareness*.

2 Sustainability dimensions and facets are italicized throughout the remainder of the report.

- A *designated pipeline leader* relies on redesigned central office *infrastructure* to coordinate the pipeline with internal *stakeholders* throughout the district and with external *partners*.
- Newark *maintains priority* by *evaluating* pipeline candidates' placement in administrative roles, effectiveness, and retention.[3] By clearly demonstrating impact and return on investment, this data demonstrates the importance of pipelines and contributes to pipeline sustainability in the face of central office turnover, maintaining the *culture* of developing leaders.

THE PRINCIPAL PIPELINE IN NEWARK

Newark's pipeline prepares aspiring leaders for the principalship and supports them as they start their leadership in the assistant principalship and move into the principalship. The core program in the pipeline is their university partnership for principal licensure, currently recruiting for its fifth cohort. This partnership was created simultaneously with Newark joining the PPLC in the fall of 2019. District staff, such as central office leaders and experienced principals, co-teach courses with university faculty. Participants receive scholarships from the district to help cover the cost of tuition but are responsible for some of the cost themselves. Ongoing support for principals, such as coaching by assistant superintendents, is also part of the principal pipeline. The district supplements the licensure program and ongoing supports with programming such as the Black Men Rising and Latino Men Rising Coalitions, which recruit and support male leaders of color into administrative roles.

Why Pipelines?

Newark faces an aging population of leaders who may be retiring soon or who moved into retirement during the pandemic. The district wanted to have a well-prepared cohort of leaders ready to fill vacancies. They had an internal pipeline before starting work with Wallace in the fall of 2019, but it wasn't well defined or structured.

The principal pipeline is embedded in the strategic plan.

In Newark, the principal pipeline is at the center of the overall district-wide system of improvement, creating *strategic alignment* and *clarity in intent* by aligning the pipeline with the district's overall *vision and policy*. The pipeline is the core strategy to develop,

3 This is not a Leader Tracking System as described by Gates et al. (2019). The district tracks pipeline outcomes, such as how long it takes for pipeline graduates to move into building leadership and retention within the district.

support, and retain effective principals. The 10-year strategic plan explicitly discusses the principal pipeline and sets development and performance benchmarks, connecting *evaluation and accountability* to *vision and policy*. This is most explicit in the ways in which the plan emphasizes the importance of official structures for leadership development and an *organizational culture* that develops leaders at multiple levels.

Throughout the strategic plan, Newark makes connections between their overarching improvement goals and goals for the principal pipeline, stating "The Principal Pipeline is a key component of this strategic plan, and the principal is the lever [for change]" (Newark Board of Education, 2021, p. 18). The School Board's approval of the strategic plan created the imperative for district staff to enact changes to support the pipeline. The district set goals to "modify central office policies, practices, and procedures in support of the Leadership Pipeline" (Newark Board of Education, 2021, p. 49). These changes include *policy changes* such as aligning job descriptions and interview processes to leadership standards, aligning internal and external professional development to standards, and redesigning the interview experience for principal applicants and *infrastructure* such as *designating a leader* responsible for the pipeline alongside de-siloing efforts, streamlining central office functions.

The explicit connection between pipelines and Newark's strategic plan reinforces the district's *organizational culture* of valuing principals and leadership development. The strategic plan includes the goal to "increase and improve pipeline programs with local colleges and universities, HBCUs and Hispanic-Serving Institutions," connecting pipeline programs to "empower[ing] [staff] to fulfill their role in our mission" (p. 28). The strategic plan aligns *external partnerships* with the district's *vision*. Additionally, Newark identified a need to recruit and retain teachers and leaders who reflect their students and created specific programs, such as the Black Men Rising and Latino Men Rising Coalitions, within the pipeline to achieve this goal.

The strategic plan sets a timeline (see Figure 5) for developing the components of the pipeline ("domains" and supporting elements). Early on—from 2020 to 2021—these included aligning job descriptions with leader standards (i.e., *policy change*) and building stakeholder support for the pipeline (i.e., *stakeholder engagement* and *organizational culture*). From 2025 to 2027, key actions will involve ensuring the budget process includes the pipeline (i.e., *resources*) and making strategic decisions about modifying the pipeline (i.e., *evaluation and accountability*). Central office leadership created *evaluation and accountability measures* corresponding to the timeline in the strategic plan, which the director of staff development tracks and reports internally and to the public. After Year 1 (2020–2021), a narrative was created and shared. After Year 3 (2022–2023), a flip book of major accomplishments and benchmarks was created and shared. Both were highlighted at public board of education meetings and made available in various

Figure 5. Excerpt from "The Next Decade," Newark's Strategic Plan

4.3 Implement a district-wide Leadership Pipeline to guide the identification, preparation, selection, placement, and retention of school leaders for the district.

TIMELINE	
2020-2021	Adopt leadership standards; partner with college/university on preservice preparation program; identify a project director; revise principal job description; create authentic experiences for candidates; establish a Leader Tracking System (LTS) to provide data for succession planning; prioritize essential Leadership Pipeline elements and their costs; secure/reallocate resources to support the pipeline; establish a process for recommending pipeline candidates; and build stakeholder support for the pipeline.
2021-2023	Review and modify leadership standards to meet district needs; place Leadership Pipeline candidates into existing vacancies; modify central office policies, practices, and procedures in support of the Leadership Pipeline; and survey principals and assistant superintendents to assess the impact of the pipeline.
2023-2025	Ensure all job descriptions are aligned to the standards and explicitly detail responsibility for Leadership Pipeline support; improve/expand the range of data incorporated into the LTS; review authentic experiences for Leadership Pipeline candidates and modify as needed; and assess the quality of support assistant superintendents provide to principals.
2025-2027	Utilize LTS data to assess the efficacy of the preservice preparation program, and make strategic decisions about continuation, modification, or discontinuation; ensure the budget preparation process includes essential Leadership Pipeline elements and no additional funding is required; and annually review/assess Leadership Pipeline functions.
2027-2030	Ensure the process of reviewing and assessing all Leadership Pipeline functions is institutionalized and modifications are informed by data.

Note: Newark Board of Education. (2021).

languages via the district's website. By mandating periodic reporting, the strategic plan positions the Office of Staff Development to request additional *resources* as needed.

The strategic plan commits financial resources to principal pipelines.

The pipeline is so central to Newark's improvement strategy that a central office leader said there is an "assumed belief that we continue marshaling resources to support pipelines." This "assumed belief" illustrates how pipelines are institutionalized in Newark, ingrained in the *organizational culture* of the district. From the outset, the strategic plan inscribed in *policy* that staff should create the principal pipeline through actions like "prioritize essential Leadership Pipeline elements and their costs; secure/reallocate resources to support the pipeline" (Newark Board of Education, 2021, p. 49). In later and ongoing years—2023–2027—the district committed to "ensure the budget preparation process includes essential Leadership Pipeline elements and no additional funding is required." Newark uses a combination of federal and local dollars in the operating budget to finance pipeline-related expenses ranging from scholarships for pipeline candidates in university preparation programs to internal programming.

The strategic plan ensures human capital resources are marshaled for principal pipelines.

