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# The Perceptions of Maryland School Principals on the Quality and Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates and the Role the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Has Played in Improving the Quality and Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates

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THE PERCEPTIONS OF MARYLAND SCHOOL PRINCIPALS ON THE QUALITY AND  
QUANTITY OF PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL CANDIDATES AND THE  
ROLE THE MARYLAND TASK FORCE ON THE PRINCIPALSHIP HAS PLAYED IN  
IMPROVING THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT  
PRINCIPAL CANDIDATES

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Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
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Title: The Perceptions of Maryland School Principals on the Quality and Quantity of  
Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates and the Role the Maryland Task  
Force on the Principalship Has Played in Improving the Quality and Quantity of  
Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this mixed-method design study is to evaluate how well the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented throughout the state of Maryland. The study examines Maryland principal perceptions as to whether or not the Task Force recommendations have been implemented in their county school districts. The study also examines if the implementation of the Task Force recommendations has made a positive difference in attracting quality candidates to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

This study utilized a mixed-method design that consisted of both quantitative and qualitative components. The quantitative component of this study was comprised of a researcher-designed survey that utilized a Likert-type scale to assess principal perceptions. The qualitative component of the study was comprised of both an open-ended survey question and post survey interviews with two school superintendents.

Based on the results of this study, acting principals in the state of Maryland perceive that a shortage of quality principal candidates does still exist, however, it appears that, as a result of school districts implementing at least some of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship

recommendations, the principal shortage does not appear to be as dire as it was ten years ago. Follow up interviews with two Superintendents from Maryland support the fact that a shortage does still exist, but is not as severe as ten years ago.

Other states facing a shortage of quality school principals may use this study and learn from Maryland's efforts to address their own shortages. The state of Maryland should view these results with pride, knowing that their efforts to address a shortage of qualified principals appears to be working. However, the state should look for ways to ensure that the recommendations are being implemented consistently across the state. Other states should also note the importance principals in this study place on internships, mentorships, and professional development. States should implement or continue to sponsor professional development opportunities for practicing and aspiring principals.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Effective educational leadership within any school rests in the hands of the adults who manage those schools. Researchers have observed, “At no other time in education have we needed quality leadership more than we do today” (Kaser, Mundry, Stiles & Loucks-Horsley, 2006, p.1). But increasingly, school superintendents are discovering that it is difficult to find quality candidates to fill principal vacancies. Numerous reports describe the shortage and point out that the shortage of qualified principal candidates is affecting schools across the nation in both rural and suburban areas (National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP], 2003)

The shortage of qualified principal candidates is caused by many reasons. The NAESP fact sheet states that the main reasons for the principal shortage are low pay compared to the required responsibilities of the position, the amount of time required to fulfill the responsibilities of the position, and stress caused by the demands of the principal’s position. These three reasons, along with other reasons described later in this study, are causing potential principal candidates to revise their career goals to include non-educational routes of employment.

In 1998, the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) conducted a survey of 21 state superintendents along with 121 individuals who were current principals, assistant principals, or aspiring principals. The survey was conducted to determine the participants’ perceptions of how severe the principal shortage was in the state of Maryland and their feelings on why there was a shortage. In December of 1999, the MASSP presented the findings of their survey to the Maryland State Board of Education. As a result of the survey, State Superintendent of Schools, Nancy S. Grasmick assembled the Maryland Task Force on the

Principalship. The Task Force was charged with the responsibility of issuing recommendations regarding how the state could increase the quantity and quality of school principals (Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, 2000).

The Task Force identified three main reasons why there was a lack of qualified principal candidates: too many job-related responsibilities of the principal's position, the lack of quality professional development to prepare and sustain principals, and low compensation.

Their findings are summarized in Appendix A. In August 2000, the Task Force recommendations were presented to and adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education.

In the summer of 2000, Maryland State Superintendent Nancy S. Grasmick created the Division for Leadership Development. Clearly stated, its mission is to “build the instructional leadership capacity of present and potential school leaders in the content and skills needed to increase student achievement” (Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework, p.1). The Division for Leadership Development plans and oversees various initiatives that address instructional leadership. These initiatives include the Maryland Principals' Academy, the Maryland Assistant Principals' Institute, the Leadership Learning Series, and the Executive Officers' Network.

The Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative grew out of the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. The purpose of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative is to provide “comprehensive, job-embedded and sustained professional development for new, aspiring, and veteran principals in order that they will ensure high quality education for all students” (p.1). The Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative relies heavily on the standards of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (Appendix B) to develop their

professional development for veteran practicing principals as well as new and aspiring principals (Maryland Department of Education, 2001, p.1).

The Maryland Division for Leadership Development has created publications that guide the professional development in the state. One publication, the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework, lists eight outcomes Maryland school principals are expected to perform. These findings are summarized in Appendix C. Each outcome lists specific evidences in practice to describe the minimum expectations of principals. Another publication created by the Maryland Division for Leadership is the Leadership Succession Planning Guide for Maryland Schools. The purpose of this publication is to provide Maryland school districts with guidance in developing their own succession plans.

In the conclusion of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Report, the Task Force expressed their desire that the state of Maryland act swiftly to respond to the state's "crippling administrator shortage" (p.35). This study will examine how quickly the state acted upon the recommendations of the task force, and if the state's initiatives have improved the quality and quantity of candidates applying for school principal positions.

#### Statement of the Problem

There is a crisis in public education today. School districts are finding that it is increasingly difficult to locate qualified candidates to fill principal vacancies. In 1998, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) conducted a nation-wide survey along with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) to determine if there was a shortage of candidates for principal positions. The results of their survey overwhelmingly pointed out the fact that there is a tremendous shortage of qualified principal candidates. Almost half of the 403 school superintendents surveyed reported that they were

finding it difficult to find qualified candidates to fill principal vacancies in their districts (NAESP, 2003, p.1).

Also in 1998, the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) started a 15-month investigation into the state principal shortage. MASSP surveyed the 24 state school superintendents, or their designees, and asked them two questions. To the first question, “In your opinion, is there a shortage of qualified potential candidates for secondary principal and assistant principal in Maryland?” every respondent indicated that there was indeed a shortage of qualified candidates for principal vacancies. The second question asked the respondents why they thought there was a shortage of qualified principal candidates. The responses fell into three main categories: failure of the state and school districts to identify and prepare aspiring principal candidates, failure of school districts to offer on-going support to practicing principals, and the high stress related to the principal position. Also, according to the NAESP, in 2002, Maryland anticipated 600 school principal vacancies for the 2003-2004 school year. That figure would mean that 45% of Maryland schools would be looking to hire a new principal during the 2003-2004 school year.

To address the principal shortage in Maryland, the state legislature passed a bill allowing school districts to hire school administrators who had already retired. These retired administrators are now allowed to collect their principal’s pay along with their retirement pay.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate how well the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented throughout the state of Maryland. The study examines Maryland principal perceptions as to whether or not the task force recommendations have been implemented in their county school districts. The method that will

be used to evaluate the implementation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations will be a survey sent to all Maryland principals. This survey can be found in Appendix F. These school leaders will be surveyed to determine to what extent the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force have been implemented in their school system.

Follow-up interviews will be conducted with two county school system superintendents to determine the level of implementation of the Maryland Task Force recommendations in their school system. The researcher hopes to gain an understanding of barriers which might limit the implementation of the task force recommendations and also gain an understanding of the superintendents perceptions as to whether the Maryland Task Force recommendations have been implemented in their school systems. The interviews will also help determine if school superintendents have noticed an improvement in the quality and quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates.

By examining the impact the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship has had on improving the quantity and quality of educators applying for principal positions, this researcher hopes to gain a better understanding as to whether school districts have implemented the recommendations, and if so, whether or not the implementation of these recommendations has improved the quality and quantity of principal candidates.

A detailed study on principal's perceptions of the implementation of the Maryland Task Force recommendations would be beneficial to the Maryland Department of Education (MDE) for several reasons. It would be helpful to the MDE to know the level of implementation of the recommendations in local school systems. MDE can also use the results of this study to determine if principals perceive that there is still a shortage of qualified candidates applying for principal positions. MDE can then assess how effective their efforts to address the shortage of

principal candidates has been over the last decade. Finally, the MDE may find this study useful in helping them determine which initiatives to address the principal shortage have been effective, and which efforts have not been effective.

Other states attempting to address principal shortages may find this study useful as they consider ways to address the shortage. The researchers will share the results of this study with other state departments of education, superintendents, and legislators.

### Theoretical Framework

According to the Wilde Research Center, “Programs whose objectives are to cause changes in participants are inherently theory-based” (p.2). The Wilder Research Center goes on to write in their publication *Program Theories and Logic Models*, “Program theories can often be captured in a series of “if-then” statements – if something is done to, with, or for program participants, then theoretically something will change” (p.2). In the case of the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, the program theory can be described the following way: If school systems “clear the plate” of extraneous job responsibilities so that principals can focus on matters of instructional importance, and if school systems develop better job-embedded professional development for principals and aspiring principals, and if the pay of school principals is increased to better reflect the responsibilities of the principal’s position, then more qualified candidates would be willing to apply for principal positions. The program theory of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative might be summarized with the following “if-then” statement: If the state provides better, all-inclusive, job-embedded professional development for practicing principals as well as aspiring principals, then student achievement will improve. This is because research shows that a principal who is an instructional leader has a positive impact on student achievement. Research on effective schools has continually shown

that improved student learning can be attained through deliberate school organization and effective principal leadership (Heck, 1992). Fullan (2000), points out that, “Principals must be instructional leaders if they are to be the effective leaders needed for sustained innovation” (p.16). He goes on to say that the key to leading this change a principal who are, “focused on the development of teachers’ knowledge and skills, professional community, program coherence, and technical resources” (p. 16). However, often times, principals spend too much time on managing the school. Steiner and Kowal, (2007). Steiner and Kowal write that, “there is a growing recognition among scholars and practitioners in the field that the demands place on administrators to become instructional leaders in their schools may be unrealistic if they cannot effectively delegate some aspects of their roles to others” (p. 1).

This study will utilize a logic model to illustrate and to evaluate the program theory of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship and the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative. By definition, a logic model is an illustration of the organization of a program. It is a simple visual depiction of the theory of change (Innovation Network, 2000). The logic model this researcher will use to describe and to evaluate the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative (See Appendix D) will identify the problem, goals, objectives, activities, and outcomes of the initiative. By evaluating the impact the activities have had on the outcomes of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative, this researcher hopes to gain a greater insight regarding the ways in which state and school systems can better prepare educators to become effective principals.

#### Definition of Terms

Certified: Refers to educators who have obtained the necessary state approval or license allowing them to legally serve as the principal of a public school.

Espoused Theory: What a program is supposed to do.

Logic Model: A visual representation of a program describing how the program will work.

Qualified: Refers to educators who are not only certified to be a school leader, but also have the necessary skills and character needed to be an effective principal.

Principalship: The status of chief authority in a public school.

Professional Development: Ongoing skill development, continuing education, or training to gain, maintain, or enhance job-related skills.

Program Theory: A reasonable and rational model of how a program is supposed to work.

### Assumptions

The major assumption of this study is that there continues to be a shortage of qualified candidates applying for vacant principal positions. The second assumption is that the Maryland State Department of Education has shared the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship with the local school systems in Maryland. The third assumption is that the superintendents and their designated leaders of the county school districts in Maryland are aware of the activities and training opportunities available to their principals and aspiring principals through the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative. The fourth assumption is that school districts are taking advantage of these opportunities by allowing current and aspiring principals to participate in the activities and training opportunities offered by the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative. The fifth assumption is that participants in this study are willing to share candidly their experiences with the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative and the ways in which the activities, along with the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship have made an impact in their school district.



### Delimitations of the Study

This study is restricted to the efforts by the Maryland State Department of Education and the school districts of Maryland in regard to improving the quality and quantity of principal candidates in the state of Maryland. Other issues that may arise during this evaluation study may not be explained or scrutinized.

### Limitations of the Study

Since the purpose of this study is to understand principal perceptions of the implementation and impact of one state's particular efforts to improve principal quality and quantity, a survey is appropriate. However, there are some limitations to survey research. Surveys are not effective at determining causality (Muijs, 2004).

Another limitation of this study is that the findings may not be applicable to a larger population. Since this study is limited to the state of Maryland, some readers may be reluctant to assume generalizability. While this researcher makes no assumptions that the findings can be applied in other state systems of education, the researcher will look for patterns, ideas and effective strategies that may be investigated at a later time.

Although this researcher will attempt to include participants from every county school system in Maryland, the findings will be limited to the volunteers who chose to participate in this study. An assumption was made that the volunteer participants were honest with their responses.

### Research Questions

1. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there a shortage of qualified candidates applying for principal and assistant principal vacancies in the state of Maryland?

2. As perceived by Maryland school principals, are Maryland county school systems implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, and if so, how are they being implemented?
3. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?
4. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates applying for principal vacancies in the state of Maryland since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?
5. Which remedies aimed at addressing the shortage of quality principal and assistant principal candidates in the state of Maryland are perceived to be the most effective in increasing the number of quality principal candidates?

#### Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate how Maryland public school principals perceive efforts by the Maryland Department of Education to improve the quality of educators seeking positions of school principals. This study will also investigate which programs and initiatives by the Maryland Department of Education have had the greatest impact on improving the quality and quantity of candidate seeking principal positions.

Chapter two will clearly demonstrate that there is a shortage of qualified candidates seeking public school principal positions, not only in Maryland, but nationwide. This shortage is affecting all areas of the country, including rural, suburban, and urban school systems. Although the literature supports the need to address the issue of the principal shortage, and noting that the

state of Maryland has been a leader in addressing the issue, there have been no studies that address what principals perceive as being effective in improving the quantity and quality of principal candidates.

This study will inform educational leaders at the district and state levels what principals perceive as being effective in improving the quantity and quality of principal candidates. These leaders may use this study as a frame of reference that can assist in revising, creating and implementing leadership preparation programs.

### Chapter Summary

Educational leaders of superior quality are essential to impacting the academic achievement of all students. However, there is a nationwide shortage of quality school leaders in all areas (rural, suburban, and urban) and at all levels (high school, middle schools, and elementary schools). Because of the ever-increasing demands of the principalship role and the lack of adequate compensation, fewer educators are considering school administration as a career. Combined with the large number of practicing principals choosing to leave the profession due to retirement or other reasons, the fact is clear that there is a shortage of qualified candidates seeking to fill the role of school principals in the United States.

Beginning in 2000, the state of Maryland began addressing this issue with a number of innovative, principal preparation programs. Governmental officials have also encouraged local Maryland school districts to address the shortage by improving the pay of their school leaders as well as lessening their work load.

This researcher has chosen to focus on Maryland's efforts to address the principal shortage due to the fact that he was an educator in Maryland and participated in many of the aspiring leader training programs that were a direct result of the Maryland Task Force on the

Principalship. The researcher was a principal in a Maryland school district which implemented some of the Task Force recommendations such as hiring school business managers. Also, the researcher chose to focus on Maryland because Maryland's educational system is considered one of the best school systems in the nation, and the state has been proactive in addressing the principal shortage. In a recent Education Week report entitled *Quality Counts 2008*, Maryland received an overall grade of a B. This report, often considered the "Consumer Reports of Education" (Maryland State Department of Education, 2008, p. 1), grades the nation and each state "based on their ratings across six areas of performance and policy: chance-for-success; k-12 achievement; standards, assessments, and accountability; transitions and alignment; the teaching profession; and school finance" (Education Week, 2008, p. 1). The average national grade was a C. Only two other states received an overall grade of a B; Massachusetts and New York.

Maryland has been taken several steps to address their ongoing principal shortage. This study will lead to a better understanding of which strategies Maryland principals perceive have worked best to address the shortage of qualified principal candidates.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study is to evaluate Maryland school principal perceptions about the effect the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship has had on recruiting, training, and retaining school principals in the state of Maryland. This study will explore, in depth, the three recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship and evaluate how well the state's 23 county school systems have implemented the recommendations of the Task Force according to Maryland principals.

The purpose of this chapter is to review the relevant related literature that is germane to the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship and to the theoretical framework for which this study is based; espoused theory, or what the Task Force recommended; and theory in use, the extent to which the Task Force recommendations have been implemented. Consequently, chapter two is divided into nine sections: The Historical Background of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship and the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative, Principal Shortages, The Role of the Principal, The Principal as Instructional Leader, Professional Development Training for Principals, Principal Compensation, Principal Retention, Clearing the Plate, and the Theoretical Framework for the Study.

#### Historical Background of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship

The Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) conducted a survey in 1998. MASSP surveyed 21 superintendents and 121 educators who were current principals, assistant principals, or aspiring principals (Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, 2000). In 1999, MASSP presented the survey results to the Maryland State Board of Education. The results

of the survey addressed the severity of the shortage of prospective secondary administrators as well as the perceptions of those surveyed as to why there was a shortage. Soon after, State Superintendent of Schools, Nancy S. Grasmick, commissioned a group of superintendents, principals, assistant principals, teachers, board members, parents, university professors, and students to study the issue of the shortage of prospective secondary administrators. This group, named the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, was asked to articulate recommendations on improving the quantity and quality of Maryland's prospective school administrators (Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, 2000).

The Maryland Task Force on the Principalship divided into three different subcommittees to research and to prepare recommendations regarding their consensus of the three major issues leading to a shortage in qualified administrative candidates (Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, 2000). One subcommittee researched the role of the principal in today's schools. The second subcommittee researched the professional preparation for administrative candidates. The third subcommittee studied the compensation and incentives used to attract qualified candidates toward an administrative role.

Together, the three subcommittee reports comprise the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations. These recommendations were adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education in August of 2000 and can be found in Appendix A.

The Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, along with two companion reports, the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Compensation Workgroup and the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Clearing the Plate Workgroup, serve as the framework for which the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative is based.

### Historical Background of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative

To address the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship's second recommendation, Maryland State Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Nancy S. Grasmick, created the Division for Leadership Development cohort of the Maryland State Department of Education in 2000. The directive of this cohort reads as follows: "The mission of the Division for Leadership Development is to build the instructional leadership capacity of present and potential school leaders in the content and skills needed to increase student achievement." (Maryland Department of Education, 2005, p. 1)

Since 2000, the Division for Leadership Development has provided professional development opportunities for new, aspiring, and veteran school principals and has acted as an advocate for principals serving as instructional leaders (Maryland Department of Education, 2005, p.1) Each year, the division sponsors the Maryland Principals' Academy and the Maryland Assistant Principals' Institute, which are year-long professional development experiences that also includes a summer residential institute. The purpose of the academy and institute is to help build leadership capacity for student achievement. The Maryland Principals' Academy also has regional chapters. These regional chapters function like a professional study group and are comprised of graduates from the Maryland Principals' Academy. These graduates meet two times a year to further explore solutions to challenges they first encountered as members of the Maryland Principals' Academy.

The Division for Leadership Development has also developed partnerships with a variety of other countries with the goal of fostering instructional leadership skills worldwide. To further bolster professional development, the division has designed workshops to help foster

instructional leadership goals for principals and aspiring principals. These workshops are titled the “Leadership for Learning Series.”

These are just some of the programs sponsored by the Maryland Department of Education Division for Leadership Development. Other programs include grant funding, a Principal’s Advisory Council, an Executive Officers’ (Superintendents) Network, Leadership Development Coordinators’ Network, and a Principals’ Fellowship and Leadership Development Program.

In 2005, the Division for Leadership Development created the Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework. See Appendix C. This framework “describes outcomes expected of Maryland principals as they provide instructional leadership for their schools” (Maryland Department of Education, 2005, p. 1). For each of the eight outcomes, there are evidences in practice that further explain what principals, as effective instructional leaders, should be able to accomplish.

In 2006, the Division of Leadership Development created the Leadership Succession Planning Guide for Maryland Schools. This planning guide offers school systems a wealth of information to help local school systems develop their own leadership succession plans. A sample plan is also included in the guide. (Maryland Department of Education, 2006).

The goal of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative is to provide continuous, job-embedded professional development for aspiring school administrators as well as new and veteran principals. The Maryland Department of Education believes that creating strong leaders will lead to improved teacher and student performance.

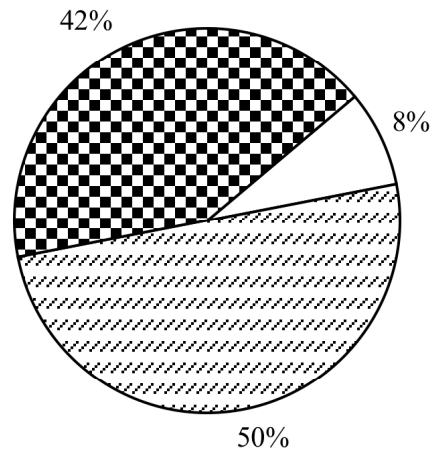


## Principal Shortages

There is a leadership crisis in public education. Research strongly supports the fact that an effective school principal has a great impact on successful schools. DuFour and Eaker (1998) state that, “The general agreement in educational research has been that the best hope for school improvement is to be found in the principal’s office.” However, more and more school districts are faced with a lack of qualified candidates to fill the role of school principal.