In 2018, the only position in the Office of Staff Development was the newly created director of staff development, the *designated pipeline leader*. As the work of creating and sustaining the pipeline progressed, the district added two additional positions: supervisor and clerical assistant. Resources were available because the strategic plan emphasized that the district must provide the Office of Staff Development with the resources and support needed to meet their goals. This ongoing *capacity building* was possible because the strategic plan prominently features the pipeline—dictating that staff align *resources* and central office practices to support the pipeline.

Evaluation Data Sustains Pipelines Through Central Office Turnover

"I have good evidence in my hands to share. I can share the success of the candidates being hired. . . . I can share all the people in the district at senior leadership positions that have some involvement or some hand in the pipeline. . . . So I have so much evidence, I have so many artifacts at my disposal that I can lay out this argument for anybody that asks."

—*Central Office Leader*

The Office of Staff Development helps onboard new central office leaders, such as assistant superintendents (i.e., *infrastructure enhancements*). When new staff join central office, their orientation to the district includes information on pipeline programming and associated outcomes measured in accordance with the strategic plan.

Current principals support principal pipelines by creating time in the workday for pipeline candidates enrolled in the university partnership to serve in a variety of non-administrative roles, such as teacher or instructional coach. Staff throughout the district—from central office to school buildings—prioritize allocating time (i.e., *resources*) to the pipeline because of its central role in district *vision and policy*. Principals also make *resources*, such as data from the school-wide information system, available to pipeline participants for use in pipeline coursework.

The superintendent vocally supports the principal pipeline.

Newark's superintendent is a strong advocate for the principal pipeline. He continually communicates the importance and value of the pipeline when speaking with district staff and across all public engagements, advancing *social and organizational awareness*. By regularly uplifting the pipeline with multiple audiences, such as community leaders and teachers, the superintendent affirms the pivotal role the pipeline plays in supporting district improvement and success. Via this *stakeholder engagement*, he cultivates buy-in across district levels and reinforces the district *vision*. For example, the superintendent

Communicating the Value of the Pipeline

"I have rarely heard [the superintendent] speak publicly when he does not specifically mention . . . the principal pipeline, the PPLC, the fact that we went through the self-study process, the fact that we have a five-year plan, the fact that we have this deep connection with our partner university. He rarely speaks to anybody when he doesn't talk about that. *And the reason is his philosophy about leadership: change does not happen in a school without an effective principal. The principal is the lever for change. And if the principal is going to be the lever for change, then it is incumbent upon us as a district to make sure that we are preparing as many good principals as possible.*"

—*Central Office Leader*

trumpets the recruitment and retention outcomes associated with specific pipeline programs like the Black Men Rising Coalition. By increasing awareness of how the pipeline develops and empowers key groups, his communication demonstrates the pipeline's importance and impact and further garners *stakeholder engagement*. The superintendent's consistent messaging around leadership carries through to other senior-level leaders, school-level leaders and staff, and the district's community engagement, maintaining an *organizational culture* of valuing and developing leaders.

A designated pipeline leader in central office coordinates the pipeline.

The designated pipeline leader fosters engagement and coordination with central office leaders.

The *designated pipeline leader* is the director of staff development. The director is responsible for "Continuous Learning for All," part of the strategic plan. In addition to the pipeline, this staff person also oversees initiatives like structuring professional learning communities (PLCs) and creating standards for aligned professional development for educators and all district employees. He sits on the superintendent's executive staff and reports to the deputy superintendent. This position within the district *infrastructure* gives his office authority to marshal financial and human capital resources in support of the pipeline. The director *builds central office capacity* by *coordinating* the collaboration of other senior central office leaders (e.g., assistant superintendents, directors) who work to support Newark's pipeline. For example, the director of staff development works with the director of employment in the human resources department to provide mock interview days, resume support, and other coaching opportunities for pipeline participants. He also coordinates joint efforts with the human resources and educator effectiveness departments for reviewing and redesigning job descriptions and evaluation protocols, ensuring that *policy changes* align with pipeline goals.

Additionally, the director of staff development works across departments to reinforce *policy changes* (such as position descriptions) related to the pipeline. He aligns

components of the pipeline with the district *vision* through ongoing coordination and *engagement with diverse stakeholder groups*, fostering widespread ownership of and commitment to the pipeline (i.e., *organizational culture*).

The designated pipeline leader aligns external pipeline partnerships with the strategic plan.

The pipeline leader coordinates the district's external *partnerships* related to the pipeline, such as with the teachers union and local colleges and universities. Their partnership with a local university preparation program is foundational to the pipeline. The university-district partnership has evolved since its inception. After observing disconnects between university training and district needs, the director of staff development developed communication *infrastructure* to improve alignment between the district's *vision* and goals and preparation coursework. Now, the director meets bimonthly with the university liaison to iterate and refine pipeline course programming. The structure of the preparation program changed, so that district staff such as the assistant superintendents, other directors, and a well-established principal, co-teach select courses alongside university professors to keep content grounded in the district's context and needs. The director structures these bimonthly meetings with routines such as a shared running agenda. The director uses this running agenda to pull in central office staff from other departments on an as-needed basis, acting as the hub of the university's relationships with other central office departments such as human resources or educator effectiveness. The director of staff development also uses these meetings to collaborate with the university preparation program to include the perspectives of other stakeholders, such as partner organizations working on other district initiatives. Additionally, the pipeline leader relies on pipeline participation and *evaluation* data to create transparency and inform hiring and placement decisions. This continual coordination relies on *social and organizational awareness* and *infrastructure enhancements* to continue *building capacity* in support of pipelines.

Data cultivates support for the pipeline.

The director of staff development collects and communicates *accountability* data, as required by the strategic plan (i.e., *vision*). He provides in-depth reports to the superintendent, board of education, and community on the status of the pipeline and pipeline-associated outcomes, as outlined by the strategic plan benchmarks and milestones. Such benchmarks include ensuring job descriptions are standards-aligned and assessing the quality of support assistant superintendents provide to current principals. In addition to strategic plan-mandated reports, the director of staff development provides quarterly updates to the superintendent and other senior-level leaders on the status of the pipeline and the time-specific goals outlined in the plan. By clearly demonstrating impact and return on investment, this data demonstrates the

importance of pipelines and maintains the *culture* of developing leaders in the face of central office turnover. For example, the district tracks how long it takes pipeline participants to move to the assistant principalship and/or principalship, their principal evaluation data once in the principalship, and their retention in the district. The Office of Staff Development and the Department of Human Resources regularly collaborate to collect data relating to pipeline graduates' placement, effectiveness, and retention. Because *evaluation and accountability* metrics align with district *vision* (i.e., the strategic plan), they position the *designated pipeline leader* to request additional *resources* for the pipeline on an as-needed basis.

CONNECTING THE KEY LESSONS

Newark's emphasis on the significance of leadership, from the strategic plan to the superintendent's messaging, undergirds the sustainability of their pipeline. This strategic alignment between the principal pipeline and the district's overall improvement strategy provides the director of staff development with the authority to iterate and refine various institutional elements—ranging from external partnerships to human capital and financial resources to district communication structures—to sustain the pipeline.

The Principal Pipeline in Greenville: Board Policy and Vision Support a Continuum of Leadership Development

DISTRICT PROFILE: 2024

REGION
Southeast (South Carolina)

DISTRICT SIZE
~80,000 (77,888)

LOCALE[1]
large suburb

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS
22% Black; 20% Hispanic; 50% White; 5% multiracial; 3% Asian; less than 1% American Indian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander[2]

18.8% limited English proficient[3]

15.8% students with disabilities[2]

55.7% "pupils in poverty"[2]

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
66

SUPERINTENDENT TENURE
May 2018–present

JOINED PPLC
Year 1 (2019–2020)

1 National Center for Education Statistics. (2024).

2 Greenville County Schools. (2024).

3 Royster, B. (2023).

KEY DISTRICT ACTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABILITY:

- The superintendent and other senior leaders foster *strategic alignment* and *clarity in intent* by continually emphasizing how the pipeline supports the district's success, creating *social and organizational awareness*.
- The *designated pipeline leader* draws on available financial *resources* and the expertise of central office and school leaders to adapt and sustain the pipeline.
- Redesigned central office *infrastructure* breaks down silos and facilitates the district's focus on developing leadership through the pipeline.

- Board *policy* enables the ongoing renewal of leadership pipelines.
- Cumulatively, these actions *maintain priority* by cultivating a *culture* of *capacity building* in support of leadership development.

THE PRINCIPAL PIPELINE IN GREENVILLE

Greenville's principal pipeline creates opportunities for educators to experience a comprehensive development progression for educators from the classroom to central office (see Figure 6). The director of staff and leadership development, the designated pipeline leader, coordinates all leadership development and support initiatives. This entire pathway is known as the Greenville County Schools Leader Academy, which recruits, prepares, and supports leaders to, during, and beyond the principalship.

Why Pipelines?

Greenville established the Aspiring Principal Institute in 2011, with additional informal support for beginning principals. The district further invested in a pipeline of connected programs, making them consistent internally and with one another.

The Leader Academy offers multiple professional advancement opportunities and forms of on-the-job support, both formal and informal, at each level of the continuum. For aspiring assistant principals and instructional coaches, Greenville operates the LEAD Institute, developing district-specific instructional leadership and coaching skills. Through partnership with two universities, teachers and instructional coaches can earn administrative licenses. Once staff move into an assistant principal role, Greenville facilitates an Instructional Leader Academy, ensuring knowledge and skills aligned with the expected practices of school principals. All new to the role meet with their offsite peer mentor in quarterly AP-mentor networks. An Aspiring Principal Institute supports readiness for the principalship. New principals complete the Principal Induction Program. Experienced principal mentors support these new leaders and further develop their own skills to build capacity in others as they prepare service in central office roles. The Principal Supervisor Academy and Executive Leader Institute prepare central office leaders to ensure every school has an equipped and effective leader. The district selects leaders for pipeline positions through a rigorous process involving multiple stakeholders and performance tasks. Greenville ensured coherence between each element of its pipeline through participation in the PPLC.

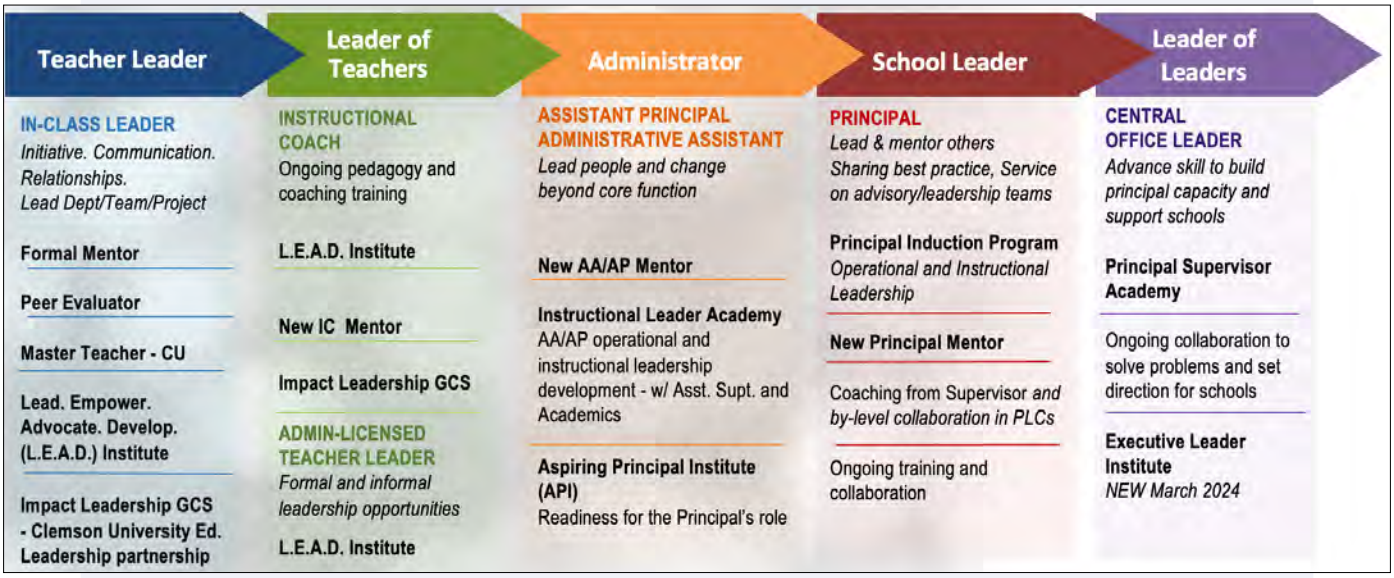
Commitment at the highest levels of district leadership maintains, sustains, and creatively renews pipelines.

The superintendent communicates the pipeline's importance and impact to various stakeholders.

The superintendent strongly sponsors the pipeline. He is physically present for pipeline sessions, such as the LEAD Institute for assistant principals and coaches and directly leads conversations in the Aspiring Principal Institute and Principal Induction Program. Additionally, he supports *social and organizational awareness* by highlighting the leadership development programming completed by a new hire when bringing them to the board of trustees. Eighty-five percent of first-time principals move into that role through pipeline programming. His advocacy and support ensure continuous financial *resources* for pipeline programs. The district funds various elements of the pipeline through general funds, Title II, and external partnerships, such as the capacity building supported by The Wallace Foundation's PPLC. When needed, the superintendent presents program-specific funding requests to the board.

Greenville's superintendent is directly involved in the ongoing evolution and renewal of its leadership development pipeline. He sets the tone that the pipeline is a key path to

Figure 6. Greenville's Principal Pipeline



Note: Byrd et al. (2024).

achieving the district improvement *vision*. For example, he initiated development of the Executive Leader Institute, supported selection of the first cohort, and recently gathered a panel of superintendents from across the state to broaden the cohort's perspective. The superintendent also brings together leaders from multiple central office functions to refine the district's goals and vision for the pipeline (see Figure 7). This revised statement, which emphasizes that the pipeline is a classroom-to-central office continuum, guides central office leaders to motivate widening and deepening pipeline programming in their internal collaboration and in presentations to board. He reinforces *organizational culture* and *stakeholder engagement* by continuously emphasizing the importance of leaders tapping other leaders, regularly communicating the expectation that staff at multiple levels—principal supervisors, human resources staff, and principals—individually encourage talented staff to apply for pipeline programs.

The designated pipeline leader has the authority to marshal resources to meet changing needs.