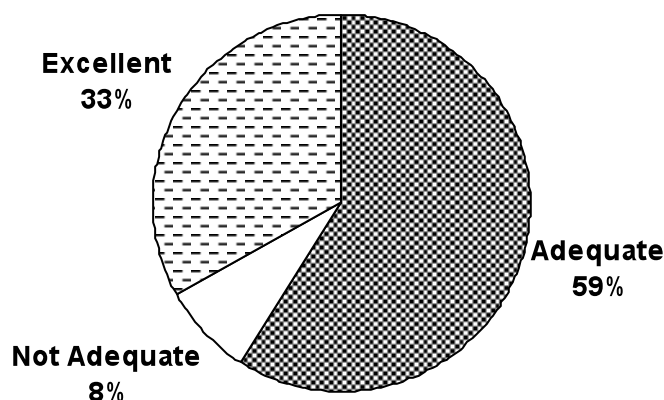
The problem is not that there aren’t enough people certified to be a school principal. Several states have more teachers who are certified as principals than available administrative positions. For example, in 2005, Georgia had 3,200 educators certified as principals, but only 2,000 schools. In New York, almost two thirds of the educators certified as principals are working in some other field related to education. Across the country, only about 25% of the educators certified as principals actively are seeking an administrative position. The reason is that many teachers seek the higher certification for financial gain, but have no interest in pursuing a principal’s position (Herrington & Wills, 2005).

In 1998, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) conducted a survey on principal shortages. When asked if there was a surplus, shortage, or right number of qualified candidates applying for principal positions, nearly half (47%) of the school districts reported that they faced a shortage in qualified candidates for elementary positions. Shortages of qualified candidates for secondary principal positions were even higher (55%). These shortages affected urban, suburban and rural school districts alike (Educational Research Service, 1998).



*Figure 1.* Shortage of qualified candidate applying for principal positions

The report also addressed the preparation of candidates for the position of school principal. When asked the question, “Would you characterize the educational preparation of candidates as being excellent, adequate, or not adequate?” nearly 60% of the superintendents who responded felt that the preparation of the principal candidates was adequate. Only 33% of the superintendents felt that the preparation of the principal candidates was excellent and 8% felt that the principal preparation was not adequate. The results were similar for both elementary and secondary principals.



*Figure 2.* Educational preparation of aspiring principals: Response of school district superintendents who hired at least one school principal in the last year when asked if they would characterize the educational preparation of recent principal candidates as being excellent, adequate, or not adequate.

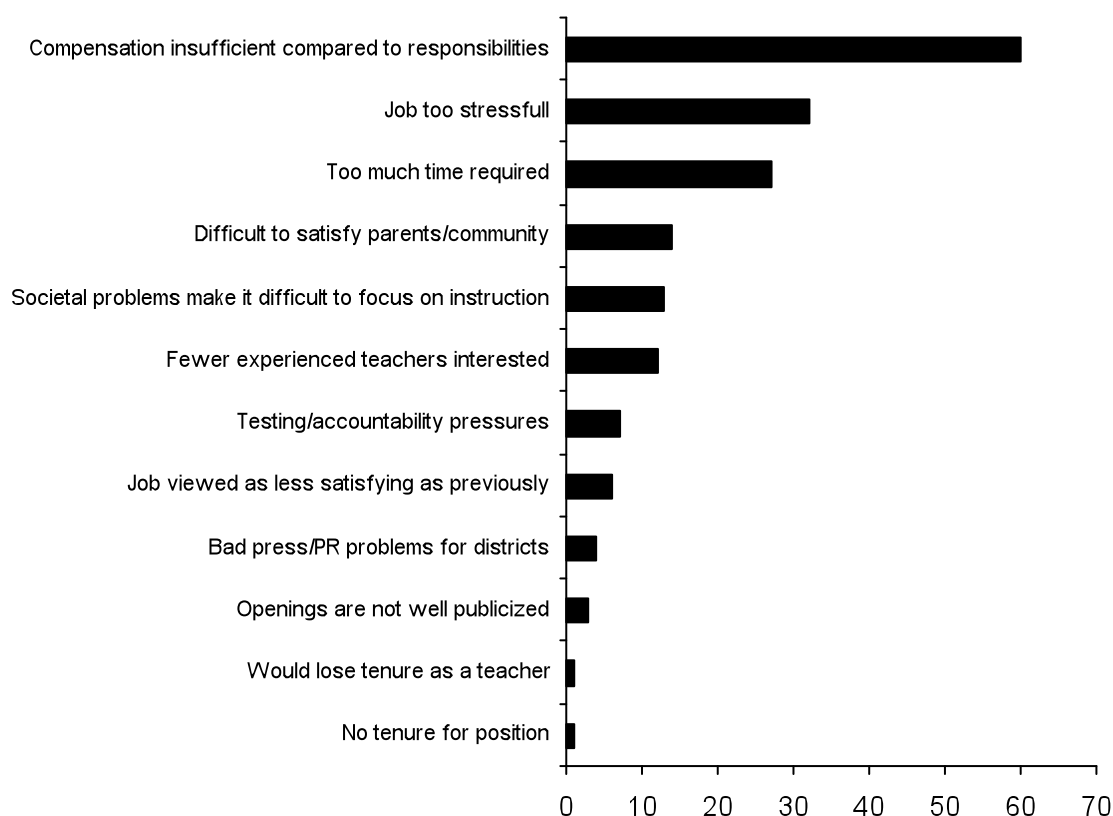
The need for quality school leaders continues to grow while the quantity of qualified persons dwindles (Cohn et. al., 2001, p. 4). Most school administrators were teachers at one point in their career (Grimmett & Echols, 2000). The Latin word for principal means “first teacher.” Like most countries, the United States is facing a teacher shortage. Pipho (1998) cites a number of reasons why there is a teacher shortage: growing student population, a strong economy that is attracting potential teachers into other professions, and tougher testing/certification standards for new teachers. The United States Department of Education predicts that over two million new teachers will need to be hired by the year 2012. Thus, it stands to reason that the shortage of teachers leads to a shortage of administrators.

In 1998, the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) surveyed county superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and aspiring principals. Respondents included 21 superintendents and 121 principals, assistant principals, and aspiring principals responded. Every respondent reported that a shortage does exist (Maryland Task Force on the

Principalship, 2000, p. v). Also in 1998, the National Associations of Elementary School Principals and Secondary Principals surveyed school districts from around the country and found that nearly one-half of the school districts reported a shortage of principal candidates who were qualified (NAESP, NASSP, 2003). According to the NAESP Fact Sheet on the Principal Shortage, The Maryland State Department of Education expected “600 vacancies, or 45 percent of the state’s principals, during the 2003-2004 hiring season” (NAESP, 2003, p.1).

According to the United States Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, the employment opportunities for educational administrators are expected to grow at a rate of about 12%, or “as fast as the average” of all other occupations through the year 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, 2008, p. 3). The Bureau of Labor Statistics goes on to say that the job opportunity prospects of school principals and assistant principals are very favorable due to the fact that increasing job related responsibilities have made the position more stressful. This fact is discouraging teachers from seeking roles as school administrators.

There are many factors that may contribute to the administrator shortage in the United States. The 1998 Educational Research Service study, commissioned by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), reported that the top three reasons given by superintendents nationwide for the principal shortage are inadequate compensation compared to the job responsibilities (58%), excessive time requirements (25%), and the fact that the job is too stressful (23%). These survey results, like the survey results of principal shortages, were found equally in urban, suburban, and rural areas.



*Figure 3.* Reasons candidates are not applying for principal positions: Reasons given by school district superintendents for why candidates are not applying for available principal positions.

Experienced principals report longer hours, more pressure, and ever increasing job responsibilities (Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, 2000). Low compensation, expensive and inappropriate certification requirements, high stress, too many job requirements, too little time to accomplish expected tasks, and the perception that principals have little real authority are factors that discourage teacher-leaders from choosing the Principalship (Gilman & Lanman-Givens, 2001). The growing demands of the Principalship are causing aspiring principals as well as current acting principals to rethink their career choices. According to Richard (2000), “Principals are faced with performing age-old managerial roles such as coordinating buses, attending events, and handling discipline. At the same time, however, they

are expected to play an expanded role in monitoring instruction, guiding teachers, and planning for effective professional development” (p.2). As the demands placed on principals have increased, the number of educators seeking principal positions has decreased (Richardson, 2000).

Increased accountability is an expected outcome of increased responsibilities in any professional job. Principals should be held accountable for the educational goals of their staff and students, as well as the outcomes of those goals. However, schools and the principals who lead those schools are increasingly being held accountable for outcomes they cannot control. Most states now have “report cards,” otherwise known as district evaluations, for school districts and individual schools. These report cards are released to the media and public and poor results on the report cards can affect everything from the job security of principals to the property values in the school district. Most of the outcomes for which principals and schools are held accountable are standards dictated by politicians at the state level, not school leaders at the local level (Institute of Educational Leadership, 2001). However, helping students succeed with higher standards can best be accomplished by giving local teachers and principals more autonomy when doing their jobs (Institute of Educational Leadership, 2001). Faced with these increasing standards and expectations, principals feel they have little professional autonomy or opportunity to practice real school leadership. Recognizing this, fewer teachers choose to seek principalships.

Another factor that is causing a growing principal shortage is the fact that many principals are retiring or nearing their retirement age. School districts are finding it increasingly difficult to find qualified candidates to replace these retiring principals (Sparks, 2002). In 2000, one out of every five principals in the state of Vermont either retired or resigned while 15 % of the principals in Washington State retired or resigned (Groff, 2001). Of the Vermont principals who retired, some were replaced temporarily by other principals who had previously retired

(Steinberg, 2000). Steinberg also reported that in states like Texas and Kentucky, job openings for principals drew as little as three applicants compared with more than twelve applicants applying for principal openings just five years earlier.

Additionally, current administrators are to blame for not identifying and encouraging prospective principals. Very few school districts do anything, such as hold “aspiring administrator” workshops or training programs, to encourage or cultivate aspiring principals. This leaves the districts with few candidates to replace the retiring or resigning principals (Sparks, 2002).

Separately, each of these factors could limit the potential principal candidate pool. Together, these issues lead to a major shortage in qualified candidates applying for school principalships.

### The Role of a Principal

Today’s principals are expected to solve all the problems facing our nation’s schools (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007). Research on effective schools has continually shown that improved student learning can be attained through deliberate school organization and effective principal leadership (Heck, 1992). Research consistently has shown that school principals are the key ingredients to successful schools (DuFour & Eaker, 1998). Teske and Schneider (1999) argue that focused, consistent leadership by principals over time is essential to successful schools (p.7). Teske and Schneider go on to say that “a strong principal defines the culture of schools and integrates the concern for high performance into the mission of the school” (p. 7). Phil Schlechty (2001) suggests that principals are as important to what teachers do in their classrooms as the teachers themselves are.

Until the mid 1980s, a school principal's main role was largely to manage the school so that all educational and facility-related programs ran smoothly. Specific responsibilities included the maintaining of student discipline and the supervising teachers. The role of today's school principals has grown into an almost unmanageable array of job requirements. "It used to be that you could get by being a good manager. Now principals must do everything from ensuring that immigrant students learn English to bringing all kids up to high standards, and so much more," says Carole Kennedy, a principal in residence for the United States Department of Education (Ashford, 2000, p.1 ). Even assistant principals find the job overwhelming due to managerial challenges (Chirichello, 2004). Along with traditional roles such as managing buses, handling discipline, and being visible, today's principal is expected to mentor teachers, oversee Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings for special education students, organize professional development, analyze test scores, and plan for more effective instruction (Richard, 2000). Also, school principals are increasingly being held responsible for their schools' performance on state and national assessments (Heck, 1992). Across the nation, schools that do not meet the state standards, as measured on state assessments, are being taken over by state departments of education and the school principals are being replaced in the takeovers.

Because of the expanded role of school principals, many principals are reporting that they are becoming burned out, and many feel that the increasing demands and the added stress of the position simply are not worth it (Hertling, 2001).

In 1996, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) developed standards for school leaders (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). The findings are summarized in Appendix B. These six standards (developed by twenty-four member states that include Maryland and Pennsylvania, plus eleven educational associations) are supported by 182



performances, or responsibilities, of effective school leaders (Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, 2000). The standards, along with the 182 performances, are so wide-ranging that one school leader cannot do it all.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) recognizes the fact that the principal's role is changing, and they have determined 10 ways school districts, states and the federal government can assist school leaders (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2002). These recommendations mirror and expand on the three recommendations for redefining the role of the principalship established by the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship three years earlier.

NAESP's Ten Ways Districts, States, and the Federal Government Can Support School Leaders:

1. Build principals' capacity to provide instructional leadership.
2. Provide support, funds, and flexibility for alternate leadership arrangements.
3. Improve working conditions.
4. Improve salaries and pay structures.
5. Assess principals fairly.
6. Demand greater accountability within established frameworks.
7. Recognize and reward principals through a national certification process.
8. Build learning opportunities and networks of principals.
9. Rethink principal preparation programs.
10. Develop federal policies that strengthen principals' ability to serve all students.

To address the increasingly overwhelming role of school principals, one of the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship is to "clear the plate" of school principals. The task force recommendation states, "Maryland State Department of

Education (MSDE) and all 24 local school systems will ‘clear the plate’ of extraneous responsibilities assigned principals to ensure they have sufficient time to fulfill their primary role as instructional leader/facilitator.”

### The Principal as Instructional Leader

Everyone has his or her own perceptions of the role of an effective school principal. More and more, one hears about the need for principals to be instructional leaders. In a 2000 report by the Institute of Educational Leadership entitled *Leadership for Student Learning: Reinventing the Principalship*, the institute says that the number one priority for principals must be instructional leadership. The report goes on to say that in addition to the managerial role a principal must fulfill, today’s principal must serve as leaders for student learning. They must know academic content and pedagogical techniques. They must work with teachers to strengthen skills. They must collect, analyze, and use data in ways that fuel excellence. They must rally students, teachers, parents, local health and social service agencies, youth development groups, local businesses, and other community residents and partners around the common goal of raising student performance.” (p. 2)

As Roland Barth, co-director of the Harvard Principals Center puts it, “Principals have a disproportionate influence on what teachers and students learn” (Barth, 1986. p.156). In his foreward of the executive summary *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do*, Dr. Vincent Ferrandino, executive director of the National Association of Elementary School Principals writes that, “We cannot have first-rate schools without first-rate school leadership. Regardless of how charismatic or personable a school leader is, or how effective a manager, a principal is not going to improve academic achievement for all students unless she engages in her work differently” (p. 2). It has become

more important that school leaders become better instructional leaders. By becoming better instructional leaders, they become genuine leaders for improving student achievement (Institute of Educational Leadership, 2001).

States are updating their administrative certification requirements to ensure that future school administrators are taking coursework in curriculum and instruction along with the more time-honored areas of principal training, such as the social sciences and business administration (Murphy, 1988). Most principals being hired today are expected to be educational leaders. Indeed, principals realize that being an educational leader is a major expectation of their role as the building principal, but most feel they cannot perform the role in the manner that they perceive to be most effective (Mullican & Ainsworth, 1979). Because of the overwhelming demands of the principal's position, most principals soon discover that it is not easy to find the time to devote to the role of an instructional leader (Litchfield, 1985).

What exactly is an educational leader? Early efforts to characterize instructional leadership resulted in nothing more than checklists of important roles principals were expected to perform as the instructional leaders of their school (Murphy, 1988). Murphy goes on to say that most research defines instructional leadership as behaviors that are related to instruction and learning such as observing teachers and students in classrooms. However, instructional leadership is more than checklists of duties to perform. It is more than simply observing classrooms and teachers. Sparks (2000) writes that strong instructional leadership means distributing influence and accountability, building a school culture that supports student academic achievement, and constantly using student performance data to drive school improvement efforts and help hold teachers accountable for their work (p. 2). Daresh (1991) states that an instructional leader does not simply sit in the back of a classroom observing.

Rather, an instructional leader provides leadership on an uninterrupted basis. Therefore, an effective principal, as an instructional leader, practices effective instructional leadership at all times by putting quality instruction at the forefront of everything he or she does. Instructional leadership involves communicating a clear vision which includes articulating high expectations for teachers and students, leading discussions of effective instructional practices and analyzing how those practices impact student learning and achievement, being visible, visiting all classrooms on a daily basis, helping teachers procure the necessary resources for effective instruction, and supervising and mentoring teachers (p. 111).

For decades, one of a principal's main tasks has been to observe teachers. In the past, the supervision of teachers usually followed a clinical supervision model where the principal held a conference with the teacher prior to the classroom observation. Then the principal observed the teacher instructing his or her students. Finally, the principal held a post conference with the teacher to give commendations and recommendations. With the role of a principal shifting towards that of an instructional leader, supervision of teachers has also changed (Andrews, Basom & Basom). Principals who are instructional leaders should now practice a supervision model where they act as a resource for effective instructional practices, an effective communicator, a visible presence, and a provider of resources (Smith & Andrews, 1989).

An effective principal knows what resources are available to him or her. His or her most important resource is naturally the teachers in the building (Andrews, Basom & Basom, 1991). An effective instructional leader is visible, visiting each classroom daily, and understands and utilizes the strengths of the teachers. Principals, as instructional leaders, also serve their teachers as an instructional resource. They understand and recognize high quality instruction and supervise teachers to assess how well a teacher is performing. Instructional leaders provide

feedback on the teacher's instruction and help the teachers examine how they can better help students succeed. The principal as an instructional leader provides teachers with the feedback, guidance, and support to grow professionally (Andrews, Basom & Basom, 1991).

Communication is also an important aspect of effective instructional leadership. Effective leaders have a strong vision, and they clearly communicate their vision to the staff and school community (Andrews, Basom & Basom, 1991). As Peterson (1985) advised, "A principal with vision has a clear idea of what he or she hoped the school should become, which translates into action." (Peterson, 1985, p. 91) Effectively communicating their vision through their words and actions creates a climate that encourages teachers to analyze their instruction and to constantly seek new and better ways to address their students' educational needs. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) write that, "Climate can be viewed as the enduring characteristics that describe the psychological makeup of a particular school, distinguish it from other schools, and influence the behavior of teachers and students, as well as the "feel" that teachers and students have for that school" (p. 333).

For a principal to be an effective instructional leader, he or she must be visible throughout the school. He or she must be visible in the hallways to talk with teachers and students. He or she must also be visible to the parents and visitors of the building so he/she can communicate his or her vision. He or she must be in the classrooms daily, monitoring instruction, supporting the work of the teachers, and encouraging higher performance of students and staff (Sparks, 2000). As Tom Peters says in his book *Thriving on Chaos*, if a principal is in his or her office more than one third of the day, that principal is out of touch with the school (Peters, 1987).

*Instructional Leadership Standards*

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) has developed six standards of instructional leadership to clearly delineate what a principal's function in school improvement should be. The standards are:

1. Effective principals lead schools in a way that places student and adult learning at the center.
2. Effective principals set high expectations and standards for the academic and social development of all students and the performance of adults.
3. Effective principals demand content and instruction that ensure student achievement of agreed upon standards.
4. Effective principals create a culture of continuous learning for adults tied to student learning and other school goals.
5. Effective principals use multiple sources of data as diagnostic tools to assess, identify and apply instructional improvement.
6. Effective principals actively engage the community to create shared responsibility for student and school success.

#### Professional Development Training for Principals

“One of the most important policy considerations for ensuring high-quality candidates for the Principalship is building preparation programs that provide candidates with the knowledge, skills, and disposition they need to meet state standards,” states the author of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship (2000, p. 19). However, most efforts to improve schools have addressed improving the schools' curriculum, improving professional development for teachers, and collaboration between schools and university. Rarely has training for school principals ever been part of the school improvement efforts (Manasse, 1985). Faced with the increasing

demands placed on school principals, the need for worthy professional development for school leaders has become more important than ever before (Richardson, 2000). Dennis Sparks, executive director of the National Staff Development Council, (NSDC) states in his article, “Learning to Lead, Leading to Learn,” that strengthening school leadership is the most important factor to improve schools. He reports that improving school leadership will impact every other area of school improvement areas, such as teacher professional development, student achievement, raising standards, and increasing accountability (2000). Christine DeVita, President of The Wallace Foundation, which commissioned the study entitled *Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World*, writes, “As much as anyone in public education, it is the principal who is in a position to ensure that good teaching and learning spread beyond single classrooms, and that ineffective practices aren’t simply allowed to fester” (Darling Hammond, et. al., 2007, p. i).

Most aspiring principals go through some sort of pre-service training in the form of university coursework, district sponsored in-services, or a series of workshops. For example, many states or universities sponsor ongoing aspiring principal’s academies. Nonetheless, most pre-service training focuses on issues that aspiring administrators do not find useful either because they do not have the experience to know how and when to apply the skills, or because the topics such as finance are not relevant to them, but are more pertinent to district level administrators (Manasse, 1985). However, there is a growing trend that suggests university level training is moving away from the managerial, top down administrative style towards a more collegial, empowering style of leadership (Behar-Horenstein, 1995).

Traditional in-service training tends to focus on topics that are more relevant to principals such as instructional trends, technology, data collection and analysis, state testing information, or curricular issues (Manasse, 1985). But these in-service trainings tend to be “one-shot” trainings

with little of the follow-up training or coaching aspiring or novice principals need. A 2007 study by the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute looked at eight high-quality pre-service and in-service principal development programs. The Institute reports that the ideal in-service programs did not focus on one-shot workshops that offered learning opportunities on a wide range of incongruent functions related to a principal's role. Rather, the effective in-service trainings were coherent and based on both theory and practice. These trainings were focused on a clear instructional leadership model and addressed explicit instructional practices (Darling-Hammond, 2007).