The district established the director of staff and leadership development position to institutionalize principal pipelines in Greenville. This director is charged with developing and enhancing pipeline programming, creating a standard of practice for principal

Figure 7. Greenville's Vision Statement on Leader Development

Our Purpose

We want skilled and committed school leaders who sustain a climate conducive to learning and the retention of quality personnel.

Our system of preparation, support, and evaluation develops leadership from the classroom to the central office, creating a pipeline of leaders focused on academic excellence and student well-being, so every student can reach their maximum potential.

We provide

- Pipeline programming aligned to standards and priority practices
- Strategies to advance the skills of administrators as individuals and in groups
- Proactive and responsive coaching and support to improve practice
- Evaluation of administrator effectiveness

Our Goal

Common understanding of the personalized preparation and support that ensures every school benefits from leadership that sustains commitment to common goals and positive impact on students.

Note: Byrd et al. (2024).

supervisors aligned with the pipeline, and making district pipeline components one coherent progression. She reports directly to the superintendent and sits on all senior cabinet councils. Because of her role's position in the district *infrastructure*, she has the *capacity* to understand evolving needs, ensuring the pipeline remains responsive. Given the director's central office position, the superintendent's consistent communication of pipeline outcomes, and the presence of leadership development in district *policy* and planning documents, funding is stable.

Over time, the director of staff and leadership development formalized and integrated previously disconnected leadership development initiatives, such as assistant principal meetings and informal principal mentoring, into a cohesive pipeline aligned to the district's overarching *vision* and leadership standards. She aligned the flagship Aspiring Principal Institute to standards and ensured experiential learning opportunities mirror the responsibilities of a school leader.

Recently, the district introduced an Executive Leader Institute focused on central office leadership at the director level and beyond. The district's multiple leadership development initiatives align with its leader standards and with one another, creating a full progression. The director of staff and leadership development noted that because the pipeline is Greenville's way of doing business, programming evolves to meet changing district improvement goals while preserving the district's *organizational culture*.

Board policy and district strategic planning enable ongoing renewal of leadership pipelines.

Greenville has a longstanding board *policy* requiring the development of administrators as leaders (see Figure 8). In addition to the board policy, Greenville has a purpose statement for its leadership development pipeline. This statement (see Figure 7) emphasizes the "why" of leadership development: the impact of leaders across all levels on student success. Together, the board policy and purpose statement set a *vision* for a throughline connecting leader development initiatives from the classroom to the central office, fostering *stakeholder engagement* at all levels.

Figure 8. Greenville's Board Policy on Leader Development

Cf.GAD: Professional Development Opportunities, General School Administration

In order to encourage staff members to increase their leadership skills and to provide training for maintaining an adequate supply of supervisory and managerial personnel, the district shall have a leadership development training program. The superintendent is authorized to set up and maintain such a program.

Note: Professional Development Opportunities (Cf.GAD).

The district's central office *infrastructure* evolves to develop and support school leadership.

The director of staff and leadership development coordinates *internal* and *external partnerships* to support the pipeline, with multiple departments fulfilling distinct pipeline elements. Elevated in board *policy* and the strategic plan, pipeline-related work is integrated into the responsibilities of all district staff. The director of staff and leadership development communicates with departments such as school supervision and academics to develop, implement, and refine pipeline programming and manages partnerships with universities for school leadership certification. Her role also includes reinforcing the strategic and instructional focus of principals and principal supervisors, in alignment with leader standards. *Infrastructure enhancements*—restructuring central office practices and responsibilities to align with pipelines—*build capacity* to support pipeline work.

Enhancing Central Office Infrastructure Supports the Pipeline

"... with the reduced case load for principal supervisors, we'll be able to reach our vision for capacity building through our assistant superintendents. Growing and serving school leaders continues to be prioritized in long-term resourcing."

—*Central Office Leader*

Greenville's *infrastructure* enables direct support to school principals for all operational functions, an ombudsman role to manage parent concerns, and an academic support office to assist instructional improvement. The district increased the number of assistant superintendents for school leadership, who are responsible for principal supervision, from four to seven and redesigned the configuration of schools among the assistant superintendents. Dedicating *resources* to these *capacity-building* changes not only reduced caseloads for assistant superintendents but also created greater internal alignment between the schools supervised. This broader network of structures cumulatively reduces competing demands on principals' and principal supervisors' time, enabling them to maintain their focus on strategic pipeline development and support.

Evaluation provides the data needed to message the pipeline's importance and make needed adjustments.

Greenville uses multiple forms of *evaluation* to assess its pipeline's successes and areas for improvement. Cohort feedback within each pipeline program and principal supervisor input is annually reviewed to refine curriculum for the subsequent year. Every three years, the director conducts focus groups with pipeline graduates to discuss the impact of the programming on their preparation and success. This feedback informs the content and structure of pipeline programming, leading to enhancements such as more

hands-on experiences in the Aspiring Principal Institute (API). *Evaluation data*, paired with the pipeline's role in achieving the district *vision*, equip the designated pipeline leader with the *resources* to implement such changes.

Greenville combines participant feedback with placement, retention, and formal and informal *evaluation data* for a holistic view of its pipeline's performance. The district tracks administrator development to the principalship, how long they stay in the role, and what proportion remain with the district. The district also calculates the proportion of new principal hires who are API graduates. Additionally, the director reviews school outcomes and culture surveys against principals' participation in pipeline programs. While very few principals later deemed unsuccessful were API graduates, patterns evident in principal evaluation led to program adjustments such as an increased focus on decision-making and communication skills for pipeline participants. This data facilitates the superintendent's communication of pipeline impact, enhancing *social and organizational awareness*. Furthermore, the district uses *evaluation* data to make ongoing changes, ensuring that leader development remains closely tied to the district's *vision* and needs.

CONNECTING THE KEY LESSONS

Greenville's dedication to leadership development is evident in board policy, district vision and planning documents, and the superintendent's messaging within the district and to the public. This clarity of intent provides the director of staff and leadership development with the financial and human capital resources needed to collaboratively iterate and refine various institutional elements. This sustains and deepens the pipeline into a cohesive pathway of leadership development aligned with the district's leadership vision and standards.

The Principal Pipeline in Philadelphia: Leader Standards Anchor Leadership Pipeline Development

DISTRICT PROFILE: 2023–2024

REGION
Northeast (Pennsylvania)

DISTRICT SIZE
~116,000 (116,115)[1]

LOCALE[2]
large city

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS[3]
50% Black; 24% Hispanic; 14% White; 7% Asian; 5% multiracial/other
19.8% limited English proficient
19.0% students with disabilities
100% free and reduced-price lunch eligible

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
249[1]

SUPERINTENDENT TENURE
June 2022–present[4]

JOINED PPLC
Year 1 (2019–2020)

1 The School District of Philadelphia. (2023b).

2 National Center for Education Statistics. (2024).

3 The School District of Philadelphia. (2024).

4 The previous superintendent served for 10 years (2011–2022).

KEY DISTRICT ACTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABILITY:

- District planning documents create *strategic alignment* by identifying leaders as critical to district success. The strategic plan makes recruiting, developing, supporting, and retaining leaders key to achieving the district *vision*. Leadership standards define requisite competencies and indicators along the leadership continuum, reflective of the district's *vision* and needs. The standards are woven throughout all other pipeline components to ensure alignment across pipeline components.
- *Institutional elements* in central office situate the pipeline for success. Pipeline work is spearheaded by a high-ranking *designated leader* with a well-staffed office which designs, implements, and *evaluates* pipeline programming. The office coordinates the work using redesigned central office *infrastructure* and engages external *partners*.