Ongoing principal academies demonstrate much progress in addressing the issue of one-shot training (Manasse, 1985). These academies usually involve a cohort of aspiring or new principals who meet on a regular basis. These professionals can turn to each other for help and guidance. This researcher personally participated in two principal academies: The Maryland Principals' Academy sponsored by the Maryland State Department of Education and the Academy for Leadership in Education sponsored by the Academy for Leadership Education at Salisbury University. Both of these academies focused on instructional issues applicable to a new school leader. The Stanford Educational Leadership Institute examined exemplary programs that can be considered a type of on-going principal academy. The researchers found that the principals who participated in these programs felt that they were better prepared for their roles as school leaders, had a more favorable outlook on the Principalship as a career, and enacted more efficient leadership practices than principals who matriculated through more traditional principal training. Important for this study, the participants in the exemplary programs viewed their role as more of a change agent than participants from comparison groups. The report also found that the cohort groups in these academies relied on each other for professional and social support



throughout their careers. The only area the administrators felt the programs did not better prepare them for was operational management areas such as managing school facilities (Darling-Hammond, et. al., 2007)

Another way aspiring principals can learn to mimic the roles of a principal and sharpen their administrative skills is through an internship. Internships can be both a screening and selection solution and a preparation program (Manasse, 1985). All of the principal training programs researched by the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute included an internship program. Two of them offered fully paid, full time internships with experienced principals. All of the graduates who participated in the exemplary training programs studied felt that the internships were helpful. The administrators who participated in the full-time internships rated the internship programs most favorably.

The truth is, however, most principals do not participate in exemplary pre-service programs such as those researched by the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute. Most aspiring principals are not trained in methods to motivate and empower others, in strategies to work as a collaborative team, in ways to change the school culture into a learning community, or in techniques to communicate more effectively with others (Ramsey, 1999). Most training for administrators is done poorly. Current administrator training focuses too much on managerial tasks or is too abstract. Most principal training ignores instructional leadership and ways to improve student academic performance almost completely (Sparks, 2001). Also, many courses require aspiring principals to work alone most of the time and spend a great deal of time writing, while most of the communication principals engage in is face-to-face and the most effective principals collaborate (Manasse, 1985).

Sparks recommends that school districts who are trying to improve the quality of the aspiring school principals should ensure that all aspiring principals collaborate in ongoing study groups to research the important issues they face in their schools. Districts should also require principals and aspiring principals to visit each other during the school day to observe each other and offer constructive criticism and support. Finally, Sparks recommends that districts provide job-embedded coaching on all aspects of the principal's role (Sparks, 2000).

The research conducted by the Stanford Educational Leadership Institute indicates three common aspects of the exemplary principal preparation programs they studied. One was that each program studied was organized and led by a team of strong leaders. Second, each program sought and obtained partnerships with universities that helped design and present the programs. Finally, each of the successful programs studied had strong financial support. It is interesting to note also that most of the eight exemplary programs studied based their programs on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards.

### *Professional Development Standards*

The content, process, and context standards for professional development as developed by the National Staff Development Council (NSCD) are:

#### *Context Standards*

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- Organizes adults into learning communities whose goals are aligned with those of the school and district.
- Requires skillful school and district leaders who guide continuous instructional improvement.
- Requires resources to support adult learning and collaboration.

### *Process Standards*

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- Uses disaggregated student data to determine adult learning priorities, monitor progress, and help sustain continuous improvement.
- Uses multiple sources of information to guide improvement and demonstrate its impact.
- Prepares educators to apply research to decision making.
- Uses learning strategies appropriate to the intended goal.
- Applies knowledge about human learning and change.
- Provides educators with the knowledge and skills to collaborate.

### *Content Standards*

Staff development that improves the learning of all students:

- Prepares educators to understand and appreciate all students, create safe, orderly and supportive learning environments, and hold high expectations for their academic achievement.
- Deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, and prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately.
- Provides educators with knowledge and skills to involve families and other stakeholders appropriately.

The five Qualities of Professional Development of School Leaders, as developed by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) are:

- Validates teaching and learning as the central activities of the school.

- Engages all school leaders in planful, integrated, career-long learning to improve student achievement.
- Promotes collaboration to achieve organizational goals while meeting individual needs.
- Models effective learning processes.
- Incorporates measures of accountability that direct attention to valued learning outcomes.

The above standards and propositions describe the essential characteristics of effective professional development. State departments of education, universities, and school districts should use these standards as a guide for developing quality staff development for aspiring principals and continued training for experienced principals.

To address the need for improved professional development for aspiring principals, one of the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship reads, “In conjunction with the Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, local school systems and/or school system consortia will develop comprehensive, job-embedded programs for the identification and professional development of principal candidates and of current principals” (Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, 2000, p. 8).

### Principal Compensation

According to the National Association of Elementary School Principal's (NAESP) Fact Sheet on the Principal Shortage, the number one reason given by school district superintendents nationwide for the reason there is a shortage of qualified candidates to fill vacant principal positions is poor compensation compared to the job responsibilities (NAESP, 2003). The fact sheet also notes that starting salaries for new school principals can be as low as 10 % more than what an experienced teacher earns. Also, since school principals generally have longer contracts than teachers, the average daily pay for a new principal may actually be lower than the daily pay rate of an experienced teacher. Coupled with the fact that many teachers moving into an administration position usually must relinquish supplemental contracts such as coaching or other extra-curricular activities, it is easy to see why some administrators may actually earn less money than they did when they taught. One of the most interesting findings from this survey is that the responses were the same in urban, rural, and suburban areas as well as across grade levels (Maryland Department of Education, 2001).

Principal salaries vary from region to region in the United States. School districts in the mid east, where this case study takes place, ranks as the highest paying region in the United States and the principal compensation in this region is usually higher than the national average (16.2 % higher in 2003-2004) (Williams, 2004).

The size of the school district in which a principal serves usually affects the salaries of principals as well (Williams, 2004) Generally, the larger the district in which the principal works, the higher the pay.

According to the United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, high school principals generally earn the most money, followed by junior high school principals, and

then elementary school principals. Benefits for school administrators are considered to be good. In the Occupational Outlook Handbook, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports, “Benefits for education administrators are generally very good. Many get a 4 or 5 week vacation every year and have generous health and pension packages” (p. 8).

The pay increases for principals have kept pace with the pay increases for teachers. Research conducted by the Educational Research Center in 2003-2004 found that principals’ salaries increased 2.2 % over a five year period compared with a 2.0 percent increase in teachers’ salaries during the same five-year period. Over the same five-year period, increases in the consumer price index have increased at a slightly higher rate than principal salaries (2.3 % in the consumer price index compared to the 2.2 % increase in the average principal salary (Williams, 2004).

Recognizing that compensation was causing an impact on the quantity and quality of the candidates applying for administrative positions in Maryland, the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship addressed the issue. The third recommendation of the Task Force’s 2000 report reads, “Local school systems will adjust principal salary and compensation packages to better reflect the responsibilities, accountability, and stressors of the principalship” (p. 27).

A subcommittee of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, the “Compensation Subgroup,” authored recommendations for local school systems and the Maryland State Department of Education. These recommendations are:

1. Local School Systems should establish a principals’ salary scale that has as its minimum entry point the equivalent of what the highest paid twelve-month teacher would be compensated plus an absolute minimum of 10%.

2. Local School Systems should provide additional compensation beyond the steps on its salary scale for principals based on the size of the school assigned, the organizational level (elementary, middle, high school), and staffing patterns within that building.
3. Local School Systems should provide additional compensation for principals due to defined needs in a specific school based on established priorities that are clearly communicated in advance and the achievement of those priorities.
4. Local School Systems should provide a multi-year commitment (no less than three, but five preferred) and additional compensation for principals who take on difficult challenges and who meet established priorities.
5. Local School Systems, based on local fiscal capacity, should include additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with Local School Systems collective bargaining agreements:
  - Health Insurance
  - Life Insurance
  - Disability Insurance
  - Deferred Compensation
  - Sabbatical Leave
  - Dues/Membership in professional organizations
  - Technology (e.g., laptops, cell phones, palm pilots)
  - Professional Development Opportunities
  - National/State Conferences

*Recommendations for the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)*

1. MSDE should work to include special consideration for principals to improve their retirement income through the state retirement/pension system.
2. MSDE should provide additional compensation through a block grant program for principals who are assigned to a reconstitution-eligible, alert, or other specially designated/challenging school and who meet established priorities.
3. MSDE should create an incentive fund to provide additional compensation for principals who demonstrate increased skills through state-sponsored professional development programs and/or achieve national certification.

**Principal Retention**

In addition to having an increasingly difficult time finding qualified candidates to fill the role as a school principal, school districts are struggling to retain the principals they have. Jay Hoffman, in his article “Building Resilient Leaders: Many Universities and School Districts are Creating Support Mechanisms That Increase Administrator Resiliency and Lead to Greater Retention,” identifies several reasons why school districts are having a hard time retaining principals. These include:

- Increased accountability expectations
- Diminished or static levels of resources to support reform efforts
- Greater administrator vulnerability to sanctions
- The complex demands of government and the community
- The sometimes slight or negligible difference between teacher and administrator compensation when viewed on a per diem basis
- The necessity for leaders to spend a great deal of time meeting the demands of the job



- Media coverage of public education's occasional errors; little coverage of our frequent successes
- Chronic Stress

Many states are actively seeking ways to retain the principals they have. For example, in Maryland, the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative, based on the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, seeks to retain principals by providing workshops and other training opportunities to increase the skill level of current principals. The state has also recommended increasing compensation for principals, and limiting the job requirements of principals.

### Clearing the Plate

As stated earlier, the role of the principal continues to expand. Today's students are coming to school with a host of social and behavioral problems that are compounding the potential for these students' academic success. Families and communities are far different today than they were just fifty years ago. Schools have been asked to incorporate issues such as sex education, before and after-school care, guidance services and mental health services, and these issues detract from the time dedicated to curricular issues. Many people feel this has detracted from the core academic mission of schools (Institute of Educational Leadership, 2001). Levine (2005) points out that many new and current principals are not prepared to help schools improve learning while also dealing with all of the other demands of the principals position. As schools have changed, principals must meet the challenge of the new roles these changes bring about and this leaves little time to be spent on the most important aspect of the principal's job: instructional leadership to improve student achievement. As mentioned earlier, the Institute of Educational

Leadership has said that instructional leadership must be the number one priority of a school principal. But, as the Institute points out,

“The principalship as it is currently constructed-a middle management position overloaded with responsibilities for basic building operations-fails to meet this fundamental priority, instead allowing schools to drift without any clear vision of leadership for learning or providing principals with the skills needed to meet the challenge.” (p. 1)

To cut back on the non-instructional leadership job responsibilities of school principals, some school districts have tried some innovative strategies such as job sharing (Hertling, 2001). Job sharing can take many forms, but it usually involves two or more people sharing the job responsibilities principals must fulfill on a day-to-day basis. The shared responsibilities may be structured around an individual's strengths, such as managing discipline or supervision (Hertling, 2001). In her article, “Creative Solutions Ease Burdens for Principals,” Ellie Ashford (2000) describes how job sharing works at Farragut High School in Knoxville, Tennessee. Farragut boasts six principals who job share. Four principals are grade-level principals who move up in grade each year with their students so that the same principal works with the same group of students for four years. There is also a chief principal whose job description covers responsibilities such as community relations, evaluation, staff development, and other administrative roles. The chief principal has the final say in all matters. This principal at Farragut is considered to be the curriculum principal who is in charge of textbooks, scheduling, and curriculum. (Ashford, 2000)

The Texas city of Houston has begun utilizing personnel that they call business managers. These business managers handle all of the administrative roles of the building so that

the principal can focus on instruction (Hertling, 2001). Talbot County Schools in Maryland has also been utilizing business managers in each school since 2002 (Friedman, 2005). In Talbot County, the major role of the school principal is to be an instructional leader. The principals plan staff development, analyze school improvement and assessment data, supervise instruction and run grade level team meetings. The principal also handles the discipline issues in the building. The business manager deals with all of the administrative tasks such as organizing buses, budgeting, facility management, and scheduling. However, the final decision in all matters rests in the hands of the principal.

Another method school districts are using to relieve principals of some of their non-instructional duties is to utilize teacher leaders. Teacher leaders can take some of the non-supervisory roles from the principal's plate. Teacher leaders perform duties such as managing minor discipline issues and scheduling. For years, the Kiski Area School District in Pennsylvania gave one teacher per school building a supplemental contract and the title of "head teacher" until budget constraints forced the school board to eliminate the position in 2006.

Some states are facing such a shortage of qualified principal candidates that they have resorted to alternative principal licensing programs (Herrington & Wills, 2005). For example, the state of Florida decertified the principal's position in 2001, allowing school districts to hire non-certified candidates as school principals.

Currently, 46 states require principal candidates to attain administrative certification before they can accept a position as a school principal. The four states that no longer require state certification (Colorado, Florida, Michigan, and South Dakota) allow the local school districts to make their decisions on licensure and hiring. This has led to candidates from fields other than education to apply for principal positions. Several other states offer an alternative path to

achieving certification. It is interesting to note that research in Florida has shown no negative or positive impact on student achievement as a result of hiring non-certified principals. However, the state of Michigan has recommended that the practice of hiring non-certified principals be terminated because the non-certified principals could not offer teachers the support and assistance they need to become better teachers (Education Commission of the States, 2007).

For this study, the certification requirements of two states are pertinent: Maryland and Pennsylvania. This is because the researcher has worked as an administrator in both states.

To obtain a principal's certificate in Pennsylvania, a candidate must have completed an approved program of graduate study preparing him or her to direct, operate, supervise, and administer the organizational and general educational activities of a school. Preparation completed out-of-state must meet Pennsylvania standards for certification. Candidates eligible for a principalship role in Pennsylvania must meet the following criteria:

- Is recommended for certification as a principal by the authorized certification officer of the institution where such education was obtained, or holds a comparable certificate from another state (for out-of-state graduates only).
- Provides a chief school administrator's verification of the completion of five years of satisfactory professional school experience on a state-issued certificate appropriate for the assignment.
- Has provided evidence of satisfactory achievement on assessments prescribed by the Department under Section 49.18(a).
- Is able to meet all other requirements provided by law.

Pennsylvania does not have an alternate path to receiving a principal's certificate, however, "the state can grant an 'Emergency Permit' for an administrator if the hiring district has

advertised the position, but cannot find a certified candidate. The person must have a bachelor's degree and work to complete the state requirements" (Education Commission of the States, 2007, p. 17). This waiver is hardly ever used in the state.

In Maryland, to become certified as a principal, a candidate, "must have a master's degree and 27 months of satisfactory performance as a teacher or school specialist. The candidate must complete a state-approved program in administration and supervision or complete 18 semester hours of graduate work in administration, including specified coursework. The candidate must achieve a qualifying score on a state-approved principal certification assessment" (Education Commission of the States, 2007, p. 8).

Maryland does have an alternate path for principal's certification. According to the report by the Education Commission of the states (2007), "For the principalship, candidates must have a bachelor's degree, have professional experience and be recommended for a certificate by the local superintendent. Certain additional program standards must be met and approved by the local board of education." (p. 8).

As pointed out earlier, the state of Maryland recognizes the importance of cutting back on the overwhelming job requirements of the principalship. The Maryland Task Force on the Principalship has recommended that "Maryland State Department of Education and all 24 local school systems will "clear the plate" of extraneous responsibilities assigned principals to ensure they have sufficient time to fulfill their primary role as instructional leader/facilitator" (Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, 2000, p. 11).

A subcommittee of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, the Clearing the Plate Workgroup, generated recommendations for the Maryland State Department of Education and recommendations for local school systems. These recommendations are:

*Recommendations for MSDE*

1. Establish an internal committee that meets regularly to review and approve survey instruments and requests for information sent to principals.
2. Establish a calendar/timeline of approved surveys and requests for information so that principals are not deluged with such requests at the same time, particularly busy times of the school year.
3. Review and streamline all special education paperwork and meeting requirements to assure that schools are not burdened with any unnecessary requirements not based in federal or state law.
4. Publish information for schools on a timely basis that allows for thoughtful consideration of requests/information.
5. Offer workshops to assist principals in analyzing MSPP and other standardized test data.
6. Recommend to local school systems a ratio of one assistant principal for each 350 students.
7. Maintain and publish an updated listing of all school support services.

*Recommendations for Local School Systems*

1. Provide an assistant principal for each 350 students.
2. Provide full-time Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team managers for each school.

3. Redesign the timeframe in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff.
4. Review and adhere to an established clerical and certificated staffing ratio.
5. Provide business managers for all schools.
6. Assure appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools.
7. Provide an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel.
8. Provide appropriate staffing to monitor buses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular activities.
9. Provide the necessary staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs.

#### Theoretical Framework for the Study

The use of program evaluation in the United States began during the middle to late 1960s to assess the effectiveness of the many federally funded social programs President Lyndon B. Johnson began as part of his Great Society initiative (Kellogg Foundation, 1998, p. 4). During this time, “systematic evaluation [was] increasingly sought to guide operations, to assure legislators and planners that they [were] proceeding on sound lines and to make services responsive to their public” (Cronbach, et al., 1980, p. 12).

Shadish (1998) writes that, “evaluation theory is neither concise nor axiomatic; and it is not a single theory but rather a set of diverse theoretical writings held together by the common glue of having evaluation as their target” (p. 2). Chen and Rossi (1983) point out that this lack of theory often provides an unclear perception of a program’s effectiveness. They further state:

It is not usually clear whether the recorded failures of programs are due to the fact that the programs were built on poor conceptual foundations, usually preposterous sets of

“casual” mechanisms (e.g. the Impact Cities Program); or because treatments were set at such low dosage levels that they could not conceivably affect any outcomes (e.g. Title I); or because programs were poorly implemented (p. 284).

Chen and Rossi (1983) also indicate that the decisive factor for associating theory is uniformity with social science theory. However, they point out that social science theories are not readily available. They argue that this should not deter program evaluation, “But the absence of fully developed theory should not prevent one from using the best of what is at hand. Most important of all, it is necessary to think theoretically, that is to rise above the specific and the particular to develop general understandings of social phenomena” (p. 285). Chen and Rossi further argue that a researcher should theorize how a program is expected to work before evaluating that program.

One purpose of this study is to evaluate whether the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship has had an impact on improving the quality and quantity of prospective candidates for school principal positions. Chen and Rossi (1983) postulate that “Implementation systems traditionally have not been given the amount of attention they fully deserve in evaluation research” (p. 296). They add that:

An understanding of program implementation is important in program evaluation, since successful implementation is also a necessary condition in assessing program theory success. Only when treatment variables are implemented successfully, or at least to some extent, can we test whether or not the treatment variables have had any impact on outcome variables. (p. 296)

Therefore, it is important that this study also examine how well the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship have been implemented by the Maryland Department of Education and the individual county school systems. This study will utilize



program theories to evaluate how well the recommendations have been implemented, and to determine if the task force's recommendations have had an impact on improving the quality and quantity of candidates applying for administrative jobs in the state of Maryland.

“A program theory is concerned with understanding the effects expected of a program” (Sidani & Sechrest, 1999) Bickman (1987) says that program theory is “a plausible and sensible model of how a program is supposed to work.” (p.5) An effective program theory should logically connect the program's activities to expected outcomes of successfully implementing the program. (Wilder Research Center) In the article, Program Theories and Logic Models, the Wilder Research Center goes on to say that, “Program theories can often be captured in a series of “if-then” statements-If something is done to, with, or for program participants, THEN theoretically something will change.” (p.2) For example, the underlying theory of the Maryland Task Force on the Principals is that by providing better professional development for future school leaders, clearing the plate of extraneous job responsibilities so that principals can focus on instructional leadership, and by increasing the compensation package to school principals, more quality candidates will apply for administrative openings, and more principals will remain in the field.

### Logic Models

The model that this researcher has chosen to illustrate the underlying program theory of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative is what is known as a logic model. Logic models have been used for years to illustrate the value of programs (McCawley, p. 1). A logic model can also be referred to as a program's theory of action (Huhman, Heitzler, & Wong, 2004). Developing a logic model to evaluate a program is useful because it presents the series of associations that show how a program is anticipated to work (Taylor-Powell, 2003).

Schmitz and Parsons (1999) describe a logic model as,

A basic element of programming that communicates the logic behind a program, its rationale. A logic model's purpose is to communicate the underlying "theory" or set of assumptions or hypotheses that program proponents have about why the program will work, or about why it is a good solution to an identified problem.

According to Renger and Titcomb, (2002) "A logic model is a visual representation of a plausible and sensible method of how a program will work under certain conditions to solve identified problems, and is fundamental to program evaluation" (p. 493). These visual representations of a program can be displayed in tables, diagrams, or text (Wilder Research Center, 2007).

According to Schmitz and Parsons (1999), logic models are helpful because they,

- Convey the fundamental purpose of an initiative
- Show why the initiative is important
- Show what will result from an initiative
- Depict what will result from an initiative
- Depict the actions/causes expected to lead to the desired results
- Become a common language and reference point for everyone involved in the initiative
- Serve as the basis to determine whether planned actions are likely to lead to the desired results.

Schmitz and Parsons (1999) explain that logic models are often confused with action plans, but they are not the same. The researchers go on to delineate the difference between action plans and logic models:

An action plan is a manager's guide for running the project. It shows, often through a set of program objectives and a timeline or task outline, what staff or others need to do to implement a project (e.g. "hire outreach worker," "launch media campaign," "revise curricula"). A logic model illustrates the presumed effects of hiring an outreach worker, launching a media campaign, or using revised curricula. (p.2)

There is no single, correct "right way" to build a logic model. A logic model is not a "detailed blueprint" of what needs to happen (Watson, 2000, p. 1). Most logic models involve highlighting the inputs, outputs, and outcomes (McCawley, p. 1). Inputs calculate resources such as people, time, and money. Outputs are the "things that we do and the people that we reach." (McCawley, p. 3-4). Examples include publications, workshops, and software. Outcomes can be short term, intermediate term, or long term, and they answer the question, "What happened as a result of the program?" (McCawley, p. 4).

An example logic model shared by Watson, (2000) begins with identifying the expected results the program wishes to accomplish. Next is a description of the circumstances that need to be changed. This is what Watson calls, "The story behind the numbers" (p.23). Following the story is a list of the strategies, or the action plan, an organization intends to utilize to reach their goal. Finally, there is a documented list of the interventions planned by the organization in regard to accomplishing their goal. In Watson's model, the effectiveness of the program is measured by examining the long-term success the organization has demonstrated at achieving its goals and measuring how the target population has changed as a result of the program.

Renger and Titcomb (2002) describe three parts to their logic model example. In the first step, they explain that it is important to recognize the antecedent circumstances of the problem. For example, the antecedent conditions of the principal shortage problem are factors such as high

stress, low compensation, long job hours, etc. The second step is to identify the antecedent circumstances targeted by the program. For example, the Maryland Task Force on the principalship seeks to target three antecedents of the problem of a shortage of qualified principal candidates: low pay, professional development, and overwhelming work load. The final step in developing a logic model in Renger and Titcomb's model is to describe the outcomes that are expected to change as a result of the proposed program. In the case of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative, the expected outcome is that there will be a greater quantity of qualified candidates applying for principal positions in Maryland schools.

Using a logic model can be an effective way to evaluate a program (Huhman, Heitzler, & Wong, 2004). According to McCawley, when evaluating a program, "Process indicators should be designed to provide a measurable response to questions such as:

- Were specific inputs made as planned, in terms of the amount of input, timing, and quality of input?
- Were specific activities conducted as planned, in terms of content, timing, location, format, and quality?
- Was the desired level of participation achieved, in terms of numbers and characteristics of participants? Did customers express the degree of customer satisfaction expected? (p. 5)

The logic model this researcher will use to describe and evaluate the implementation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations will identify the problem, goals, objectives, activities, and outcomes of the Task Force implementation. These findings are summarized in Appendix D.

An important first step in program evaluation is to develop a logic model (Renger & Titcomb, 2002). This researcher will use the self-devised logic model to describe and evaluate how effective the implementation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations are in achieving the goals of improving the quality and quantity of principal candidates, and to determine if the espoused theory is the theory of use by the Maryland Department of Education and the twenty-three county school systems in Maryland.

### Chapter Summary

School systems across the county are facing a shortage of qualified school principals. A 1998 Educational Research Service study reported that qualified candidates were not pursuing principal positions because of the lack of compensation compared to responsibilities, the stress associated with the principals position, and the time required to be on the job as well other reasons.

Today's school principals are faced with an increasing list of demands which affect the time they can dedicate to the most important role of principals which is to improve student learning.

Research suggests that school improvement efforts be focused on principal preparation programs which focus on knowledge, skills, and dispositions principals need to meet state academic standards. However, most efforts to improve schools have addressed improving the schools' curriculum, improving professional development for teachers, and collaboration between schools and universities.

In a National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) study, qualified principal candidates report that the lack of adequate compensation is one of the major reasons they are not interested in pursuing principal positions.

The Maryland Task Force on the Principalship released a report in 2000 offering recommendations for how school systems could address the shortage of qualified principal candidates. The Division for Leadership Development was created by Maryland State School Superintendent Nancy Grasmick to address the Task Force recommendation to improve professional development of aspiring and current principals. This division is responsible for the state's yearly principal academies and assistant principal academies.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

In 2000, the state of Maryland released the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. This report offered three recommendations, described in detail in Chapter One. The findings in Appendix A address the ongoing principal shortage faced by the state's school systems. The recommendations of the task force led to the development of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative. It is the goal of the Maryland Educational Initiative to "provide comprehensive, job-embedded and sustained professional development for new, aspiring and veteran principals in order that they will ensure high quality education for all students" (Maryland Department of Education, 2001, p.1).

This chapter describes the detailed research methods that were used to investigate the perceptions of Maryland public school principals as to whether or not there continues to be a shortage of qualified applicants applying for vacant principal and assistant principal positions in Maryland public schools. This study also investigated the perceived effects that the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative has had on attracting more qualified candidates to principal positions in the state of Maryland.

To collect data for this quantitative study, an online survey was created by the researcher. Select Maryland elementary and secondary principals were invited to participate in the study by completing the on-line survey. The invitation itself was sent in an email message. A copy of the email message can be found in Appendix E.

### Statement of the Problem

For school districts to maintain or achieve high standards of quality student work, it is crucial that the districts hire quality principals to serve as their school leaders. However, nationwide, quality school administrators are becoming harder to find, and the state of Maryland is no exception. A 1998 survey by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) found that nearly half (47%) of the school districts surveyed reported that they faced a shortage in qualified candidates for elementary positions. It was even worse for secondary principal positions where over half (55%) of the school districts surveyed reported a shortage of qualified principal candidates.

### Research Questions

The methodology involved in this quantitative study is designed to answer the following questions:

1. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there a shortage of qualified candidates applying for principal and assistant principal vacancies in the state of Maryland?
2. As perceived by Maryland school principals, are Maryland county school systems implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, and if so, how are they being implemented?
3. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?
4. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates applying for principal vacancies in the state of



Maryland since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?

5. Which remedies aimed at addressing the shortage of quality principal and assistant principal candidates in the state of Maryland are perceived to be the most effective in increasing the number of quality principal candidates?

### Research Design

The design of this research is quantitative in nature. The purpose of the study is to examine the perceptions of Maryland public school principals regarding their perceptions of the quality of candidates applying for principal positions in their school systems. Another purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of Maryland public school principals as to which initiatives and programs of the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative have had the most impact on improving the quality of prospective principal candidates.

Slavin (2007) defines descriptive research as “research that is carried out to describe some phenomenon as it exists” (p. 99). The researcher used a non-experimental research design to answer the research questions posed in this study. Since no tool currently exists to conduct this specific research study, one was developed with the assistance of experts in the field of education. This instrument is a survey that utilizes a Likert-type scale. Slavin (2007) explains that, “the purpose of a survey is to describe the opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of a population of interest.” (p. 105). Cresswell (1994) explains that surveys are efficient and versatile. Since this study is examining the perceptions of school principals, and because the sample size of participants is so large, an online survey is an appropriate tool to use.

The researcher sought permission from district county school superintendents to survey all principals in their district. E-mail invitations were sent to all school principals in districts here

superintendent permission was granted. A database was maintained to keep track of which principals responded so that reminder e-mails could be sent out. Reminder e-mails were sent out to principals who did not complete the survey after the initial e-mail.

There are advantages to using surveys to conduct research. Vogt (2007) points out that surveys can generate much of information for little time, effort or cost. Vogt also explains that surveys are useful when a researcher is studying subjective data such as the beliefs, attitudes, and values of a group of people. According to Slavin (2007), the benefits of conducting e-mail surveys is that they are inexpensive and the people completing the surveys are not influenced by the researcher. However, Slavin states that survey research has its disadvantages. Typically, response rates for surveys are low and it is difficult to acquire detailed responses from the people taking the surveys.

The researcher attempted to address the problem of low response rate in a variety of ways. First, a short, personalized e-mail was sent to all possible participants and reminder e-mails were sent to initial non-participants two weeks and three weeks after the first e-mail was sent. Jennifer M. Jensen, Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, says that sending personalized e-mails can increase the response rates of online surveys by at least five percent. Jensen also suggests that instructions on the survey be kept quite brief, and the instructions on the survey used by this researcher are short. Participants' responses in this study are confidential. It is hoped that the participants were encouraged to respond once they knew that their identity and their individual responses would not be shared with anyone. One final method in which the researcher hoped to increase the participation rate was to promise to share his results with those people completing the survey.

Follow-up, one –to-one, interviews were conducted with two school system superintendents from Maryland. These superintendents will be selected from the counties which appear to have implemented the Task Force recommendations, based on principal responses. One superintendent is from an urban school district, and the other is from a small, rural school district. Slavin (2007) points out that interviews can help researchers gain a more in-depth understanding of attitudes and perceptions because respondents can be asked to explain or clarify their responses to interview questions. The researcher developed an interview protocol (Appendix G) of questions asked of the superintendents during the interviews.

### Study Site

The survey was sent to all principals in school districts in the state of Maryland where superintendent permission was granted to survey those principals. The school systems represented in the survey are a mixture of large, urban school systems, and smaller, rural school systems. Based on 2006 statistics, the enrollment of Maryland public schools is 851,640 students. Table 1 summarizes the enrollment of students in each of the twenty-three county school systems as well as the enrollment of Baltimore City schools.

Table 1

*Fall Enrollment – Maryland Public Schools: September 30, 2008*

Local Unit	Total	Pre- Kindergarten	Kindergarten	Grades 1-6	Grades 7-12
State	843,861	26,821	60,530	450,471	393,390
Allegany	9,232	471	611	5,016	4,616
Anne Arundel	73,653	1,684	5,430	39,754	33,899
Baltimore City	82,266	3,999	6,353	46,957	35,309
Baltimore	103,180	3,505	7,571	55,470	47,710
Calvert	17,052	325	1,121	8,622	8,430
Caroline	5,513	258	436	3,060	2,453
Carroll	27,964	316	1,890	14,001	13,963
Cecil	16,201	578	1,129	8,713	7,496
Charles	26,727	840	1,640	13,234	13,493
Dorchester	4,560	229	343	2,501	2,059
Frederick	40,070	918	2,835	21,078	18,992
Garrett	4,425	122	310	2,244	2,181
Harford	38,610	879	2,710	20,526	18,048
Howard	49,905	1,019	3,309	25,637	24,268
Kent	2,219	138	155	1,237	982
Montgomery	139,282	3,167	10,273	73,500	65,782
Prince George's	127,977	5,770	8,836	67,880	60,097
Queen Anne's	7,859	292	531	4,097	3,762
St. Mary's	16,752	677	1,195	9,021	7,731
Somerset	2,292	196	225	1,634	1,278
Talbot	4,419	159	315	2,278	2,141
Washington	21,734	469	1,656	11,964	9,770
Wicomico	14,590	457	1,191	8,424	6,166
Worcester	6,671	344	465	3,543	3,128

The Maryland public school system is made up of 806 elementary schools and 415 secondary schools and 85 combined elementary and secondary schools. Since not all school systems follow the same grade divisions for elementary and secondary schools, this researcher has classified schools with grades pre K-6 as an elementary school, and grades 7-12 as secondary schools. Some of the county school systems in Maryland have schools with students in grades pre-K through 8. For the purpose of this study, these schools were considered to be elementary

schools. Special schools such as career and technology centers, alternative schools, charter schools, and magnet schools were not included in this study because the leaders in these schools may not have matriculated through the traditional training of the leaders in the other public schools.

Maryland's educational system is considered one of the best school systems in the nation. In a recent Education Week report entitled *Quality Counts 2008*, Maryland received an overall grade of a B. This report, often considered the "Consumer Reports of Education" (Maryland State Department of Education, 2008, p. 1), grades the nation and each state "based on their ratings across six areas of performance and policy: chance-for-success; k-12 achievement; standards, assessments, and accountability; transitions and alignment; the teaching profession; and school finance" (Education Week, 2008, p. 1). The average national grade was a C. Only two other states received an overall grade of a B; Massachusetts and New York.

When comparing all of the states' educational systems, Maryland's performance was the most consistent. Only one performance indicator fell outside the B range: the teaching profession (Maryland State Department of Education, 2008). The teaching profession indicator examined factors such as induction and mentoring programs for new teachers and administrators and student-teacher ratios. For the purpose of this study, it is interesting to note that the Education Week report looked at three factors related to school leadership: Standards for licensure of school administrators; Supervised internship for aspiring principals; and Induction or mentoring programs for aspiring principals. Maryland does have standards for licensure of school administrators. These ISLLC standards can be found in Appendix B. Maryland requires a supervised internship for aspiring principals, but Maryland currently does not require new or aspiring principals to participate in an induction or mentoring program.

### Sample Population

Participants for this study were all principals in Maryland Public Schools where superintendents granted permission to survey principals, and two county school superintendents. The total number of principals asked to participate in this survey was 363. Principals and superintendents were chosen as the participants of this study because they are the school administrators directly involved in the hiring process of principals and assistant principals. They are the people who would have a direct knowledge of the quantity and quality of principal and assistant principal candidates. School superintendents and principals are also the administrators who would have the best knowledge of efforts undertaken by the state of Maryland to improve the quality and quantity of school principals and assistant principals. They are also the school leaders who would have the best understanding of which remedies aimed at addressing the shortage of quality principal and assistant principal candidates in the state of Maryland have been the most effective in increasing the number of quality principal candidates.

Two Maryland school superintendents are also participants in this study, however, they participated in a one-to-one interviews rather than completing the survey. The follow-up, one-to-one interviews with superintendents were conducted at sites determined by the superintendents.

The researcher considered surveying school board members as well since they are responsible for officially hiring new school administrators, but it was decided that the board members are usually only involved at the end of the administrator selection process after the candidates have already been screened and interviewed by superintendents and principals. Often, they are not aware of how many candidates applied for administrative positions or the qualifications of those candidates who did not receive an interview.

The results of this study represent urban, suburban, and rural areas of the state. The names and email addresses of the superintendents and principals were available for the researcher on the Maryland State Department of Education Website, and the websites of the individual city and county school systems in the state.

Emails were sent to all of Maryland's elementary and secondary principals. A copy of this email can be found in Appendix E. The emails explained the nature of the study and assured principals that the confidentiality of participant responses would be respected. The email also contained a link to an online survey. The survey instrument was published on an online survey hosting site called Qualtrics (<http://www.qualtrics.com/>) The online survey was opened for survey responses on November 13, 2009 and closed on December 18, 2009. On November 27, a reminder email was sent to the participants who had not yet completed the survey. A final e-mail was sent on December 11, 2009, thanking those who did respond and reminding those who did not respond to please do so. The survey data collection period ended on December 18, 2009.

#### Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was a survey. Since no formal survey is currently available to conduct this particular study, one was developed by the researcher. Vogt (2007) says that there are two key questions that researchers using survey design must consider. The first question is, "Can you learn what you want to know by asking people?" (p.76). Vogt insists that the answer to the first questions lies in quality survey design. The researcher relied on educational experts to ensure that the survey used by this researcher is of high quality and answers the research questions it seeks to target. These experts included the researcher's dissertation committee, employees of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Applied Research

Lab, and sample Maryland principals who participated in a pilot study to determine the effectiveness of the survey.

The second question that Vogt (2007) claims must be considered is “Can you generalize from what people tell you (your sample) to a broader group (your target population)?” (p. 76). Vogt writes that the answer to the second question “is mostly determined by the quality of your sample, particularly its representativeness.” (p. 76). Vogt (2007) also describes that:

Among equally representative samples, bigger is always better. The bigger the sample, the smaller the sampling error and the greater the statistical power. In other words, large samples are more likely to be representative of the populations from which they were drawn, and researchers using large samples are more likely to be able to detect true relations among variables. (p. 84)

When conducting survey research, large populations also help control for external validity issues (Creswell, 2003). For this reason, the researcher wanted to include all principals in the state of Maryland in this study (minus the principals who participated in the pilot study). However, several superintendents in the state would not give the researcher permission to survey their principals due to the fact that their principals were too busy and the superintendents did not want to add the additional burden of filling out a survey to their work load. Also, some superintendents did not reply to the researchers repeated attempts to obtain permission to survey principals in their school district.

The survey instrument, which can be found in Appendix F, is divided into seven parts and asks principals to respond to 63 questions. The first section includes five questions that were used to gather general demographic data of the responding principals. In this section of the survey, the respondents simply checked the appropriate boxes that match the correct data. The



remaining sections of the survey included items with a five-point Likert-type scale with a range of 1 (No Knowledge) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Vogt (2007) suggests including neutral options on Likert scales. He says that this allows respondents to fully express themselves. However, on the advice of the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Applied Research Center, the researcher decided not to use “not sure” as a choice because the survey is not asking respondents how sure they are of a particular response. Therefore, a neutral choice will not be included on the survey used in this study. On the suggestions of the researchers dissertation committee, the option of “No Knowledge” was added in case principals did not know the answer to a survey question.

The second section of the survey asked the responding principals if they felt that there is a lack of qualified principal and assistant principal candidates applying for vacant administrator positions. Sections three through five assessed the respondents’ perceptions as to their school district’s level of participation in the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations. Section six assessed the principals’ perceptions as to whether their district participates in programs and trainings offered by the Maryland Educational Leadership Initiative. Section seven assessed whether principals perceive there to be an improvement in the quality and quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in their district as a result of their district’s participation in implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. Finally, section eight assessed whether principals perceive the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship to have an effect on attracting qualified candidates to apply for principal and assistant principal vacancies.

The Likert survey was used to determine whether the responding principals perceived a principal/assistant principal shortage in their district. The survey also helped determine if the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship have been implemented in

districts throughout the state. Although the survey was not designed to specifically highlight which districts have or have not implemented the Task Force recommendations, it was used to determine if the principals in the districts where the recommendations have been implemented perceive an improvement in the quality and quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates. The survey was also designed to determine if school districts are participating in Maryland Educational Leadership Initiatives, and if they are, which initiatives principals perceive as being the most helpful in preparing principal and assistant principal candidates. In order to create a survey instrument which answers the questions addressed in this study, the researcher conducted a factor analysis of the survey questions. (Table 2)

Table 2 *Layout of Survey Questions*

Section of Survey	Survey Question	Research Question
Part 1	1. I am a(n):	Demographic information
Part 1	2. I have been a principal:	Demographic information
Part 1	3. The school district where	Demographic information
Part 1	4. How many students does your school serve?	Demographic information
Part 1	5. How many assistant principals does your building have?	Demographic information
Part 2	1. There is a shortage of candidates applying for principal or assistant principal positions in my school district.	#1-Perceived shortage
Part 2	2. Candidates applying for principal or assistant principals in my district are quality candidates.	#4-Candidate Quality
Part 3	1. My school district has provided an assistant principal for each 350 students.	#2-District participation
Part 3	2. My district has provided a full-time Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team manager for each school.	#2-District participation
Part 3	3. My district has redesigned the timeframe in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff.	#2-District participation
Part 3	4. My district has reviewed and adheres to an established clerical and certificated staffing ratio.	#2-District participation
Part 3	5. My district has hired building-based business managers for all schools.	#2-District participation
Part 3	6. My district provides appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools.	#2-District participation
Part 3	7. My district provides an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel.	#2-District participation
Part 3	8. My district provides appropriate staffing to monitor buses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular activities.	#2-District participation

Table 2 continued

Part 3	9. My district provides the necessary staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs.	#2-District participation
Part 4	1. My district and/or my local school system consortia has developed identification and professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school system staffing.	#2-District participation
Part 4	2. Professional development programs in my district are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.	#2-District participation
Part 4	3. My district and/or school system consortia submits professional development program proposals to the Maryland Department of Education for approval and supplemental funding.	#2-District participation
Part 4	4. My district and/or school system consortia provides a comprehensive mentorship program for first-and second-year principals.	#2-District participation
Part 4	5. My district and/or school system consortia coordinates intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.	#2-District participation
Part 5	1. My district has established a principal's salary scale that has as its minimum entry point the equivalent of what the highest paid twelve month teacher would be compensated plus an absolute minimum of 10%.	#2-District participation
Part 5	2. My district provides additional compensation beyond the steps on its salary scale for principals based on the size of the school assigned, the organizational level (elementary, middle, high school), and staffing patterns within that building.	#2-District participation
Part 5	3. My district provides additional compensation for principals due to defined needs in a specific school based on established priorities that are clearly communicated in advance and the achievement of those priorities.	#2-District participation

Table 2 continued

Part 5	4. My district provides a multi-year commitment (no less than three years) and additional compensation for principals who take on difficult challenges and who meet established priorities.	#2-District participation
Part 5	5. My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include:	#2-District participation
Part 5	5a. Health insurance	#2-District participation
Part 5	5b. Life insurance	#2-District participation
Part 5	5c. Disability insurance	#2-District participation
Part 5	5d. Deferred compensation	#2-District participation
Part 5	5e. Sabbatical leave	#2-District participation
Part 5	5f. Dues/membership in professional organizations	#2-District participation
Part 5	5g. Technology (cell phones, laptops, palm pilots)	#2-District participation
Part 5	5h. Professional development opportunities	#2-District participation
Part 5	5i. National and state conferences	#2-District participation
Part 6	1. My school district is having difficulty in attracting a sufficient number of candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions.	#3-Quantity of candidates
Part 6	2. My school district is having a difficult time attracting quality candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions.	#4-Quality of candidates
Part 6	3. My school district has implemented recommendations from the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship in an effort to improve the quality and quantity of candidates applying for principal and assistant principal positions.	#2-District participation
Part 6	4. The quantity of principal and/or assistant principal candidates in my school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship	#3-Quantity of candidates

Table 2 continued

	recommendations	
Part 6	5. The quality of principal and/or assistant principal candidates in my school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations.	#4-Quality of candidates
Part 6	6. Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school staffing.	#2-District participation
Part 6	7. The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals' participation in internships which are long-term, full-time, comprehensive and part of school staffing.	#3-Candidate Quantity
Part 6	8. The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals' participation in internships which are long-term, full-time, comprehensive and part of school staffing.	#4-Candidate Quality
Part 6	9. Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.	#2-District participation
Part 6	10. The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.	#3-Candidate quantity
Part 6	11. The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and	#4-Candidate quality

Table 2 continued

	improved classroom practices.	
Part 6	12. Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in comprehensive mentorship programs for first- and second-year principals.	#2-District participation
Part 6	13. The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first- and second-year principals.	#3-Candidate quantity
Part 6	14. The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first- and second-year principals.	#4-Candidate quality
Part 6	15. Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.	#2-District participation
Part 6	16. The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.	#3-Candidate quantity
Part 6	17. The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.	#4-Candidate quality
Part 7	1. Ensuring that each school has an assistant principal for every 350 students will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
Part 7	2. Redesigning the timeframe in which principals must complete formal evaluations of staff will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies

Table 2 continued

Part 7	3. School district reviewing and adhering to established clerical and certificated staffing ratios will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
Part 7	4. Hiring building-based business managers for all schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
Part 7	5. School districts providing appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
Part 7	6. Employing an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel in school districts will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
Part 7	7. Ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor buses, cafeteria, athletic events and extracurricular activities will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
Part 7	8. Ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
Part 7	9. School districts and/or local school system consortia developing professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school system staffing will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
Part 7	10. School districts providing professional development programs that are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies



Table 2 continued

Part 7	11. School districts and/or school system consortia coordinating intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	#5-Effective remedies
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### Pilot Procedures

Piloting the survey was necessary to help establish the reliability and validity of the survey. Prior to gathering information for this research, permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board.