- The district committed internal *resources*—money and personnel—to support the pipeline but is also exploring innovative funding sources to further its growth and ensure fiscal sustainability.
- The district *maintains priority* by weaving monitoring, *evaluation*, and evolution into the pipeline.

THE LEADERSHIP PIPELINE IN PHILADELPHIA

Why Pipelines?

Philadelphia wants a bench of equity-centered leaders who are prepared to step into the assistant principalship and principalship. The leadership pipeline serves to systematize leadership development in alignment with the district's vision and mission, which identifies leaders as key drivers of improvement.

The Office of Leadership Development, through its leadership pipeline, is responsible for the strategies and approaches to identify and prepare leaders, while providing ongoing professional development and supports to strengthen and retain a cadre of strong leaders. Today, the pipeline embodies (1) a commitment to diversify leadership in the district to match the student body, and (2) the expectation that all leaders engage in equity-centered leadership to disrupt racial inequalities for students, staff, and communities (see Figure 9 for the office's mission and vision).

The Office of Leadership Development has built a leadership pipeline anchored by a set of programs, supplemented with required ongoing professional learning, and leadership coaching. Leadership standards clearly define expectations and competencies for all leaders and guide the ongoing development of the leadership pipeline. The principal pipeline now serves as an exemplar for the district's development of a holistic "grow-your-own" strategy that begins with paraprofessionals and extends through senior leadership.

The need for strong leaders is embedded throughout the strategic plan.

Accelerate Philadelphia, the 2023–2028 strategic plan, puts forth a mission and *vision* and core values for the district. The plan concretely links school leaders to these pillars, specifically identifying "centering schools and school leadership teams as the units of change," to "transform learning and life outcomes for all students" (The School District of Philadelphia, 2023a, p. 9).

The centrality of school and district leaders is evident throughout the five priority areas of the strategic plan. The plan identifies leaders as critical for achieving district goals

> "Why this strategy? Turnover in districts, especially turnover of school and district leaders, can negatively impact student outcomes. . . . Succession planning requires identifying talent who can step into critical roles immediately and ensuring they have the institutional knowledge and development necessary to do so efficiently and effectively. . . . Without careful planning for transitions, districts fall into the trap of simply replacing key staff members without the essential overlap and mentoring necessary to ensure more immediate efficacy."
>
> —*The School District of Philadelphia, 2023a, p. 31*

and concentrates on the recruitment, development, support, and retention of leaders. The strategic plan also recognizes the importance of organizing the central office to function in support of schools and commits to breaking down silos that interfere with the effective operation of central office in supporting school leaders, necessitating *infrastructure enhancements*. Finally, the plan commits to succession planning with a strong emphasis on leaders.

Leadership Pathways Framework formalizes a clear vision of quality leadership and shapes the pipeline.

The district clearly articulates its *vision* for strong leadership in its Leadership Pathways Framework (The School District of Philadelphia, 2022b). Within the framework are indicators of skills and behaviors tailored to different role types (e.g., assistant principals, principals, central office leaders). The framework is a developmental roadmap for educators as they progress along the leadership pathway to the principalship and beyond.

The leadership framework and its corresponding skill and behavior indicators serve as the roadmap for the design, implementation, and refinement of the principal pipeline. Relying on the framework as district *policy* justifies corresponding central office changes. For example, the district aligned the leader evaluation system with the skill and behavior indicators. When designing internally provided professional development for assistant principals and principals, staff members used *evaluation* data to inform content on areas of greatest need. The leadership standards also guided staff as they developed the content for and monitored the implementation of new programming.

Every year, members of the Office of Leadership Development reexamine the leadership framework, and adjust it based on the year's data and progress as well as changes in district initiatives. It is a "living document." The most significant revisions over time are within the area of equity-centered leadership, which is now embedded more completely throughout the other competencies. This is particularly significant because a core aim of the pipeline itself is to develop equity-centered leaders.

The Office of Leadership Development spearheads pipeline development and operation.

The *designated leader* of the pipeline initially served as the deputy chief of leadership development but has been promoted and is now the district's chief learning officer. He continues to oversee pipeline operations. As such, the leadership pipeline falls directly under a top-level member of the central office, who oversees all talent development in the district. This position within central office *infrastructure* positions the pipeline leader with needed authority.

As the pipeline grew, the district allocated *resources* to expand the office staff, *building capacity*. Some staff members are responsible for specific pipeline components such as internal development and support. Others, who are all former principals, serve as leadership coaches. Coaches are "seasoned, impactful principals" who provide direct support to school leaders, while a portion of their time is earmarked to support pipeline programs. In this way, *building capacity* by expanding pipeline coaching staff is in line with using district dollars to support people closest to classrooms. Though leadership coaches are members of central office, they maintain their designation as principals, including principal union membership. The union supports the pipeline because it grows future leaders and supports current members. Ongoing communication and collaboration with the union of school administrators created a *partnership* around a strong principal pipeline sustained by *stakeholder engagement*.

Figure 9. Mission and Vision of Philadelphia's Office of Leadership Development

Mission

The Office of Leadership Development cultivates, grows, and sustains equity-centered leaders.

Vision

Principals are recognized as the most influential leaders in the City of Philadelphia. Because their words and actions disrupt predictable racial inequities for our students, staff, and communities. All school leaders center systemic racism, and its intersection to amplify historically oppressed voices, and are responsive to identified needs in service to access and liberation.

Note: The School District of Philadelphia. (2022a).

The Office of Leadership Development plays another crucial role of meeting the district's priority of dismantling silos in central office. Though they are the dedicated office that supports the pipeline, they also "straddle" many other offices such as professional development, equity, and talent management. The director sets the expectation that everyone in their office should be reaching over and breaking down silos, redesigning central office *infrastructure* to effectively implement the district's improvement *vision*.

Strong partnership negotiation with local universities benefits all parties and breeds mutual commitment.

The district *negotiated a partnership* with two local universities that were chosen following a competitive RFP put forth by the district. The decisive selection factor was university commitment to *partner* with the district to develop leaders who were equipped to meet the district's needs. The district did not expect the universities to radically change all the courses, but they were clear that projects, guest speakers, and instructors needed to center the realities and experiences of program participants and embed the district's leadership framework.

Preparation Partnership Agreements that Reflect District Priorities

"We've really leaned on the language [of] responsive programming and the standards-based preparation aspect of things that we were clear in our RFP . . . to play in our sandbox, you have to use our competencies, our indicators for assistant principals, and principal development. . . . that regardless of what your scope and sequence look like at the university level, we need to see evidence of a focus on the things that we're prioritizing in the system."

—*Central Office Leader*

These two programs prepare approximately 30 assistant principals who are ready to fill openings in the school year. By the end of the 2024–2025 school year, three cohorts will have graduated, yielding approximately 100 new leaders. Now that there is widespread *social and organizational awareness* of the program throughout the district, the number of applicants far exceeds the number of spaces available, which is limited by *financial resources*: The district annually allots $1 million dollars to support scholarships.