Once permission was granted from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board, a convenience sample of three current and two recently retired principals from the state of Maryland reviewed the survey to assess the readability of the survey. These current and retired principals were chosen as the pilot group due to the fact that they are former colleagues of the researcher. Positive rapport has already been established with these administrators and the researcher trusts that their input was honest and reliable. The pilot group represents administrators with varied backgrounds, experiences, and years of service in education.

Pilot participants also provided evidence of content validity and offered feedback on ways to improve the survey. The five panel members were provided with electronic copies of the survey and the research questions this study intends to explore and all of the respondents returned completed surveys and participated in follow-up interviews. They were asked to comment on the format of the survey as well as the wording and order of the questions. They were also asked to do a factor analysis of each question on the survey to ensure that each question addresses one of the research questions posed in this study. Vogt (2007) states that

factor analysis is an effective way to check for reliability of longer surveys with many respondents. Follow-up phone calls or face-to-face meetings were made to each of the pilot participants so that each pilot participant could provide additional feedback on ways to improve the survey instrument.

All of the pilot participants shared similar comments. Overall, the comments were positive and the participants felt that the survey questions did indeed address the five research questions posed in this study. In follow-up face-to-face interviews or phone call interviews with the respondents, the researcher asked questions such as, “Are the instructions clear? Did you understand the questions?” The respondents commented that the survey was easy to understand and the questions made sense. Two of the respondents responded that several of the questions were repeated. This was not the case however. The confusion for the respondents was between the words *quality* and *quantity*. Both respondents recommended that I highlight the words in some way, such as underlining them or making them bold.

Because the researcher had concerns about the length of survey, the respondents were asked to compare each question to the five research questions this survey hopes to address. The pilot participants were asked if any survey question did not address a research question, and therefore could be eliminated. All of the respondents felt that all of the questions addressed the study’s research questions and therefore should remain as part of the survey.

#### Analysis of Data

Once the on-line survey completing period was closed, Cronbach’s alpha, “a correlational measure of the reliability or consistency of the items in a scale” (Vogt, 2007) was processed using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS). Demographic data was also used to provide a textual summary of the profile of the responding principals.

Information from the surveys was analyzed to determine to what extent the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented across the state. For those districts which have implemented the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, data was analyzed to determine principal perceptions on whether the recommendations have had any impact on improving the quality and quantity of aspiring principals and assistant principals. Data was also analyzed to determine which of the Maryland Educational Leadership initiatives principals perceive to have the greatest effect on improving the quantity and quality of aspiring principal and assistant principal candidates.

### Chapter Summary

To answer the questions posed in this study, principals from across the state of Maryland were asked to complete an online survey created by the researcher. Prior to conducting the study, this researcher piloted the survey instrument to ensure the survey was reliable and valid. Pilot participants were current and former principals in the state of Maryland. These principals completed the survey and provided feedback to the researcher which provided evidence of the survey's content validity. Principals also offered feedback for making the survey easier to read and understand.

Data was analyzed and Cronbach's alpha was processed using Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) to determine the survey's reliability.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### Introduction

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how well the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented throughout the state of Maryland. The purpose of this study was also to determine which implemented Task Force recommendations Maryland school principals perceived to have made a positive impact on attracting qualified candidates to fill vacant principal positions. This chapter analyzes the data and reports the findings that address the research questions posed in Chapter 1:

1. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there a shortage of qualified candidates applying for principal and assistant principal vacancies in the state of Maryland?
2. As perceived by Maryland school principals, are Maryland county school systems implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, and if so, how are they being implemented?
3. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?
4. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates applying for principal vacancies in the state of Maryland since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?

5. Which remedies aimed at addressing the shortage of quality principal and assistant principal candidates in the state of Maryland are perceived to be the most effective in increasing the number of quality principal candidates?

This chapter includes both quantitative and qualitative findings, which address these research questions. The first part of this chapter will focus on the quantitative data obtained from a survey completed by school principals in the state of Maryland.

The second part of this chapter will report the qualitative findings from face-to-face interviews done with two Maryland school superintendents.

### Quantitative Findings

#### *Demographics of the Survey Respondents*

Since no survey instrument was available to address this study's research questions, one was developed by the researcher. The survey was then piloted to determine validity with a panel of current and retired principals in the state of Maryland.

The final survey used in this study was designed using a Likert scale and contained 8 parts. In Part I of the survey, respondents identified demographic information such as the number of years they have been a principal, the size of the school where they are principal, the location of their school (either urban or rural), and the number of assistant principals employed in their school. Part II of the survey had respondents identify their level of agreement as to whether or not there is a shortage of quality candidates applying for principal positions in their state. In parts III, IV, and V of the survey, principals identified their level of agreement as to whether certain recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship have been implemented in their school districts. Part VI had principals state their level of agreement as to whether the implementation of Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations has improved the

quality and quantity of candidates applying for principal positions in their districts. Part VII of the survey had principals identify which recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship they felt were most important in attracting and training principal candidates. In Part VIII of the survey, respondents were free to add any comments about the Principalship they wished to add.

To determine the reliability of the survey, responses were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Base 17.0.1, 2009). Cronbach's alpha was computed to determine the internal consistency of the scaled scores. Cronbach's Alpha may range from 0 to 1. Generally, a coefficient score of 0.70 is considered to be an acceptable reliability coefficient (Vogt, 2007). The reliability coefficient of the scaled scores for the survey used in this study was .865. Therefore, the survey is considered to be reliable.

Email invitations to participate in the study were sent to all school superintendents in the state of Maryland. Nine of the superintendents responded and permission was granted for their principals to participate in the study. Five superintendents did not give permission to the researcher to send the survey to their principals citing an already heavy workload for their principals. Ten superintendents did not respond to the researchers email requests for permission to survey their principals. The researcher sent follow-up emails to the superintendents who did not respond. The ten superintendents did not respond to the follow-up emails. Once permission to survey principals was granted to the researcher, emails were sent out to all principals in those school districts describing the purpose of the study. The email included a link for principals to complete the online survey. Twenty-two principals responded to the initial email, which was sent to 363 principals. Thank-you emails were sent to those principals and follow-up emails were sent to all of the principals who did not respond to the initial email. After the follow-up email

was sent, an additional 57 principals completed the survey. Of the 363 survey invitations emailed, 79 principals (22%) completed the on-line survey and were entered into the SPSS database.

More surveys were received from principals in rural school districts than urban school districts (see Table 3), and more elementary principals responded to the survey than middle or high school principals (see Table 4).

Table 3

*Maryland Public Schools Systems by Setting as Reported by School Principals*

Classification of Maryland School Systems	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Urban	23	29%
Rural	56	71%
Total	79	100%

For the purpose of this study, principals in six of the 24 school systems in Maryland were considered to be urban school districts. The other 18 school systems were considered to be rural. Out of the six urban school systems, only one gave this researcher permission to conduct the study in their district. Therefore, principals from 8 rural districts made up the bulk of this study. This is the reason why the number of rural respondents is much higher than the urban respondents.

Table 4

*Grade Levels in Schools of Participating Principals*

Grade Level	Number of	Percentage of
In School	Responses	Responses
Pre-Kindergarten	26	33%
Kindergarten	39	49%
First Grade	39	51%
Second Grade	37	48%
Third Grade	38	49%
Fourth Grade	36	47%
Fifth Grade	38	48%
Sixth Grade	26	33%
Seventh Grade	24	30%
Eighth Grade	23	29%
Ninth Grade	26	33%
Tenth Grade	27	34%
Eleventh Grade	28	35%
Twelfth Grade	26	33%



Respondents represented a wide range of experience with most respondents (90%) serving as a school principal for 2 or more years (see Table 5).

Table 5

*Experience of Responding Principals*

Years of Experience	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Less Than 2 Years	8	10%
2-5 Years	23	30%
6-9 Years	16	21%
10-13 Years	9	12%
More Than 13 years	21	27%
Total	77	100%

Schools served by the responding principals most commonly fell within the 350-599 student range (see Table 6). Only 1 principal responding to the survey (1%) served as the principal of a school of less than 100 students.

Table 6

*Number of Students in Schools of Responding Principals*

Number of Students	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Less Than 100	1	1%
100-349	17	22%
350-599	34	43%
600-849	15	19%
850 or More	12	16%
Total	79	100%

A majority of the principals responding worked in a school with at least one assistant principal (see Table 7). Eighteen principals (23%) worked in a school with no assistant principal. The most common number of assistant principals was 1 (43% of the respondents).

Table 7

*Number of Assistant Principals in Reporting Schools*

Number of Assistant Principals	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
0	18	23%
1	34	43%
2	18	23%
3	7	9%
4	2	3%
More than 4	0	0%
Total	79	100%

## Principal Perceptions on Principal Shortages

To answer the first research question, “As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there a shortage of qualified candidates applying for principal and assistant principal vacancies in the state of Maryland?” principals were asked to respond to four questions about principal shortages in their districts. Participants selected from five responses in a Likert-type scale: 1=strongly agree, 2=somewhat agree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=strongly disagree, and 5=no knowledge. The four survey questions are shown in Table 8 with their respective means (from lowest to highest) and standard deviations.

Table 8

*Principal Perceptions on Principal Shortages*

Question	M	SD
Q7: Candidates applying for principal or assistant principal positions in my district are quality candidates.	2.42	1.00
Q6: There is a shortage of candidates applying for principal or assistant principal positions in my school district.	2.56	1.03
Q38: My school district is having a difficult time attracting quality candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions.	2.72	1.26
Q 37: My school district is having difficulty attracting a sufficient number of candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions.	3.04	1.20

Survey question 7 asked the principals if the candidates applying for assistant principal and principal positions are quality candidates. The most common answer given by respondents was “somewhat agree.” Sixty-four percent of the principals responded with “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree.” Thirty-one percent of the principals responded with “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Five percent of the responding principals had no knowledge if assistant principal and principal candidates are quality candidates (see Table 9).

Table 9

*Maryland Principals Report on Their Perceptions of Quality Candidates Applying for Assistant Principal or Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	10	13%
Somewhat Agree	40	51%
Somewhat Disagree	17	22%
Strongly Disagree	7	9%
No Knowledge	4	5%
Total	78	100%

Survey question 6 asked principals if there is a shortage of candidates applying for principal or assistant principal positions in their school districts. According to Table 10, 52% of the principals responded with “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” when asked if there was a shortage of candidates applying for principal or assistant principal positions in their school district. Forty-five percent of the principals responded “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” when asked the same question. The most common answer was “somewhat agree.” Three percent of the principals responded that they had no knowledge of whether or not there was a shortage of candidates applying for assistant principal or principal position in their district.

Table 10

*Maryland Principals Report on Their Perceptions of a Shortage of Candidates Applying for Assistant Principal or Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	11	14%
Somewhat Agree	30	38%
Somewhat Disagree	21	27%
Strongly Disagree	14	18%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	78	100%

Question 38 asked principals if their school district is having a difficult time attracting quality candidates to apply for principal and assistant principal positions. Table 11 shows that 56% responded that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district is having a difficult time attracting quality candidates to apply for principal and assistant principal positions. Thirty-two percent of the principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Fourteen percent reported that they had no knowledge of whether the candidates applying for principal or assistant principal candidates were quality candidates.

Table 11

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District is Having a Difficult Time Attracting Quality Candidates to Interview for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	10	14%
Somewhat Agree	31	42%
Somewhat Disagree	13	18%
Strongly Disagree	10	14%
No Knowledge	10	14%
Total	74	100%

Survey question 37 asked principals if their school district is having a difficult time attracting a sufficient number of candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions. Table 12 shows that the most common response was “somewhat agree.” A total of 40% of the principals completing the survey stated that they “strongly agree” or somewhat agree” that their district is having a difficult time attracting a sufficient number of candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions, while 44% of the principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Sixteen percent had no knowledge of their district having a difficult time attracting a sufficient number of candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions.

Table 12

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District is Having Difficulty in Attracting a Sufficient Number of Candidates to Interview for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	5	7%
Somewhat Agree	25	34%
Somewhat Disagree	19	25%
Strongly Disagree	14	19%
No Knowledge	12	16%
Total	75	100%

There are three major recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship (see Appendix A). Each major recommendation is divided into additional recommendations for increasing the quantity and quality of Maryland's school administrators. To address the second research question posed by this study, "As perceived by Maryland school principals, are Maryland county school systems implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, and if so, how are they being implemented?" several of the survey questions asked principals to identify their level of agreement as to whether these additional recommendations are being implemented in their school districts. Once again, participants were asked to select from five responses in a Likert-type scale: 1=strongly agree, 2=somewhat agree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=strongly disagree, and 5=no knowledge.



When asked to identify their level of agreement with the statement “My school district has implemented the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship in an effort to improve the quality and quantity of candidates applying for principal and assistant principal positions,” 48% of the responding principals reported that they either “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree.” Nineteen percent reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Thirty-three percent of the principals reported that they had no knowledge of whether or not their district implemented the recommendation of the Task Force (see Table 13).

Table 13

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Has Implemented Recommendations From the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship in an Effort to Improve the Quality and Quantity of Candidates Applying for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	5	7%
Somewhat Agree	31	41%
Somewhat Disagree	11	15%
Strongly Disagree	3	4%
No Knowledge	25	33%
Total	75	100%

To further understand principal perceptions about their districts’ efforts to implement the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations, additional survey questions asked principals to identify their level of agreement with specific recommendations of the Task Force.

Recommendation number 1 of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states, “MSDE and all 24 local school systems will “clear the plate” of extraneous responsibilities assigned principals to ensure they have sufficient time to fulfill their primary role as instructional leader/facilitator” (Maryland Department of Education, 2000) More specific recommendations for “clearing the plate” include: providing an assistant principal for every 350 students; providing a full-time Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team manager for each school; redesigning the time frame in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff; reviewing and adhering to an established clerical and certificated staffing ratio; providing business managers for all schools; assuring appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools; providing an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel; providing appropriate staffing to monitor busses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular activities; and providing the necessary staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs (Maryland Department of Education, 2001).

As with the other survey questions, participants were asked to select from five responses in a Likert-type scale: 1=strongly agree, 2=somewhat agree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=strongly disagree, and 5=no knowledge. The four survey questions are shown in Table 14 with their respective means (from lowest to highest) and standard deviations.

Table 14

*Principal Perceptions on Clearing the Plate*

Question	M	SD
Q14: My district provides an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel.	2.55	0.97
Q16: My district provides the necessary staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs.	2.62	0.97
Q8: My district has provided an assistant principal for each 350 students.	2.69	1.36
Q11: My district reviewed and adheres to an established clerical and certificated staffing ratio.	2.69	1.25
Q13: My district provides appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools.	2.71	1.34
Q9: My district has provided a full-time Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team manager for each school.	2.87	1.28
Q15: My district provides appropriate staffing to monitor busses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular activities.	2.91	0.98
Q10: My district has redesigned the time frame in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff.	3.00	1.21
Q12: My district has hired building-based business managers for all schools.	3.51	0.98

The recommendation with the lowest mean (most agreement) for clearing the Plate dealt with districts providing appropriate numbers of school psychologists and alternate education personnel. Over half (54%) of the principals responding “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their districts have addressed the recommendation. Forty-four percent of the principals completing the survey reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their school districts provide an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel. Three percent of the principals reported that they had no knowledge of their districts’ efforts to provide an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel (see table 15).

Table 15

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District Providing an Appropriate Ratio of School Psychologists and Alternate Education Personnel*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	9	12%
Somewhat Agree	32	42%
Somewhat Disagree	23	30%
Strongly Disagree	11	14%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	77	100%

Additional staffing recommended by the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship includes appropriate staffing to monitor areas and events principals must often monitor such as

busses, cafeterias, athletic events, extracurricular activities, breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs. Table 16 shows that 37% of the principals report that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides appropriate staffing to monitor busses, cafeterias, athletic events, and extracurricular activities. Table 17 shows that 51% of the principals “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides the necessary staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs. Table 16 also shows that 62% of the principals “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district provides appropriate staffing to monitor busses, cafeterias, athletic events, and extracurricular activities. Three percent had no knowledge of staffing in these areas. As shown in Table 20, 48% of the principals completing the survey “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district provides necessary staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs. One percent of the principals had no knowledge of staffing for these programs.

Table 16

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District Providing Appropriate Staffing to Monitor Busses, Cafeterias, Athletic Events and Extracurricular Activities.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	5	7%
Somewhat Agree	23	30%
Somewhat Disagree	25	33%
Strongly Disagree	22	29%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	77	100%

Table 17

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District Providing the Necessary Staffing to Monitor Breakfast Programs, After-School Programs, and Summer Programs*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	8	10%
Somewhat Agree	32	41%
Somewhat Disagree	21	27%
Strongly Disagree	16	21%
No Knowledge	1	1%
Total	78	100%

Survey question number 8 asked principals to indicate their level of agreement as to whether or not their school district has provided an assistant principal for each 350 students. Nearly half (48%), responded with “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree.” Forty-three percent reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district provides an assistant principal for every 350 students. Nine percent of the principals reported that they had no knowledge of whether or not their district provided an assistant principal for every 350 students (see Table 18).

Table 18

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District Providing an Assistant Principal for Every 350 Students*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	21	13%
Somewhat Agree	16	27%
Somewhat Disagree	13	21%
Strongly Disagree	20	17%
No Knowledge	7	9%
Total	77	100%

Fifty-seven percent of the principals completing the survey reported that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district adheres to an established clerical and certified staffing ratio. Twenty-eight percent of the principals “somewhat disagree” or strongly disagree.” Fourteen percent had no knowledge about their district reviewing and adhering to an established clerical and certificated staffing ratio (see Table 19).



Table 19

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District Reviewing and Adhering to an Established Clerical and Certificated Staffing Ratio*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	10	13%
Somewhat Agree	34	44%
Somewhat Disagree	14	18%
Strongly Disagree	8	10%
No Knowledge	11	14%
Total	77	100%

Table 20 shows the level of principals' agreement with their districts providing appropriate level of security personnel in all middle and high schools. The Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommends that school districts provide appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools. Fifty-two percent of the principals "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" that their districts provide the appropriate levels of security personnel in their middle schools and high schools while 34% did not agree. Fifteen percent of the principals did not have knowledge of the security levels at their districts' middle schools and high schools.

Table 20

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District Providing Appropriate Levels of Security**Personnel in all Middle and High Schools*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	16	21%
Somewhat Agree	24	31%
Somewhat Disagree	17	22%
Strongly Disagree	9	12%
No Knowledge	12	15%
Total	78	100%

Another recommendation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship is for districts to provide a full-time Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team manager for each school. Forty percent responded that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” while 58% of the principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district provides a full-time IEP team manager for each school. Forty-five percent of these principals strongly disagree. Three percent of the responding principals had no knowledge of whether their district provided an IEP team manager for each school (see table 21).

Table 21

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District Providing an Individual Education Plan (IEP)**Team Manager for Each School*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	18	23%
Somewhat Agree	13	17%
Somewhat Disagree	10	13%
Strongly Disagree	35	45%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	77	100%

As depicted in Table 22, 39% of the principals completing the survey responded “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district has redefined the time frame in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff. However, a large percentage of the principals completing the survey reported some level of disagreement with the statement, “My district provides an Individual Education Plan (IEP) team manager for each school.” Fifty-four percent reported that they “somewhat disagree, or “strongly disagree” that their district has redefined the time frame in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff. Eight percent of the principals reported that they had no knowledge of whether or not their school district has redefined the timeframe in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff.

Table 22

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District Redesigning the Time Frame in Which Principals are Required to Formally Evaluate Staff*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	10	13%
Somewhat Agree	20	26%
Somewhat Disagree	14	18%
Strongly Disagree	28	36%
No Knowledge	6	8%
Total	78	100%

When asked if their school districts hire building-based business managers for every school to handle all non-instructional tasks, thus freeing the principal to focus on instruction. The majority of principals, (74%) strongly disagreed that their school districts provided school-based business managers. Six percent “somewhat disagree. Eighteen percent either “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their districts provided school-based business managers, while 1%, had no knowledge of business managers in schools (see Table 23).

Table 23

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District School based Business Managers*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	6	8%
Somewhat Agree	8	10%
Somewhat Disagree	5	6%
Strongly Disagree	58	74%
No Knowledge	1	1%
Total	77	100%

The second major recommendation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship addresses both pre-service and ongoing professional development opportunities for aspiring principals and current principals. It states, “In conjunction with the Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, the local school systems and/or school system consortia will develop comprehensive, job-embedded programs for the identification and professional development of principal candidates and of current principals.” Five survey questions assessed principal perceptions regarding these recommendations.

Principals showed the most agreement with the Task Force recommendations for providing professional development opportunities for principals, assistant principals, and aspiring principals. The five survey questions are shown in Table 24 with their respective means (from lowest to highest) and standard deviations.

Table 24

*Principal Perceptions on Professional Development*

Question	M	SD
Q19: Professional development programs in my district are consistent with the national Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.	1.87	1.03
Q45: Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.	2.25	1.22
Q21: My district and/or school system consortia provides a comprehensive mentorship program for first- and second-year principals.	2.42	1.09
Q22: My district and or school system consortia coordinates intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.	2.46	1.04
Q18: My district and/or my local school system consortia has developed identification and professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full time, comprehensive and part of the school system staffing.	2.62	1.14

When asked if professional development programs in their districts are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices, there was overwhelming agreement from the principals. Eighty-five percent of the principals completing the survey indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement. Only 8% indicated that they “somewhat disagree” while no principals “strongly disagree.” Six percent of the principals indicated that they had no knowledge of whether professional development programs in their districts are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices (see Table 25).

Table 25

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Professional Development Programs in Their Districts are Consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards and are Linked to Student Achievement and Improved Classroom Practices*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	31	40%
Somewhat Agree	35	45%
Somewhat Disagree	6	8%
Strongly Disagree	0	0%
No Knowledge	5	6%
Total	77	100%

When asked if principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in their school district have participated in professional development activities which are consistent with the

National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices, again, a large percentage of principals agreed. Sevent-five percent of the principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement. Only 14% “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Eleven percent of the principals indicated that they had no knowledge regarding this survey question (see table 26).

Table 26

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Principals, Assistant Principals, and/or Aspiring Principals in their school District have Participated in Professional Development Activities which are Consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards and which are Linked to Student Achievement and Improved Classroom Practices*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	19	26%
Somewhat Agree	35	49%
Somewhat Disagree	7	10%
Strongly Disagree	3	4%
No Knowledge	8	11%
Total	72	100%

There was also a high level of agreement regarding mentorships and the opportunity of principals to network with other school principals. When asked to respond to the question, “My district and/or school system consortia provides a comprehensive mentorship program for first- and second-year principals,” 61% of the principals surveyed “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their school district and/or school system consortia provides a comprehensive



mentorship program for first and second year principals. Twenty-nine percent of the principals surveyed “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Only 3% had no knowledge of mentorship programs available to first and second year principals (Table 27).

Table 27

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides a comprehensive Mentorship Program for First-and Second-Year Principals*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	16	21%
Somewhat Agree	31	40%
Somewhat Disagree	15	19%
Strongly Disagree	14	18%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	78	100%

Regarding the opportunity for principals to network, 59% of the principals responded that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” when asked to respond to the survey statement, “My district and or school system consortia coordinates intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.” Thirty-six percent indicated that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” with the statement, while 5% of the responding principals reported that they had no knowledge about networking opportunities for principals (see Table 28).

Table 28

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District and/or School System Consortia Coordinates Intra-System networking for Cooperative Problem Solving and Sharing Best Practices*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	12	15%
Somewhat Agree	34	44%
Somewhat Disagree	20	26%
Strongly Disagree	8	10%
No Knowledge	4	5%
Total	78	100%

Principals' responses about internships were split almost equally. Fifty-one percent responded "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" when asked to respond to the statement, "My district and/or my local school system consortia has developed identification and professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of the school system staffing. Forty-two percent of the principals responded "somewhat disagree" or "strongly disagree" to the same statement. Eight percent responded that they had no knowledge about their districts providing internships (see Table 29).

Table 29

*Maryland Principals Report on Their District or Local School System Consortia Developing Identification and Professional Development Frameworks for Principal Candidates, which Include Internships that Are Long-Term, Full Time, Comprehensive, and Part of the School System Staffing*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	12	16%
Somewhat Agree	27	35%
Somewhat Disagree	22	29%
Strongly Disagree	10	13%
No Knowledge	6	8%
Total	77	100%

The third major recommendation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states, “Local school systems will adjust principal salary and compensation packages to better reflect the responsibilities, accountability, and stressors of the Principalship” (Maryland Department of Education, 2000). Strategies to address this recommendation were developed by the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship: Compensation Workgroup (Maryland Department of Education, 2001). Eleven survey questions assessed principal perceptions regarding principal compensation. The eleven survey questions are shown in Table 30 with their respective means (from lowest to highest) and standard deviations.

Table 30

*Principal Perceptions on Salary and Compensation Packages*

Question	M	SD
Q28: My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include health insurance.	1.89	1.24
Q29: My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include life insurance.	1.92	1.18
Q35: My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include professional development opportunities.	2.03	0.83
Q30: My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include disability insurance.	2.12	1.31
Q25: My district provides additional compensation beyond the steps on its salary scale for principals based on the size of the school assigned, the organizational level (elementary, middle, high school), and staffing patterns within that building.	2.25	1.33

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Q33: My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include dues/memberships in professional organizations.	2.37	1.21
Q36: My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include national and state conferences.	2.44	1.06
Q32: My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include sabbatical leave.	2.53	1.48
Q26: My district provides additional compensation for principals due to defined needs in a specific school based on established priorities that are clearly communicated in advance and the achievement of these priorities.	3.18	1.31
Q24: My district has established a principal's salary scale that has as its minimum entry point the equivalent of what the highest paid twelve-month teacher would be compensated, plus an absolute minimum of 10%.	3.39	1.39
Q27: My district provides a multi-year commitment (no less than three years) and additional compensation for principals who take on difficult challenges and who meet established priorities.	3.67	1.15

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Responding principals showed a high level of agreement with survey statements referring to districts providing additional compensation and benefits such as health insurance, life insurance, and disability insurance. Seventy-nine percent of the responding principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides additional health insurance. Seventy-eight percent indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides additional life insurance, and 75% indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides additional disability insurance. The percentage of principals disagreeing with the survey questions on additional compensation and benefits was low. Sixteen percent of the respondents reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district provides additional health insurance. Seventeen percent of the principals responding reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district provides additional life insurance, and 17% of the respondents reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district provides additional disability insurance (see Tables 31, 32, and 33).

Table 31

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides Additional Health Insurance for all Principals Consistent with the District Collective Bargaining Agreement*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	41	54%
Somewhat Agree	19	25%
Somewhat Disagree	3	4%
Strongly Disagree	9	12%
No Knowledge	4	5%
Total	76	100%

Table 32

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides Additional Life Insurance for all Principals Consistent with the District Collective Bargaining Agreement*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	37	49%
Somewhat Agree	22	29%
Somewhat Disagree	4	5%
Strongly Disagree	9	12%
No Knowledge	3	4%
Total	75	100%



Table 33

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides Additional Disability Insurance for all Principals Consistent with the District Collective Bargaining Agreement*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	32	43%
Somewhat Agree	24	32%
Somewhat Disagree	3	4%
Strongly Disagree	10	13%
No Knowledge	6	8%
Total	75	100%

Principals responding to the survey also showed a high level of agreement when it came to professional development opportunities offered to principals in their school districts. Seventy-three percent of the principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with the statement, “My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include professional development opportunities.” Twenty-seven percent of the principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” with this statement (see Table 34).

Table 34

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides Additional Professional Development Opportunities for all Principals Consistent with the District Collective Bargaining Agreement*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	21	28%
Somewhat Agree	33	45%
Somewhat Disagree	17	23%
Strongly Disagree	3	4%
No Knowledge	0	0%
Total	74	100%

Principals also had a high level of agreement the survey question regarding compensation relevant to school size and organizational level. When asked to respond to the statement, “My district provides additional compensation beyond the steps on its salary scale for principals based on the size of the school assigned, the organizational level (elementary, middle, high school), and staffing patterns within that building, 70% of the principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree.” Twenty-one percent reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Nine percent responded that they had no knowledge of whether or not their district provides additional compensation beyond the steps on its salary scale for principals based on the size of the school assigned, the organizational level (elementary, middle, high school), and staffing patterns within that building (see Table 35).

Table 35

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides Additional Compensation*

*Beyond the Steps in its Salary Scale for Principals Based on the Size of the School Assigned, the Organizational Level (Elementary, Middle, High), and Staffing Patterns Within That Building*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	28	37%
Somewhat Agree	25	33%
Somewhat Disagree	6	8%
Strongly Disagree	10	13%
No Knowledge	7	9%
Total	76	100%

Sabbatical leave was another component of compensation for which principals had a high level of agreement. Sixty-seven percent of respondents indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides additional sabbatical leave for principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. Twelve percent of the principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” while 21% indicated that they had no knowledge of whether their district provides additional sabbatical leave for principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement (see Table 36).

Table 36

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides Additional Sabbatical Leave for all Principals Consistent with the District Collective Bargaining Agreement*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	21	28%
Somewhat Agree	30	39%
Somewhat Disagree	5	7%
Strongly Disagree	4	5%
No Knowledge	16	21%
Total	76	100%

More than half of the principals surveyed (61%) “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district compensates them to attend national and state conferences. Thirty-six percent of the responding principals indicated that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district compensates them to attend national and state conferences. Three percent of the principals responded that they had no knowledge of whether their district offers compensation to attend national and state conferences (see Table 37).

Table 37

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides National and State Conferences for all Principals Consistent with the District Collective Bargaining Agreement*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	13	17%
Somewhat Agree	33	44%
Somewhat Disagree	14	19%
Strongly Disagree	13	17%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	75	100%

The Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommends that principals be compensated for dues and memberships in professional organizations. Fifty-five percent of the principals completing the survey said that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” while 42% reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” that their district provides compensation for dues and membership in professional organizations. Three percent of the principals responded that they had “no knowledge” of whether their district provides compensation for dues and membership in professional organizations (see Table 38).

Table 38

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides Additional Compensation for Dues/Membership in Professional Organizations Consistent with the District Collective Bargaining Agreement*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	25	55%
Somewhat Agree	17	22%
Somewhat Disagree	17	22%
Strongly Disagree	15	20%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	76	100%

In regards to additional compensation, the level of agreement among principals declines when asked to state their level of agreement with the statement, “ My district provides additional compensation for principals due to defined needs in a specific school based on established priorities that are clearly communicated in advance and the achievement of these priorities.” Only 31% of the responding principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement while nearly half (49%) of the principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Twenty percent of the principals reported that they had “no knowledge” of whether their district provides additional compensation for principals due to defined needs in a specific school based on established priorities that are clearly communicated in advance and the achievement of these priorities (see Table 39).

Table 39

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides Additional Compensation for Principals Due to Defined Needs in a Specific School Based on Established Priorities that are Clearly Communicated in Advance and the Achievement of These Priorities*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	10	13%
Somewhat Agree	14	18%
Somewhat Disagree	19	25%
Strongly Disagree	18	24%
No Knowledge	15	20%
Total	76	100%

The Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommends that districts “establish a principals’ salary scale that has as its minimum entry point the equivalent of what the highest paid twelve month teacher would be compensated, plus an absolute minimum of 10%” (Maryland Department of Education, 2001). Thirty percent of the principals responded that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district is following this recommendation while 36% of the principals responded that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Thirty-four percent of the principals responded that they had no knowledge of whether their district established a principal’s salary scale that has as its minimum entry point the equivalent of what the highest paid twelve month teacher would be compensated, plus an absolute minimum of 10% (see Table 40). This may indicate that principals are unaware of how principal contracts are developed in their districts. This may also indicate that districts do not have any teachers who are

contracted for twelve months. Both of the district superintendents interviewed for this study indicated that they do not have any teachers with twelve-month contracts.

Table 40

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Has Established a Principal's Salary Scale that has as its Minimum Entry Point the Equivalent of What the Highest Paid Twelve Month Teacher Would Be Compensated, Plus an Absolute Minimum of 10%*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	7	9%
Somewhat Agree	16	21%
Somewhat Disagree	19	25%
Strongly Disagree	8	11%
No Knowledge	26	34%
Total	76	100%

Principals responding to the survey reported little agreement with the Task Force recommendation that districts “provide a multi-year commitment (no less than three years) and additional compensation for principals who take on difficult challenges and who meet established priorities” (Maryland Department of Education, 2001). Only 17% of the responding principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement while 57% of the principals indicated that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Twenty-six of the principals responded that they had no knowledge of whether their district provided multi-year commitments and additional compensation for principals who take on difficult challenges and who meet established priorities (see Table 41).



Table 41

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Their District Provides a Multi-Year (No Less than 3 years) and Additional Compensation for Principals who Take on Difficult Challenges and Who Meet Established Priorities*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	4	5%
Somewhat Agree	9	12%
Somewhat Disagree	15	20%
Strongly Disagree	28	37%
No Knowledge	20	26%
Total	76	100%

Principals were asked to respond to five survey questions to answer question 3 of this study, “As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?” Overall, principals indicated that they believe the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates has improved as a result of their districts implementing the Maryland Task Force recommendations. The five survey questions are shown in Table 42 with their respective means (from lowest to highest) and standard deviations.

Table 42

*Principal Perceptions on the Task Force Recommendations Improving the Quantity of Principal Candidates*

Question	M	SD
Q43: The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals' participation in internships which are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school staffing.	2.29	1.08
Q49: The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first and second year principals.	2.41	1.29
Q46: The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.	2.49	1.29
Q52: The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.	2.63	1.29

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Q40: The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations.	2.89	1.35
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When asked to respond to the statement, “The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship,” 63% of the principals completing the survey indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree.” Twelve percent responded that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” while 26% responded that they had no knowledge of whether the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in their school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship (see Table 43).

Table 43

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether the Quantity of Principal and/or Assistant Principal Candidates has Improved as a Result of Implementing the Recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Recommendations*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	1	3%
Somewhat Agree	21	60%
Somewhat Disagree	3	9%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
No Knowledge	9	26%
Total	35	100%

Principals had the highest level of agreement with the statement, “The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first-and second year principals.” Seventy-five percent of the principals completing the survey responded that they either “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement while just 9% of the principals responding to the survey indicated that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Sixteen percent of the principals responded that they had no knowledge of whether the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first-and second year principals (see Table 44).

Table 44

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether the Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates in their School District has Improved as a Result of Aspiring Principals Participating in Comprehensive Mentorship Programs for First and Second Year Principals.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	6	19%
Somewhat Agree	18	56%
Somewhat Disagree	2	6%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
No Knowledge	5	16%
Total	32	100%

Principals completing the survey also showed a high level of agreement with the statement, “The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in internships which are long-term, full time, comprehensive, and part of school staffing.” Seventy-one percent of the principals reported that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement. Twenty-two of the principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Seven percent of the respondents indicated that they had no knowledge of whether the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in their district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in internships which are long-term, full time, comprehensive, and part of school staffing (see Table 45).

Table 45

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether the Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates in their School District has Improved as a Result of Aspiring Principals Participation in Internships which are Long-Term, Full Time, Comprehensive, and Part of School Staffing*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	8	20%
Somewhat Agree	21	51%
Somewhat Disagree	7	17%
Strongly Disagree	2	5%
No Knowledge	3	7%
Total	41	100%

When asked if, “The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices,” 69% of the principals responded that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree.” Sixteen percent of the principals responded that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” with this statement. Sixteen percent of the principals indicated that they had no knowledge of whether the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in their district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the

National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices (see Table 46).

Table 46

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether The Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates in their School District has Improved as a Result of Aspiring Principals Participating in Professional Development Activities which are Consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards and which are Linked to Student Achievement and Improved Classroom Practices.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	9	18%
Somewhat Agree	26	51%
Somewhat Disagree	6	12%
Strongly Disagree	2	4%
No Knowledge	8	16%
Total	51	100%

The agreement among principals was not quite as high when asked to respond to the statement, “The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.” Sixty-three percent of the principals responding to this survey question indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement while 19% indicated that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree”.

Seventeen percent of the principals answering this survey question indicated that they had no knowledge of whether the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in their district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices (see Table 47).

Table 47

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether The Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates in their School District has Improved as a Result of Aspiring Principals Participating in Intra-System Networking for Cooperative Problem Solving and Sharing Best Practices.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	6	13%
Somewhat Agree	23	50%
Somewhat Disagree	7	15%
Strongly Disagree	2	4%
No Knowledge	8	17%
Total	46	100%

Five survey questions address the fourth question of this research study, “As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates applying for principal vacancies in the state of Maryland since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?” All but one of the survey questions had over 70% agreement among the principals completing the survey. The five survey



questions are shown in Table 48 with their respective means (from lowest to highest) and standard deviations.

Table 48

*Principal Perceptions on the Task Force Recommendations Improving the Quality of Principal Candidates*

Question	M	SD
Q44: The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in internships which are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school staffing.	2.23	1.11
Q50: The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first and second year principals.	2.23	1.23
Q53: The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.	2.33	1.16
Q47: The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.	2.38	1.22
Q41: The quality of principal and/or assistant principal candidates in	2.80	1.35

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my school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations.

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The first question of the survey addressing quality of principal candidates asked principals to respond to the statement, “The quality of principal and/or assistant principal candidates in my school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations.” Sixty-six percent of the principals responding to this question “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement. Twelve percent of the principals “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” and 23% of the principals reported that they had no knowledge of whether the quality of principal and/or assistant principal candidates in my school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations (see Table 49).

Table 49

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether the Quality of Principal and/or Assistant Principal Candidates in their district has Improved as a Result of Implementing the Recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Recommendations*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	2	6%
Somewhat Agree	21	60%
Somewhat Disagree	2	6%
Strongly Disagree	2	6%
No Knowledge	8	23%
Total	35	100%

The next four questions of the survey assessed principal perceptions as to whether specific recommendations of the Task Force improved the quality of principal candidates. When asked to respond to the survey question, “The quality of principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first-and second-year principals,” 84% of the principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree.” Only 3% replied that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Thirteen percent reported that they had “no knowledge” of whether there was improvement in the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates applying for principal vacancies in the state of Maryland since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted in their district (see Table 50).

Table 50

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether the Quality of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates in their School District has Improved as a Result of Aspiring Principals Participating in Comprehensive Mentorship Programs for First and Second Year Principals*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	7	23%
Somewhat Agree	19	61%
Somewhat Disagree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	1	3%
No Knowledge	4	13%
Total	31	100%

There was also a high level of agreement among principals when asked the question, “The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in internships which are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school staffing.” Eighty percent of the principals responding to this question indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree.” Thirteen percent replied that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” while 8% indicated that they had “no knowledge” of whether the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in their district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in internships which are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school staffing (see Table 51).

Table 51

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether the Quality of Principal and/or Assistant Principal Candidates in their district has Improved as a Result of Aspiring Principals Participation in Internships which are Long-Term, Full Time, Comprehensive, and Part of School Staffing*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	8	21%
Somewhat Agree	23	59%
Somewhat Disagree	2	5%
Strongly Disagree	3	8%
No Knowledge	3	8%
Total	39	100%

As shown in Table 52, 75% of the principals completing the survey indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with the statement, “The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.” Twelve percent of the principals responded that they “somewhat disagree or “strongly disagree” with this statement. Thirteen percent indicated that they had “no knowledge” of whether the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are

consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.

Table 52

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether The Quality of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates in their School District has Improved as a Result of Aspiring Principals Participating in Professional Development Activities which are Consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards and which are Linked to Student Achievement and Improved Classroom Practices*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	9	17%
Somewhat Agree	30	58%
Somewhat Disagree	4	8%
Strongly Disagree	2	4%
No Knowledge	7	13%
Total	52	100%

A similar number of principals agreed with the statement, “The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.” Seventy-four percent of the principals completing the survey “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement while 18% “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Nine percent of the principals reported that they had no knowledge of whether the quality of

principal and assistant principal candidates in their district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices (see Table 53).

Table 53

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether the Quality of Principals, Assistant Principals, and/or Aspiring Principals in their School District Has Improved As a Result of Aspiring Principals Participating in Intra-System Networking for Cooperative Problem Solving and Sharing Best Practices*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	9	20%
Somewhat Agree	25	54%
Somewhat Disagree	4	9%
Strongly Disagree	4	9%
No Knowledge	4	9%
Total	46	100%

The final section of the survey addressed research question 5 of this study; “Which remedies aimed at addressing the shortage of quality principal and assistant principal candidates in the state of Maryland are perceived to be the most effective in increasing the number of quality principal candidates?” Eleven survey questions asked principals if each of the Task Force recommendations would encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal



positions. The eleven survey questions are shown in Table 54 with their respective means (from lowest to highest) and standard deviations.