Currently, the district is working on ways to further decrease program costs for participants. The $25,000 scholarship covers 90 percent of the tuition at one of the partner universities but less than half of the cost at the other. In light of this discrepancy, and because of the strong partnership, the latter university sought additional funding and further subsidized the cost. They contributed $15,000 per person to supplement the amount provided by the district. This was a clear win-win for both the district and the university, demonstrating how both parties allocate *resources* to enact their *vision* and strengthen the *partnership*.

The district is working to identify new funding streams to support and expand enrollment capacity. They are exploring additional *financial resources* beyond general operating funds, Title 1, and Title 2 dollars. For example, they are exploring apprenticeship dollars from the federal and state government and grants from private foundations.

The demonstrated impact on the district in the first two years made the university and district leaders proud of the partnerships, fostering an *organizational culture* of cultivating the *partnership*. When the superintendent joined the district, he met with leaders from both universities, and heard the programs touted as a "pride point," which solidified the superintendent's outspoken commitment to the pipeline. While turnover in leadership is often associated with large programmatic changes, strong *partnerships* and *accountability* positioned the School District of Philadelphia to *maintain priority* on pipelines in the face of turnover.

Sustaining the Financial Investment in Future Leaders

"... while a million dollars feels like a lot a year, in our larger budget, it's nothing. And if that's going to result in 30 additional district-chosen folks that could step into assistant principal roles the next year, and we've had a real hand in their development with our partners, and there they have their certification, then to me, it feels like just such a necessary investment that I don't see that it would get cut with all the things that we could cut."

—*Central Office Leader*

Monitoring and evaluation are woven into the pipeline.

The Office of Leadership Development is committed to ensuring the pipeline meets the needs of the district. Pipeline development and maintenance is an "iterative process." The *designated pipeline leader* expects ongoing changes to the pipeline to improve quality and ensure it adapts to meet emergent district needs and reflects district priorities.

The Office of Leadership Development has key *evaluation* benchmarks reflecting the pipeline *vision* and goals. One such "guiding light" is for the demographic makeup of teachers and leaders to match the students served. Reaching this goal will mean doubling the number of Black male leaders, tripling the number of Hispanic leaders, and quadrupling the number of Asian leaders. This has primarily shaped recruitment into pipeline programs.

Ongoing Reflection and Program Evolution to Ensure Intended Results

"I think the important thing is, first, constant reflecting year on year of what groups aren't represented. Who's doing better than others? ... OK, let's pilot something next year around this small group of folks. ... every year we were saying the subset of leaders really needed to ramp up their instructional leadership. It was what was holding them back to landing in the principal role. So, this year, we did an intensive instructional pilot with five of them. They got weekly coaching from our leadership coaches ... all about instruction. And it's been magical to see what's happened, which has just informed how we need to get so much more differentiated with who's in it."

—*Central Office Leader*

Pipeline programs are structured but nimble. The district collects participant feedback to capture their experiences. They also track demographic characteristics of program participants and people who are moving into new roles, three-year retention rates of program participants, and eventually five-year retention rates, too. By regularly examining *evaluation* data, pipeline staff uncover weak spots, wrestle with potential solutions, pilot new programs and supports, and adjust established ones.

CONNECTING THE KEY LESSONS

Philadelphia highlights the importance of school and district leaders as key levers to district success. There is a formal commitment to identification, development, support, and retention of equity-centered leaders, while intentionally working to increase their diversity by ensuring equitable opportunities. Working across central office and with external partners such as local universities and unions has made the pipeline a point of pride for key stakeholders, as well as focused resources, and evaluation and accountability.

The Principal Pipeline in Cumberland County: Central Office Structures Reinforce a Culture of Developing Leaders

DISTRICT PROFILE: 2023–2024

REGION
Southeast (North Carolina)

DISTRICT SIZE[1]
~50,000 (50,246)

LOCALE[2]
midsize city

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS[3]
46% Black; 16% Hispanic; 26% White; 2% Asian; 9% multiracial; 1% American Indian; less than 1% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
3.7% limited English proficient (1,838 students receiving ESL services)
15% students with disabilities (7,267 students receiving Exceptional Children's Services)
75% free and reduced-price lunch eligible

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS
86

SUPERINTENDENT TENURE
2018–present[4]

JOINED PPLC
Year 1 (2019–2020)

1 Cumberland County Schools. (2023a).

2 National Center for Education Statistics. (2024).

3 Cumberland County. (2021).

4 Cumberland County Schools. (2023b).

KEY DISTRICT ACTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO SUSTAINABILITY:

- The strategic plan positions leaders as the agent of change in schools and sets goals for principal retention, creating *accountability* for supporting the pipeline *strategically aligned* to the district *vision*.
- The superintendent created *clarity in intent* by committing to the pipeline as the path to develop, support, and retain school leaders. By championing the pipeline, he spreads *social and organizational awareness* and supports an *organizational culture* of valuing school leaders and leader development.
- Central office *structures* align pipelines with school and district needs and streamline collaboration in support of pipelines.

- The district *maintains priority* by continuing to adapt the pipeline to changing needs. The district expanded *capacity* for leadership coaching and assistant principal mentoring in response to pipeline *evaluation* data.

THE PRINCIPAL PIPELINE IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Why Pipelines?

Cumberland County had multiple motivations for investing in a principal pipeline. While they have had some leadership development programming for years, recent retirements—exacerbated by the COVID pandemic—motivated them to commit to institutionalizing a coherent progression of leadership development.

Cumberland County sees its principal pipeline as a path to build leadership capacity across multiple levels of the district. Programs target aspiring and current leaders at various stages of their careers. Recently, the district also created an initiative to recruit aspiring assistant principals.[4] The first cohort of aspiring school leaders finished the program in 2022. The district also facilitates the Leadership, Empowerment, and Administrative Development (LEAD) program for aspiring principals. District leaders tap principals to serve in a range of leadership development and coaching roles, such as facilitating LEAD sessions or mentoring new assistant principals or principals. The district frames the experience of coaching leaders as building principals' coaching capacity, ultimately preparing them for potential transitions into central office roles. The district also partners with the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association to provide professional development opportunities for central office leaders. Over the last four years, Cumberland worked to align these programs and practices, creating a coherent pipeline that recruits aspiring leaders into the assistant principalship and principalship and supports their continued growth while serving as building leaders.

The strategic plan's emphasis on leader development and retention fosters awareness of the pipeline and provides resources.

Cumberland's strategic plan has four priorities. The pipeline is embedded in all three key actions in the second priority, "Premier Professionals," (see Figure 10). Therefore, the district's improvement *vision and policy* document prioritizes all principal support initiatives in Cumberland, which are all part of the pipeline. Additionally, the strategic

4 As a part of the work with aspiring APs, Cumberland partners with North Carolina State University's Educational Leadership Academy (NELA). North Carolina State participated in the University Principal Preparation Initiative sponsored by The Wallace Foundation from 2016–2021, though Cumberland County was not a district partner in that work.

plan establishes *evaluation* metrics, such as the percent of principals in the district with three or more years of experience as a key measure of district improvement.