Table 54

*Principal Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Task Force Recommendations to Improve the Quantity and Quality of Principal Candidates*

Question	M	SD
Q64: School districts and/or school district consortia coordinating intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	1.77	0.94
Q62: School districts and/or local school system consortia developing professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school system staffing will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	1.80	0.98
Q63: School districts providing professional development programs that are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	1.88	0.95
Q60: Ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor busses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular	1.98	1.02

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activities will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.		
Q59: Employing an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel in school districts will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	1.98	1.03
Q54: Ensuring that each school has an assistant principal for every 350 students will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	2.02	1.07
Q58: School districts providing appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	2.02	1.12
Q57: Hiring building-based business managers for all schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	2.05	1.16
Q61: Ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	2.08	1.09
Q56: School districts reviewing and adhering to established clerical and certificated staffing ratios will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.	2.17	1.01
Q55: Redesigning the time frame in which principals must complete formal evaluations of staff will encourage more educators to apply	2.55	1.13

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for principal and assistant principal positions.

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All but one of the task force recommendations had 76% or more of the principals indicate some level of agreement. The Task Force recommendations for internships, improved staff development and opportunities for networking had the highest percentage of agreement among principals.

Table 55 presents the results of the data on internships. Eighty-nine of the principals completing the survey indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with the statement, “School districts and/or local school system consortia developing professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of system school staffing will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.” Only 6% of the principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” while 5% of the principals reported that they had “no knowledge” of whether school districts and/or local school system consortia developing professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of system school staffing will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Table 55

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether School Districts and/or Local School System Consortia Developing Professional Development Frameworks for Principal Candidates, Which Include Internships That Are Long-Term, Full-Time, Comprehensive, and Part of School System Staffing Will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	28	42%
Somewhat Agree	31	47%
Somewhat Disagree	2	3%
Strongly Disagree	2	3%
No Knowledge	3	5%
Total	66	100%

According to Table 56, 89% of the principals also indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with the statement, “School districts and/or school district consortia coordinating intra-system networking or cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.” Eight percent of the principals “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” with this statement. Three percent of the principals indicated that they had “no knowledge” of whether school districts and/or school district consortia coordinating intra-system networking or cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Table 56

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether School Districts and/or School System Consortia Coordinating Intra-System Networking for Cooperative Problem Solving and Sharing Best Practices Will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	29	44%
Somewhat Agree	30	45%
Somewhat Disagree	2	3%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	65	100%

When asked to respond to the statement, “School districts providing professional development programs that are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions,” 88% of the principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” while 9% indicated that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Three percent reported that they had no knowledge of whether or not school districts providing professional development programs that are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions (see Table 57).

Table 57

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether School Districts Providing Professional Development Programs That Are Consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) Standards and Which are Linked to Student Achievement and Improved Classroom Practices Will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	24	36%
Somewhat Agree	34	52%
Somewhat Disagree	2	3%
Strongly Disagree	4	6%
No Knowledge	2	3%
Total	66	100%

Table 58 depicts the principals' level of agreement with the statement, "School districts providing appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions. Eighty-two percent of the principals indicated that they "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" with this statement. Eleven percent indicated that they "somewhat disagree" or "strongly disagree" while 8% indicated that they had "no knowledge" whether or not school districts providing appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Table 58

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Providing Appropriate Levels of Security Personnel in all Middle and High Schools will Encourage more Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	23	35%
Somewhat Agree	31	47%
Somewhat Disagree	5	8%
Strongly Disagree	2	3%
No Knowledge	5	8%
Total	65	100%

Eighty-two percent of the principals completing the survey also indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with the statement, “Ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor busses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular activities will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.” Fourteen percent reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” with this statement while 5% indicated that they had “no knowledge” whether or not ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor busses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular activities will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions (see Table 59).

Table 59

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Ensuring That All Schools Provide Appropriate Staffing to Monitor Busses, Cafeteria, Athletic Events and Extracurricular Activities Will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	22	34%
Somewhat Agree	31	48%
Somewhat Disagree	6	9%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
No Knowledge	3	5%
Total	65	100%

Table 60 depicts principals' level of agreement with the statement, "Ensuring that each school has an assistant principal for every 350 students will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions." 81% of the principals responded that they "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" while 13% responded that they "somewhat disagree" or "strongly disagree" with this statement. Six percent of the principals indicated that they had "no knowledge" whether or not ensuring that each school has an assistant principal for every 350 students will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.



Table 60

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Ensuring that Each School has an Assistant Principal for Every 350 Students will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	22	33%
Somewhat Agree	32	48%
Somewhat Disagree	5	8%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
No Knowledge	4	6%
Total	66	100%

When asked to respond to the statement, “School districts reviewing and adhering to established clerical and certificated staffing ratios will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions,” 80% of the responding principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree,” while 14% indicated that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Six percent of the principals indicated that they had “no knowledge” whether or not school districts reviewing and adhering to established clerical and certificated staffing ratios will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions (see Table 61).

Table 61

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Reviewing and Adhering to Established Clerical and Certified Staffing Ratios Will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	13	20%
Somewhat Agree	39	60%
Somewhat Disagree	6	9%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
No Knowledge	4	6%
Total	65	100%

Table 62 represents the level of principals' agreement with the statement, "Ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions." Eighty percent of the principals responding to the survey indicated that they "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" with this statement while 14% indicated that they "somewhat disagree" or "strongly disagree." Six percent of the respondents reported that they had "no knowledge" whether or not ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Table 62

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Ensuring That All Schools Provide Appropriate Staffing to Monitor Breakfast Programs, After-School Programs, and Summer Programs Will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	20	30%
Somewhat Agree	33	50%
Somewhat Disagree	5	8%
Strongly Disagree	4	6%
No Knowledge	4	6%
Total	66	100%

Eighty percent of the principals completing the survey also reported that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with the statement, “Employing an appropriate ratio of school psychologist and alternate education personnel in school districts will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.” Sixteen percent of the responding principals reported that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree” while 5% reported that they had “no knowledge” whether or not employing an appropriate ratio of school psychologist and alternate education personnel in school districts will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions (see Table 63).

Table 63

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Employing an Appropriate Ratio of School Psychologists and Alternate Education Personnel in School Districts Will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions.*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	23	35%
Somewhat Agree	30	45%
Somewhat Disagree	7	11%
Strongly Disagree	3	5%
No Knowledge	3	5%
Total	66	100%

Table 64 depicts principal agreement with the statement, “Hiring building-based business managers for all schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.” Seventy-six percent of the principals responded that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement and 17% responded that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Six percent reported that they had “no knowledge” whether or not hiring building-based business managers for all schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Table 64

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Hiring Building-Based Business Managers for all Schools will Encourage more Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	25	38%
Somewhat Agree	25	38%
Somewhat Disagree	6	9%
Strongly Disagree	5	8%
No Knowledge	4	6%
Total	65	100%

Agreement among principals with Task Force recommendations dropped off considerably when asked to respond to the question, “Redesigning the time frame in which principals must complete formal evaluations of staff will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.” Fifty-six percent of the principals responded that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” with this statement, while 35% replied that they “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree.” Nine percent of the principals indicated that they had “no knowledge” whether or not redesigning the time frame in which principals must complete formal evaluations of staff will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions (see Table 65).

Table 65

*Maryland Principals Report on Whether Redesigning the Time Frame in which Principals Must Complete Formal Evaluations of Staff will Encourage More Educators to Apply for Principal and Assistant Principal Positions*

Rating	Number of Responses	Percentage of Responses
Strongly Agree	10	15%
Somewhat Agree	27	41%
Somewhat Disagree	18	27%
Strongly Disagree	5	8%
No Knowledge	6	9%
Total	66	100%

#### Qualitative Findings

The survey instrument provided insight into principal perceptions as to whether or not the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented in their school districts and whether or not the implementation of these recommendations have made a difference in attracting quality candidates to the principalship. The survey also provided information on which recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship principals perceive as being the most effective at attracting quality candidates to the principalship. Qualitative data for this study provided an opportunity to better understand the quantitative data obtained and was collected two ways. The first came from the open ended questions at the end of the survey which asked, “Is there anything you would like to share about your districts efforts to address the shortage of qualified principal and assistant principal

candidates?” 16 principals provided input to this open-ended question. Their responses are sorted based on the research questions asked in this study.

Responses which addressed the first research question, “As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there a shortage of qualified candidates applying for principal and assistant principal vacancies in the state of Maryland?” included,

We really do not have a shortage. We currently have a lot of quality people who would like to be administrators. If one develops it will be because of the AP positions that were recently cut and the fact that we are going on three years without a step increase.

I believe there is no shortage of qualified candidates, only a shortage of quality candidates.

One principal completed an open-ended response which addressed the second research question posed by this study “As perceived by Maryland school principals, are Maryland county school systems implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, and if so, how are they being implemented?” The principal wrote,

We are a long way off in implementing this very important work. I applaud the Task Force's efforts in working to reshape the Principalship in order to best support our children.

No principals responded to the open-ended question which addressed the third research question posed by this study, “As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?” or the fourth research question, “As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates applying for principal vacancies in the state of Maryland since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?”

There were several responses to the open-ended question which addressed the fifth research question of this study, “Which remedies aimed at addressing the shortage of quality principal and assistant principal candidates in the state of Maryland are perceived to be the most effective in increasing the number of quality principal candidates?” Responses include,

The differential between a classroom teacher's salary and an administrator's salary is a function of the number of days worked. To attract a sufficient quantity and quality of administrative applicants, the salary for principals and assistant principals needs to become competitive with the private sector. Additionally, consideration needs to be given to the pension system. Administrators "burn-out" faster than classroom teachers; however, years of service in the Maryland pension system are counted equally.

Stress load, special education laws and Teacher Unions are the problems.

Although this job can be very stressful, I feel very supported by my immediate supervisors. Their support helps me to know I can handle anything that comes my way.

Continue to have mentoring programs and training programs that include ongoing professional development to better prepare staff for demands of position.

Better pay, pay for performance, more freedom, more realistic expectations measured on a growth model rather than a stagnant criteria model, and greater ability to hire/fire teachers would bring more qualified people to the principalship. Additionally, reexamining the pointless MSDE and federal paperwork associated with certain task or portions of funding (such as Title II, Title I, and AARA) would go a long way to attracting better candidates because many people are scared off by the addition of pointless administrative paperwork that was designed by people who have either never been or have not recently been in a school. Finally, better quality PD delivered by competent, intelligent people would attract better candidates. Having attended an MSDE, BCPS, and BCPSS development conference I was astounded by the lack of legitimate, academic, rigorous, and intelligent discourse in the room. The teacher/principal preparation programs in Maryland and PA are so poor so as to be anti-intellectual.

I deeply appreciate the new format for principal's meetings; differentiated, small-group, still a chance to see the CEO speak and catch the vision.

Working in a culture of constant fear and threats does nothing to actually improve education. What that does is make people look for ways to meet stated goals so that they are not regularly threatened. In other words, they will use their talents to make the data come out better but not the end product (a wholly educated and



responsible child). By the same token, hiring people who have engaged in a "leadership" program for two years and appointing them as principals has shown that it does not work. When these people do not work out, they are removed and replaced by someone else just as unqualified. Experienced individuals who have gone through the ranks, so to speak, are rarely given the opportunity to become (or remain as) principals. Just look at the trends for the last three years and you will see this. They also receive absolutely no senior management support. For many of them who have spent considerable time in this school system, their training included supporting subordinates and helping them to do well, not simply giving orders and showing up to remove them when errors are made.

Nothing ever is removed from our "plate". I'm not griping, I'm stating a fact. Everything is vital. There are limited components of serving as the principal of a school that you can afford to take lightly. State accountability, NCLB accountability, graduation rates, attendance rates, extra-curricular matters, Advanced Placement exam rates, SAT rates, PSAT rates, safety, security, cleanliness, personnel evaluations, and the various other initiatives set forth by the state or the federal government. I believe the biggest deterrent in attracting qualified candidates is the time commitment and the diversity of responsibilities associated with the principalship.

In my district principals have the autonomy of their budgets. Therefore, they may or may not "opt" to budget for folks such as the assistant principal, the special educator, the budget manager, etc. I feel these positions should be a "given" to all schools and not optional or negotiable for principals. Sometimes once a principal secures all the teaching positions there are no funds available for additional positions.

My district hires too quickly not looking at experience. They have no idea if the candidate has the heart of a teacher, which is necessary for the job. There seems to be a new trend where experience in the area of education does not matter. I loved teaching and was able to be a leader of change.

Our system tends to promote from within. Several National Board Certified Teachers have become Student Achievement Specialists, then have been promoted to administration. This is very advantageous in terms of built-in educational leadership.

These responses show that there are a variety of issues that add to the stress level of principals, and that principals feel that the issue of over-work and stress may be discouraging

teachers from moving into a principalship position. Principals shared remedies to address these concerns, which included increasing pay and pension benefits, support from principal supervisors, continuing mentor and training programs, professional autonomy, clearing the plate of extraneous principal duties, and hiring from the ranks of experienced teachers.

Two open-ended responses did not address any of the research questions of this study. However, this researcher felt that their comments were important and should be considered when discussing ways to retain current principals and attract candidates to the principalship. The comments are:

Central Office personnel make more money than building level administrators. They don't deal with the issues school-based administrators deal with in parents, students, and community. They go home at 4 p.m. while the building level administrators are at extra-curricular activities and events at night. This makes us want to work at the central office.

Budget constraints have begun to affect every aspect of our school system and it appears that things will get much worse before they improve.

Qualitative data for this study was also gathered by conducting two interviews with two Maryland school superintendents. One interview was conducted by phone, and the second interview was a face-to-face interview. The superintendents, one of whom is the superintendent of a large, urban school district, and one who is the superintendent of a small, rural school district, were asked to respond to questions from the Superintendent Interview Protocol developed by this researcher (Appendix G).

The first question asked of the superintendents was, "Is your district currently experiencing a shortage of qualified principal and assistant principal candidates?" This question is directly related to the first research question of this study. The urban superintendent responded that there is not a shortage of candidates applying for principal or assistant principal openings in his district. He replied that his school system has a large number of candidates applying for

principalships from inside the district, and outside the district. The rural superintendent responded that he was comfortable with the number of principals applying for elementary school principal positions. However, he was not as comfortable with the number of candidates applying for middle school and high school openings. He said, “If I had to replace any of my high school principals today, I would be hard pressed to find a candidate to fill that position. If I had to replace any of my middle school principals, I might be able to find a replacement internally, but that candidate would need a lot of support.”

Question 2 from the interview protocol, which asked the superintendents, “Has your county implemented any of the three recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship?” addressed this study’s research question 2. The urban superintendent replied that it is a difficult question to answer because he wasn’t very familiar with the Task Force recommendations, and because of the structure of his school system. He did however say that there are systems in place to support the recommendations of the Task Force. He went on to clarify by saying that his district recently shifted their school funding method from district controlled funding to school controlled funding based on the number of pupils in the school. Under this new system of funding, principals have complete discretion over how they spend their money. When looking at the Task Force recommendations regarding staffing, it is really up to the building principal to spend their money to hire the staff based on individual building needs. For example, one principal in the district may follow the Task Force recommendation to hire an assistant principal for every 350 students in the building. Another principal may decide to hire two intervention teachers or implement after school programs instead of hiring an assistant principal. The superintendent believes this level of professional autonomy afforded the principals

in his district creates a sense of empowerment among principals and actually has attracted more people to apply for principal openings.

The rural superintendent interviewed said some of the Task Force recommendations have been implemented in his district, but that budget constraints limit how many recommendations can be implemented in his district, especially when it comes to staffing. He says that every school building in his district has an assistant principal, but the student to assistant principal ratio is about 400 to 1 rather than the 350 to 1 recommended by the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. None of the schools in his district have a business manager. The superintendent explained that the district had to make a choice between business managers and assistant principals. The district decided to hire assistant principals because they can move into principal positions in the district once they become available.

As far as compensation, both superintendents say that there is no system in place to compensate principals like the system recommended by the Task Force. However, both reported that principal pay is a non-issue in their district with principals earning more than the teachers in their building.

Both principals feel that the implementation of at least some of the Task Force recommendations has improved the quantity and quality of candidates applying for principal positions. Question 3 of the interview protocol asked, "In your opinion, which recommendation has had the biggest impact in improving the quality and quantity of principal candidates?" The urban superintendent said he didn't think it was implementing a Task Force recommendation that had the biggest impact in improving the quality and quantity of principal candidates. Rather, he feels that it is the high level of professional autonomy that has had the biggest impact on attracting a high number of quality candidates to apply for principal positions in his district.

Addressing the same question, the rural superintendent felt strongly that a multi-year assistant principal internship has had the biggest impact in attracting and preparing quality candidates to apply for principal positions. During this internship, assistant principals meet with the building principal, county superintendent, and an outside consultant 4 times a year for 2 years to evaluate how the assistant principal is doing and to set goals. The superintendent feels that this internship prepares assistant principals for principal positions and gives them the tools they need to be effective principals.

Question 4 of the interview protocol asked superintendents, “Have you experienced any hurdles in implementing the recommendations of the Task Force? If so, please elaborate.” Both superintendents reported that money is the biggest hurdle to implementing the Task Force recommendations, especially when it comes to the staffing recommendations. As described earlier, principals in the urban superintendent’s school system are given a set budget based on the number of pupils in the school. Although the principals have control over the type of staff they hire, budget constraints force principals to make decisions about which staff they hire. Although assistant principals, security staff, and staff to monitor students during lunch and recess are common in this school system, IEP facilitators and business managers are non-existent.

IEP facilitators and business managers are also non-existent in the rural superintendent’s school system, and again, it is because of money constraints. The rural superintendent said that all staffing comes down to a choice. As already mentioned, he decided to hire assistant principals rather than business managers because they can move into principal positions in the district once they become available. There just isn’t enough money in the budget to hire business managers as well. Principals and assistant principals in this school system also must do cafeteria duty because there is not enough money in the district budget to hire cafeteria monitors. The superintendent,

again referring to the choices that must be made because of budget constraints, replied that he would rather hire assistant principals for each of his school buildings as opposed to cafeteria monitors.

Question number 5 of the interview protocol asked superintendents, “If you were a member of a team of educators charged with revising the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, what if any, additions or revisions would you make to the three current recommendations?” Both superintendents quickly replied that they would recommend that more time be spent on internships and mentorships for aspiring and new administrators. The urban superintendent commented, “We need to spend more time identifying and grooming more aspiring principals on the ground level.” He went on to say that, “The tools are not there to determine where leadership potential is. We are not intentional enough in this area.”

The rural superintendent agreed that internships and mentorships are critical, but he feels that his district has an effective internship and mentorship program in place for new assistant principals. This superintendent did mention that school districts need to do a better job of identifying and preparing aspiring assistant principals and principals.

The rural superintendent added that school systems need to do a better job of “Inservicing on ways to deal with adults.” He explained that, too often, new principals do not know how to deal with conflict among adults. He added that, “too frequently, principals are taken away from their academic responsibilities to deal with personnel matters.”

Interview protocol question number 6 asked superintendents, “Has your district done anything other than implement the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship to address a shortage of qualified principal and assistant principal candidates? If so, what, if anything, has been effective at improving the quality and quantity of administrative

candidates?” Both superintendents said that the Task Force recommendations are very thorough and all encompassing. Therefore, they are not doing anything above and beyond the Task Force recommendations, but they are doing some things a little differently than recommended by the Task Force.

For example, the urban superintendent referred back to the autonomy given to principals to make budget decisions. He feels this flexibility has empowered principals, which makes the principal position more desirable in his district. As far as hiring quality administrative candidates, this superintendent feels that a change in the hiring process has improved principal quality. He explained that the school system historically had a pool of candidates for principal positions. This pool was made up mostly of assistant principals already in the school system. When a principal position became available in this district, an assistant principal was moved into the position. When he took over as superintendent of this school system, this superintendent changed the hiring process for principals. He did away with the pool of candidates and began advertising all administrative vacancies. Assistant principals within the school system could apply, but the positions were open to outside candidates as well. The human relations department now interviews select candidates and then narrows the field of candidates. These candidates then interview with a school site-based team made up of community partners, parents, and teachers. The site-based team recommends 3 top candidates. These candidates then interview with the superintendent who makes the final decision for who will be hired.

The superintendent feels that this new hiring process attracts quality candidates from outside the school district, but it also encourages assistant principals already in the district to prepare for principalships since their promotion into a principal position is no longer a foregone conclusion.

Finally, the urban superintendent referred to a partnership with local colleges as something that is above and beyond the Task Force recommendations. He explained that his school system partners with local universities such as John Hopkins and Morgan State University to identify and train new leaders for schools in his school system. He explained that this program has been a success.

The rural superintendent referred back to the intensive internship provided to assistant principals as something above and beyond the Task Force recommendations. He feels that this internship program has had the most positive impact on improving the quality of principal candidates.

Question 7 of the interview protocol, “Why has your county chosen not to implement any of the Task Force recommendations?” was not asked of either superintendent since they both indicated that at least some of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented.

### Chapter Summary

The quantitative and qualitative findings answer the questions posed by this study. In chapter 5, this researcher will discuss the results of the survey and offer insight to school leaders on steps which may be taken to address the continuing school principal shortage.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

#### Introduction

In 2000, the Maryland Department of Education released the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. The Task Force issued recommendations for Maryland school systems to follow, which the Task Force hoped would address the growing shortage of principal candidates in the state of Maryland. The purpose of this study was to evaluate how well the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented throughout the state of Maryland. The purpose of this study was also to determine which implemented Task Force recommendations Maryland school principals perceive to have made a positive impact on attracting qualified candidates to fill vacant principal positions.