In cabinet meetings, central office leaders articulated additional pipeline *evaluation* metrics, creating more explicit goals for the pipeline than those set by the strategic plan, such as benchmarks for principal retention. Because pipelines are a path for reaching goals in the strategic plan, cabinet updates to the board include information on the status of the pipeline and pipeline outcomes. The pipeline leader also shares pipeline information with the board through a monthly "Headlights" document on key district initiatives. By communicating metrics with central office leaders and board members, the designated pipeline leader reinforces *social and organizational awareness* and *stakeholder engagement*.

Figure 10. Priorities and Measures in Cumberland's Strategic Plan Align with the Pipeline

Priority 2: Premier Professionals

Recruit, support, and retain impactful teachers, leaders, and support staff

2A: Recruit and retain premier professionals
2B: Develop equitable access to human capital
2C: Develop educator talent pathways and data-driven professional learning

Key Measures

2.1	% of teachers retained yearly
2.2	% of school-based vacancies at day 1
	% of school-based vacancies at day 40
2.3	% of all professionals in the district with 3 or more years of experience
	% of principals in the district with 3 or more years of experience
	% of teachers in the district with 3 or more years of experience
2.4	% of Hispanic teachers to % of Hispanic students in district
	% of African American teachers to % of African American students in district
2.5	% of teachers meeting or exceeding growth expectations
2.6	% of National Board Certified Teachers
2.7	% of certified staff agreeing with statements about professional development in school

Note: Cumberland County Schools. (2019).

Because the pipeline is directly connected to the strategic plan, staff in central office and school buildings are accountable for supporting the pipeline. Although central office job descriptions do not explicitly include pipeline responsibilities, staff districtwide work on the pipeline because it's part of their job responsibility to implement the strategic plan (e.g., central office staff and successful sitting principals facilitate LEAD programming). Relying on existing human capital in the district reduced the financial cost of the pipeline.

When the pipeline needs additional *resources*, the district finds ways to keep costs to a level that can be provided in the operational budget. For example, the district initially used ESSER funds to pay contractors to serve as leadership coaches for sitting principals but shifted to paying successful retired principals an hourly rate to coach part time. This change lowered the cost of leadership coaching supports for principals so that the operational budget could cover this program.

The superintendent's focus on school leaders facilitates the pipeline.

A Culture of Valuing Leaders

" . . . premier professionals–really growing and supporting and tending to the needs of our people–is a priority . . . that culture is at the core of who we are as a district. . . . [The superintendent] is sending out messages, *Oh, we just could not do this work without you.* Our culture is paramount in Cumberland County."

—Central Office Leader

The superintendent is highly committed to the pipeline, ensuring *social and organizational awareness* and tying leader development to the district *vision* as part of a larger focus on leaders as the lever of change. The *designated pipeline leader*, the associate superintendent of school support, describes the superintendent's outlook as "leaders creating culture and culture creating success." The superintendent collaborates with external *partners*, such as the university preparation program, and internal collaborators, like the associate superintendent for human resources, to ensure pipeline success. He is physically present for many pipeline activities, such as the LEAD program for aspiring principals and a state program for aspiring assistant principals. His presence encourages other central office leaders and sitting principals and assistant principals to similarly invest in the pipeline, supporting a *culture* of organizational learning and support for school leaders. Because the superintendent strongly supports leader development, *engagement* in the pipeline by central office and school building leadership became the norm.

The superintendent's focus on strategic planning and aligned improvement initiatives positions pipelines as central to the district improvement strategy (i.e., *vision*). The designated pipeline leader described how the district had "something called a pipeline"

for years, but that it did not truly create capacity in the district. Previously, the district did not have a clear vision for the pipeline; the pipeline lacked connection to other district goals and programs. The pipeline transformed once the superintendent instilled a unified *vision* for improvement across the district based on transformative leadership. Now, staff understand that the pipeline relies on existing human capital *resources* within the district and creates opportunities for professional advancement and support for leaders at multiple stages of their careers.

The designated pipeline leader coordinates across departments using central office communication structures.

Deconstructing "lanes" for Central Office Departments

"If you'd asked several years ago, I think there were a lot more silos than there are now. I think people are aware of the need [to support pipelines] because of the open communication that we have at the senior level and then the level right below. There are processes and structures in place for collaboration and consistent communication."

—*Central Office Leader*

The Office of School Support manages the pipeline. *Infrastructure enhancements* to central office communication structures de-silo departments and streamline cross-departmental collaboration. Other departments, such as human resources, collaborate with the associate superintendent of school support (i.e., the *designated pipeline leader*) to enact pipeline programming. Structured weekly cabinet-level meetings provide an opportunity for various departments to discuss rising challenges or concerns and how pipeline programming can adapt to respond to these challenges when appropriate. Each cabinet member designated a person in their department who is responsible for supporting the pipeline and liaising with the pipeline leader. Each month, the pipeline leader convenes these representatives from each department to adjust the supports provided to principals. She also participates in quarterly district improvement team meetings (a task force dedicated to monitoring progress on the strategic plan). These communication structures provide opportunities for the designated pipeline leader to coordinate with other central office leaders about resources needed to support the pipeline. They also ensure all leaders are *aware* of the pipeline, its successes, and its challenges, reinforcing an *organizational culture* of supporting the pipeline.

Central office leaders use multiple data sources to plan and implement capacity-building changes for the pipeline.

The *designated pipeline leader* understands the pipeline in the scope of the district's broader needs because she leads the Office of School Support. Positioning the pipeline with essential central office *infrastructure* equipped the leader with the data and authority to develop and adapt the pipeline. Recent school trends revealed a need for targeted leadership coaching for early-career principals. In response, the district hired principal coaches, extending pipeline supports for sitting principals. In addition, the district created mentor roles for current principals to mentor sitting assistant principals. This mentorship program extends the pipeline by honing successful principals' coaching ability. Providing professional advancement opportunities for experienced principals, then extends the pipeline to develop future central office leadership.

Continually Monitoring District Needs to Adjust Pipeline Programming

" . . . but out of that comes trend data . . . and so how can we layer in supports? I've hired additional coaches, leadership coaches, that can go out and work with some of those [principals]. So, it's really paying attention and being reflective. You know, sometimes meetings that were designed for something else help lend itself to very valuable insight into next steps for pipeline work."

—*Central Office Leader*

Additionally, the district is currently forming coordinated onboarding plans for school leader roles. The Office of School Support formed plans for the principal, assistant principal, and coach roles and is working with other departments to ensure these plans are comprehensive. Part of this effort is creating onboarding plans for central office roles to support principals' transition into central office leadership. The pipeline leaders' knowledge of overall district needs, given her position in central office *infrastructure*, facilitated this *capacity building*.

CONNECTING THE KEY LESSONS

Cumberland County cultivates an organizational culture of developing leaders. The superintendent and strategic plan reinforce this culture, demonstrating that the principal pipeline is a strategic priority. Maintaining priority of the pipeline as key to accomplishing district goals elevates institutional reforms that support pipelines. Reforms that support the pipeline, such as routines for information gathering and communication within central office, simultaneously support other district improvement initiatives.

Conclusion

There is not just one way to implement principal pipelines for sustainability. The Newark Board of Education, Greenville County Schools, the School District of Philadelphia, and Cumberland County Schools each implement and sustain their principal pipelines in distinct ways. Yet, each district demonstrates actions addressing the dimensions of the sustainability framework (see Figure 11).

Attention to sustaining principal pipelines is ongoing and is threaded and stretched throughout a district and across time. It starts with the initial planning of pipelines, through articulation in the district's strategic plan, to planning for pipeline core leadership, allocation of resources, and ongoing monitoring and review based on data. Sustainability is a continuous cycle, not an event or single domain; sustainability as an ongoing process is embedded in pipeline planning, development, and implementation throughout the phases of the change process: creating readiness, initial implementation, institutionalization, and ongoing and creative renewal.

We offer the following recommendations for districts implementing principal pipelines—or other district initiatives—in an enduring way:

- **Ensure the pipeline has a vocal champion that communicates the vision for leadership pipelines.** In every district, high-level district leadership—such as the superintendent and/or deputy and assistant superintendents—set the tone that the pipeline was a central path through which to achieve the district's improvement goals. This organizational awareness reinforced a culture of valuing leaders and leader development.
- **Designate a pipeline leader who acts as the "hub."** Each district had a single, key leader in central office who coordinated across different departments. This leader had clear responsibility and authority within the district's organizational chart and had access to resources to align the work of pipelines across multiple departments.
- **Break down central office departmental silos and revise central office job descriptions to foster collaboration on the pipeline.** Cross-departmental coordination—such as between human resources and school support—created coherence around the pipeline goals, programming, and desired outcomes. Multiple districts specifically linked refocusing the role of principal supervisors (i.e., developing principal's instructional leadership) with the continuum of pipeline programming. Districts gave central office staff and school resources (e.g., time, stipends, etc.) for pipeline work.

- **Align pipeline goals and evaluation metrics with broader district strategic planning.** Districts relied on varying forms of pipeline evaluation data, including formal personnel tracking systems, such as longitudinal data on principal retention; evaluation and placement outcomes for pipeline participants and the relationship with pipeline programming; and focus groups with pipeline participants and their supervisors. The data each district collected related to their specific goals for their pipeline and documented "return on investment," supporting the continual allocation of resources for principal pipelines. Districts used data about principal pipelines to continuously adapt the pipeline as needed.

This report presents a framework to implement for sustainability, highlighting the importance of implementing for sustainability early in a change process as an ongoing part of planning and developing principal pipelines. Districts implementing for sustainability enacted an ecology of sustainability. The four district case studies highlight how districts adapt principal pipelines for sustainability and respond to changing needs, goals, and district contexts. The cases illustrate the sustainability framework in the context of principal pipelines, but the framework and these themes apply across district change initiatives.

Figure 11. Implementing for Sustainability Framework, Applied to Principal Pipelines

DIMENSIONS	KEY FACETS	EXAMPLES APPLIED TO PIPELINES
Ensuring Strategic Alignment[3, 4]	**Vision and Policy**[1, 2, 3, 4]	◢ Develop, articulate, and adjust the pipeline and its domains to align with core district priorities and initiatives (N, G, P, C) ◢ Make explicit that pipelines are part of strategic plans and initiatives; pipelines align with and meet specific district goals and priorities (N, G, P) ◢ Demonstrate superintendent buy-in and leadership; bring pipeline successes and needs to the board of education (N, G, P, C) ◢ Articulate the need for pipelines as an evidence-based approach to hire, support, and retain high quality leaders (N, P) ◢ Develop and articulate a cohesive picture of the strengths and weaknesses across pipeline domains (self-study); set concrete goals for each domain, with a timeline (N)
Communicating Clarity in Intent[3, 4]	**Social and Organizational Awareness**[1, 2, 3]	◢ Develop awareness and interest in the principal pipelines across the organization from the highest levels of central office (N, G, P, C) ◢ Articulate a commitment to pipelines by the superintendent and district leadership (N, G, P, C) ◢ Communicate clearly the pipeline as a priority throughout the district; share plan on how to reach the outcomes/goals (who, what, when, where) (N, G, P, C) ◢ Develop awareness of and investment in pipeline and benefits through the organization (i.e., pervasive throughout central office and in schools) (N, G, P, C)
Aligning Institutional Elements and Supports[2, 3]	**Leadership Designation**[1, 2, 3]	◢ Ensures the work moves forward; champions the work (N, G, P, C) ◢ Assigns leaders with decision-making capabilities to the work (N, G, P, C)
	Partnership Negotiation[1, 2, 3]	◢ Coordinates cross-departmentally and owns pipeline priorities (cross-departmental team) (N, G, C) ◢ Performs outreach and communicates to external partners (e.g., universities, unions) (N, G, P, C)

1 Adelman & Taylor, 2003; 2 Andreou et al., 2014; 3 Adelman & Taylor, 2007; 4 McIntosh et al., 2009

Note: Districts taking each action are marked with the first letter of the district's name (i.e., C = Cumberland County School District, G = Greenville County Schools, N = Newark Board of Education, P = School District of Philadelphia)

Aligning Institutional Elements and Supports (continued)	**Resources (e.g., time, space, funding)[1, 2, 3]**	◢ Gives personnel dedicated time as a formal duty (N, G, P) ◢ Dedicates funding stream(s) (N, G, P, C) ◢ Works in cross-departmental teams to communicate and coordinate (de-siloing) (N, G, P, C)
	Capacity Building (e.g., development of personnel and addressing personnel mobility)[1, 2, 3, 4]	◢ Gives existing personnel dedicated time as a formal duty; hires additional personnel as needed (N, G, P, C) ◢ Commits to financial transparency through internal funds (not hidden operative costs with no budget for domains and programming) (N, G, P) ◢ Seeks external financial support when needed (G, P)
	Infrastructure Enhancement[1, 2, 3, 4]	◢ Invests on ongoing basis in developing coordination and coherences across core teams to build capacity and break down silos (N, G, P, C) ◢ Performs formal onboarding of new personnel (N, G, C)
	Policy Change[3, 4]	◢ Reviews and revises internal policies and practices to align with pipeline goals (e.g., hiring practices, PL/PD) (N, G, P, C) ◢ Solidifies commitment to leadership and pipelines via formal school board policy (G) and/or the strategic plan (N, G, P)
Maintaining Priority[2, 3, 4]	**Stakeholder Engagement[2, 3, 4]**	◢ Incorporates members across the organization (e.g., teachers, current school leaders, central office personnel) into the pipeline and its development (N, G, P, C) ◢ Communicates commitment/rationale of pipelines by district leadership to board members and other local leaders (N, G, P, C)
	Organizational Culture[2, 3]	◢ Works to address silos that typically partition leadership development into discrete, disconnected activities (N, G, P, C) ◢ Communicates openly and acts in ways that demonstrate the importance of effective school leaders (N, G, P, C)
	Evaluation and Accountability[3, 4]	◢ Sets clear goals and priorities and continually assesses movement toward those goals (N, G, P, C)

1 Adelman & Taylor, 2003; 2 Andreou et al., 2014; 3 Adelman & Taylor, 2007; 4 McIntosh et al., 2009

Note: Districts taking each action are marked with the first letter of the district's name (i.e., C = Cumberland County School District, G = Greenville County Schools, N = Newark Board of Education, P = School District of Philadelphia)

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