The previous chapter presented the results of a survey conducted with practicing Maryland school principals. The responding principals represented elementary, middle, and high school levels, and serve as principals in rural and urban areas. The survey helped glean principal perceptions as to the level of implementation of the Maryland Task Force recommendations in their school districts. The survey also helped determine which Task Force recommendations principals perceived as having positive impacts on attracting qualified candidates to fill principal position vacancies in their school districts. Finally, the survey assessed which recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship principals perceive have the most potential for attracting qualified candidates to apply for principal positions in their district, whether their district has implemented the recommendations or not.

To gain a deeper understanding of current principal shortages in the state of Maryland and how the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented, follow up interviews were conducted with two school superintendents.

This chapter will present the conclusions of the study by addressing the research questions first proposed in Chapter One:

1. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there a shortage of qualified candidates applying for principal and assistant principal vacancies in the state of Maryland?
2. As perceived by Maryland school principals, are Maryland county school systems implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, and if so, how are they being implemented?
3. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?
4. As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates applying for principal vacancies in the state of Maryland since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?
5. Which remedies aimed at addressing the shortage of quality principal and assistant principal candidates in the state of Maryland are perceived to be the most effective in increasing the number of quality principal candidates?

### Discussion of the Research Findings

The following discussion of the research findings summarize the conclusions drawn from principal responses to the survey and the interviews with two school superintendents. Summaries are presented in response to each research question posed in this study.

Research Question 1: As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there a shortage of qualified candidates applying for principal and assistant principal vacancies in the state of Maryland?

Given the fact that 52% of the principals completing the survey indicated agreement with the statement, “There is a shortage of candidates applying for principal or assistant principal positions in my school district,” it is evident that there continues to be a principal shortage in the state of Maryland. 40% of the principals surveyed also agreed with the statement, “My school district is having difficulty in attracting a sufficient number of candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions.” Also, when asked to respond to the statement, “My school district is having a difficult time attracting quality candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions,” 56% of the principals indicated that they agreed. This survey data is backed by one of the county school superintendents interviewed who indicated that he would find it difficult to find a replacement for his middle and high school principals if they decided to retire or resign.

These findings are consistent with the research literature presented in Chapter 2 of this study. Principal shortages do exist and they affect both elementary and secondary schools in urban and rural areas alike.

However, research collected as part of this study suggests that the shortage of principal candidates may not be as severe as it was twelve years ago when the Maryland Department of

Education began studying the problem. At that time (1998), all of the 21 school superintendents who completed a Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP) along with all of the 121 principals, assistant principals, and aspiring principals who participated in a MASSP focus group indicated that a shortage existed (Maryland Department of Education, 2000).

In response to this study's survey, 45% of the school principals reported that they do not agree that there is a shortage of candidates applying for principal and assistant principal positions. Also, one of the superintendents interviewed reported that he was happy with the number of candidates applying for principal and assistant principal positions in his district.

When asked to respond to the statement, "Candidates applying for principal or assistant principal positions in my district are quality candidates," 64% of the principals reported that they agreed. 31% of the principals indicated some level of disagreement with this statement. This indicates that principals perceive that a shortage still does exist in some school systems, however, the shortage does not appear to be as severe as it was twelve years ago. A less severe shortage is supported by the fact that one of the superintendents reported no shortage of principal candidates at all, while one superintendent reported a shortage at the secondary level only.

Research Question 2: As perceived by Maryland school principals, are Maryland county school systems implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, and if so, how are they being implemented?

Nearly half of the responding principals (48%) indicated some level of agreement with the statement that their school district has implemented the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. Only 19% disagreed that their school district implemented the Task Force recommendations. 33% of the principals indicated that they had no knowledge of

whether the Task Force recommendations have been implemented. This suggests that principals may not be aware of the recommendations of Maryland Task Force on the Principalship.

To better understand which Task Force recommendations have been implemented in school districts across Maryland, principals were asked to respond to additional survey questions.

The first recommendation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states that, “MSDE and all 24 local school systems will “clear the plate” of extraneous responsibilities assigned principals to ensure they have sufficient time to fulfill their primary role as an instructional leader/facilitator.” Of the nine strategies the Task Force recommends schools implement to help clear the plate of principals, four had more than 50% of the responding principals indicate they agree that they have been implemented in their school district. 57% of the principals agreed with the statement, “My district adheres to an established clerical and certified staffing ratio,” while 28% indicated some level of disagreement with this statement. 54% of the principals agreed that their district provides appropriate numbers of school psychologists and alternate education personnel compared with 44% of the principals who indicated that they disagree that their district provides appropriate numbers of school psychologists and alternate education personnel. 52% of the principals indicated that they agreed with the statement, “My district provides appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools.” 34% of the principals disagreed with this statement. 51% of the principals indicated some level of agreement with the statement, “My district provides the necessary staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs,” while 48% responded that they disagreed to some level on this statement.

It is interesting to note that even though these four recommendations for clearing the plate have greater than 50% of the principals indicating some level of agreement, two of the

statements also have a relatively equal number of principals indicating some level of disagreement (staffing of psychologists and staffing of monitors for breakfast, after-school, and summer programs).

All of the other recommendations to clear the plate of principals had fewer than half of the principals agree that these recommendations were being implemented in their schools. 40% of the principals indicated some level of agreement with the statements, “My district has provided a full-time Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team manager for each school,” and “My district has provided an assistant principal for each 350 students.” 39% of the principals indicated some level of agreement with the statement, “My district has redefined the timeframe in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff.” 37% of the principals indicated that they agree that their district provides enough staffing to monitor busses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extra curricular activities suggesting that many of these duties continue to fall to the school principal.

By far, the Task Force recommendation which had the fewest number of principals agree is being implemented in their school district is the recommendation that all schools hire business managers. Only 18% of the principals indicated that they agree that their district provides business managers for their schools while 80% reported that they do not agree that their district provides business managers for each of their district’s schools. According to the superintendents this researcher interviewed, this is a budget issue. The urban superintendent stated that each of his principals is given a budget based on the number of students in the building. Each principal chooses to hire staff they feel is needed to run the school efficiently. Because the budget is limited, principals cannot possibly hire all the staff recommended by the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. Principals must choose which staff is needed for their school. One principal

in the district may choose to hire a business manager while a different principal may choose to hire an assistant principal. Another principal may choose to hire additional security personnel or pay teachers to conduct after-school programs. Principals have the flexibility with their budget to hire the staff they feel is necessary, but no principal has the budget to hire all of the staff recommended by the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship.

The superintendent from a rural school district interviewed by this researcher agreed that limited budget plays a big role in what staff can be hired and that the district budget simply cannot support hiring the large number of staff members recommended by the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. Principals in this superintendent's district do not have the flexibility to hire different types of staff. All staffing decisions are made at the district level. When asked if his district hired business managers for each school, the superintendent replied that he had to make a choice between business managers and assistant principals because his budget could not support hiring both. This superintendent chose to hire assistant principals for each of the schools in his district because the assistant principals can be trained and possibly moved into principal vacancies in the district, where business managers cannot be promoted to principals because they lack the training and certification.

All but one of the Task Force recommendations involve hiring appropriate numbers of staff members to cover duties that often fall to the school principal. This researcher's work shows that school systems don't have the money needed to hire additional staff. Further study is needed to determine why staffing in these areas appear to be inconsistent across the state. Future researchers may study to find out if the disparity is related to the size of the district and/or schools, the location of the district and schools (urban vs. rural), the relative wealth of the school district, or other reasons.

Only one recommendation to clear the plate of principals is related to something other than hiring additional staff, and that is the recommendation that districts should redefine the time frame in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff. Only 39% of the principals indicated that they agreed their district has redefined the evaluation time frame while 58% indicated that they disagreed that their district has redesigned the evaluation time frame. Both of the superintendents interviewed as part of this study indicated that this has not been done in their districts. They explained that the reason this has not been done is because of the need for greater accountability for teachers. However, one of the superintendents said that his district is looking at implementing a differentiated supervision model, which would limit the number of times principals need to observe certain staff members. The superintendent felt that implementing such a model could go a long way towards clearing the plate of principals.

Further study is needed to determine if such differentiated models may have an impact on clearing the plate of principals. Future researchers may study to find out if such models of supervision maintain teacher accountability as well.

The second recommendation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states, “In conjunction with the Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, local school systems and/or school system consortia will develop comprehensive, job-embedded programs for the identification and professional development of principal candidates and of current principals.

Principals showed a higher level of agreement with their district’s implementation of this second recommendation for better professional development than they did with the first Task Force recommendation of clearing the plate. Over 50% of the principals completing the survey indicated some level of agreement with all of the survey questions relating to the Task Force recommendations on professional development.



The statement that the highest percentage of principals indicating agreement (85%) was, “Professional development programs in my district are consistent with the national Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practice.” This indicates that Maryland principals perceive the professional development opportunities in their districts to be on target with national standards.

The level of principal agreement dropped slightly when asked to respond to the statement, “Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practice.” 75% of the principals indicated some level of agreement with this statement. 14% of the principals disagreed with this statement. Further study is needed to determine why principals and assistant principals are not taking advantage of professional development opportunities that are available, especially in light of the fact that the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states, “One of the most important policy considerations for ensuring high-quality candidates for the Principalship is building preparation programs that provide candidates with the knowledge, skills, and disposition they need to meet state standards” (MSDE, 2000, p. 19).

Eleven percent of the principals completing the survey reported that they had no knowledge whether or not principals in their district participated in professional development activities. This indicates that these principals probably have not participated in professional development activities consistent with the NSDC standards themselves. Further study is needed to determine if these principals have participated in this type of staff development, especially as an aspiring or new principal.

As is noted later in this study, principals reported that mentorships, opportunities for networking, and internships are an important step in improving the quantity and quality of principal candidates. Also, as noted in Chapter 4, one of the superintendents interviewed for this study felt that his district's multi-year assistant principal internship has had the biggest impact on attracting and preparing quality candidates for principal positions in his district.

However, only 61% of the principals completing the survey reported that their district provides a comprehensive mentorship program for first and second year principals. Only 59% of the principals reported that their district/and or local school system consortia coordinates intra-system networking for problem solving and sharing best practices, and only 51% of the principals reported that principals in their district participated in internships that are long-term, full time, comprehensive, and part of the school system staffing. Since principals feel that these mentorships, internships, and opportunities for networking are so important, it would be advantageous to conduct further studies to find out why more aspiring principals and new principals are not participating in these types of programs.

The third recommendation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states, "Local school systems will adjust principal salary and compensation packages to better reflect the responsibilities, accountability, and stressors of the Principalship." As with the other recommendations of the Task Force, principals perceive that some of the recommendations are being implemented in their district, while others are not.

There is evidence that principals perceive school districts are doing a good job implementing the Task Force recommendations when it comes to additional compensation for principals in the form of insurance. Responding principals showed a high level of agreement with survey statements referring to districts providing additional compensation and benefits such

as health insurance, life insurance, and disability insurance. 79% of the responding principals indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides additional health insurance. 78% indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides additional life insurance, and 75% indicated that they “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that their district provides additional disability insurance.

There was also a high level of agreement among principals when it came to professional development opportunities offered to principals. 73% of the principals completing the survey indicated some level of agreement with the statement, “My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the districts collective bargaining agreement.”

Principals showed a high level of agreement for several other Task Force recommendations on compensation as well. 70% of the principals indicated some level of agreement that their district provides additional compensation based on the size of the school building a principal is assigned to, the organizational level of the building (elementary, middle, high) and staffing patterns within that building. This is important because larger schools are usually more difficult to manage. There are more staff members to supervise and students who may have discipline issues. Also, secondary principals often have more after school activities to supervise than elementary principals.

Because 22% of the principals disagreed that their district provides additional compensation based on the size of the school building a principal is assigned to, the organizational level of the building, and staffing patterns within that building, further study is needed to determine why some districts do not provide this additional compensation, and if that lack of additional compensation has led to a higher turn over rate of principals.

Other Task Force recommendations which had a greater than 50% agreement rate among principals included districts providing additional sabbatical leave for principals (67% agreement), district compensation for principals to attend national and state conferences (61% agreement), and districts paying principals dues for membership in professional organizations (55%).

The level of agreement among principals drops quite a bit when asked to respond to the statement, “My district provides additional compensation for principals due to defined needs in a specific school based on established priorities that are clearly communicated in advance and the achievement of these priorities.” Only 31% of the principals indicated some level of agreement with this statement while nearly half (49%) of the principals reported some level of disagreement with this statement. This is important because it suggests that principals in schools with unique issues such as high drop out rate, a high number of discipline issues, or low test scores, are getting paid the same as principals in schools with fewer issues. Further study is needed to determine if this lack of additional pay is causing a higher than normal turn-over of principals serving these defined schools.

The Task Force has a second recommendation aimed at attracting and retaining principals to serve as principals in schools with difficult challenges. The Task Force recommends that districts, “provide a multi-year commitment (no less than three years) and additional compensation for principals who take on difficult challenges and who meet established priorities.” Only 17% of the principals agree that this recommendation has been implemented in their school district while 57% disagree. Further study is needed to see if principal retention is higher in schools which have implemented this recommendation as compared to similar schools which have not implemented this recommendation.

It is no secret that principals work long hours and have additional responsibilities which require them to work beyond the normal school day. Recognizing this fact, the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommends that school districts “establish a principals’ salary scale that has as its minimum entry point the equivalent of what the highest paid twelve month teacher would be compensated, plus an additional 10%.” Only 30% of the principals completing the survey indicated some level of agreement with this statement while 36% of the principals indicated some level of disagreement. 34% reported that they had no knowledge of additional compensation, perhaps suggesting that their district has not implemented this recommendation.

Both superintendents interviewed for this study admit that they have not implemented this recommendation and both reported that they have a few teachers making more money than some of their principals.

Further study is needed to determine if this lack of additional compensation is keeping qualified teachers certified as principals from applying for principal positions.

Research Question 3: As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?

There is evidence that the implementation of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations has improved the number of candidates applying for principal vacancies. 63% of the principals completing the survey report that the quantity of candidates applying for principal positions has improved as a result of their district implementing Task Force recommendations as compared to only 12% who indicate some level of disagreement. This is also supported by the fact that both superintendents interviewed for this study reported that they had no problem finding people to apply for principal positions in their district. Only one of

the superintendents could compare the number of people applying for principal positions now with ten years ago. He reported that there are more people applying for principal positions now than there were ten years ago.

Additional survey questions helped this researcher further examine which Task Force recommendations principals feel have improved the quantity of candidates the most. Task Force recommendations that principals feel made the most difference in improving the quantity of principal candidates are from most agreement to least: aspiring and new principals participating in mentorship programs (75% agreement); aspiring principals participating in long-term, full time, comprehensive internships (71% agreement); aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards (69% agreement); aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices (63% agreement).

Research Question 4: As perceived by Maryland school principals, is there improvement in the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates applying for principal vacancies in the state of Maryland since the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been adopted?

There is also evidence that principals perceive that the quality of principal candidates has improved as a result of districts implementing Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations. 66% of the principals completing the survey indicated some level of agreement with the statement, “The quality of principal and/or assistant principal candidates has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations.” Only 12% of the principals indicated some level of

disagreement that the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates has improved as a result of the Task Force recommendations being implemented.

Taking a closer look at which recommendations principals perceive as making the most improvement in the quality of principal candidates, mentorship and internship programs, as well as providing professional development opportunities and opportunities for aspiring principals to network with other aspiring principals once again ranked high in principal agreement.

Eighty-four percent of the principals indicated some level of agreement that mentorship programs have helped improve the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates, and 80% of the principals indicated that they agree that long-term, full time, comprehensive internships for aspiring principals helped improve the quality of principal candidates. 75% of the principals agreed that the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates has improved as a result of aspiring principals and assistant principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the national Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards. 74% of the principals indicated a level of agreement that intra-system networking opportunities for aspiring principals to problem solve and share best practices has helped improve the quality of principal and assistant principal candidates.

Research Question 5: Which remedies aimed at addressing the shortage of quality principal and assistant principal candidates in the state of Maryland are perceived to be the most effective in increasing the number of quality principal candidates?

When asked which Task Force recommendations would be the most effective at addressing principal shortages in the state of Maryland, the recommendations with the most agreement among principals once again were the recommendations focusing on internships, opportunities for intra-system networking, and professional development. Task Force

recommendations principals perceive as being the most effective at addressing principal shortages are from most agreement to least are: school districts and/or local school system consortia developing professional development frameworks for principal candidates which include internships that are long-term, full-time, and comprehensive (89% agreement); school districts and/or local school system consortia coordinating intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices (89% agreement); school district providing professional development programs that are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards (88% agreement); school districts providing appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools (82% agreement); ensuring that all schools provide staffing to monitor busses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular activities (82% agreement); ensuring that each school has an assistant principal for every 350 students (81% agreement); school districts reviewing and adhering to established clerical and certificated staffing ratios (80% agreement); ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs (80% agreement); employing an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternative education personnel (80%); hiring building based business managers (76% agreement); redesigning the time frame in which principals must complete formal evaluations of staff (56% agreement).

#### Recommendations for Action

As a result of this study, the state of Maryland and local school systems should understand that principals do perceive that a shortage of qualified principals still does exist in the state of Maryland. However, as a result of districts implementing the recommendations of the



Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, the shortage of qualified candidates is not as severe as it was ten years ago.

Local school districts in Maryland should view the results of this study as confirmation that the implementation of the Task Force recommendations has made a difference in attracting and retaining principal candidates. It is recommended that school systems in Maryland revisit the Task Force recommendations to determine how they may implement Task Force strategies that are not already implemented.

Colleges and universities can view these results as a way to develop principal preparation programs which focus on high-quality mentorship programs.

States experiencing principal shortages should take note of the fact that principals participating in this study highly value internships and mentor programs. When developing effective principal preparation programs, school leaders will want to examine the work of Stephen Davis. According to a 2005 school leadership study, Davis found that there are key features of principal preparation designs. These key features include research-based programs that use mentors and cohort groupings and focus on authentic problems solving (Davis, 2005).

At the time this study is completed, the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship is ten years old. This researcher suggests that the Maryland Department of Education form committees to reexamine and revise the Task Force recommendations. Based on the results of this survey, special consideration should be given to expanding internships, mentorships, and opportunities for principals, as well as aspiring principals, to network with other professionals outside their district.

### Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the results of this study, this researcher offers the following considerations for future research:

1. This study should be replicated with all of the state principals and superintendents. Doing this may further enhance the understanding of principal perceptions on the Principalship.
2. This study, along with a revised, shortened survey, should be replicated with professionals beginning principal training programs. This may enhance our understanding of what aspiring principals view as important strategies for recruiting and retaining new principals.
3. Further study is needed to see if principal retention is higher in schools which have implemented a majority of the Task Force recommendations as compared to similar schools which have not implemented the Task Force recommendations.
4. Further study is needed to determine why staffing patterns appear to be inconsistent across the state. Future researchers may study to find out if the disparity is related to the size of the district and/or schools, the location of the district and schools (urban vs. rural), the relative wealth of the school district, or other reasons.
5. Further study is needed to determine why principals and assistant principals are not taking advantage of professional development opportunities that are available, especially in light of the fact that the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states, “One of the most important policy considerations for ensuring high-quality candidates for the Principalship is building preparation programs that provide candidates with the knowledge, skills, and disposition they need to meet state standards” (MSDE, 2000, p. 19).

6. Further study is needed to determine if differentiated models of supervision may have an impact on clearing the plate of principals. Future researchers may study to find out if such models of supervision maintain teacher accountability as well.

7. Because 22% of the principals disagreed that their district provides additional compensation based on the size of the school building a principal is assigned to, the organizational level of the building, and staffing patterns within that building, further study is needed to determine why some districts do not provide this additional compensation, and if that lack of additional compensation has led to a higher turn over rate of principals.

8. For this study the response rate for urban principals was low, partly because superintendent permission could not be obtained to survey principals from the larger, urban districts. This lack of urban principal participation should be considered a limitation of this study. Further study is needed to see if principal shortages are different between rural and urban areas, and if the implementation of Maryland Task Force recommendations are consistent between rural and urban areas.

9. This study included interviews with only two district superintendents. Further study on the implementation of Maryland Task Force recommendations is needed which includes input from all of Maryland's school superintendents.

### Closing Thoughts

Ten years ago, the state of Maryland acted proactively to address the principal shortage in their state by issuing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship. Based on the results of this study, acting principals in the state of Maryland perceive that a shortage of quality principal candidates does still exist, however, they do not perceive the shortage to be as dire as it was ten years ago. Follow up interviews with two superintendents

from Maryland support the fact that a shortage does still exist, but is not as severe as ten years ago.

Other states facing a shortage of quality school principals may use this study and learn from Maryland's efforts to address their own shortages. The state of Maryland should view these results with pride, knowing that their efforts to address a shortage of qualified principals appears to be working. However, the state should look for ways to ensure that the recommendations are being implemented consistently across the state.

Other states should also note the importance principals in this study place on internships, mentorships, and professional development. States should implement or continue to sponsor professional development opportunities for practicing and aspiring principals. Programs such as the Maryland Principal's Academy, the Maryland Aspiring Principal's Academy, and the Principal's Academy of Western Pennsylvania through the University of Pittsburgh can be used as a model for professional development programs for principals and aspiring principals.

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## Appendix A

Recommendations of the Maryland Task Force  
On the Principalship

Adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education  
August 30, 2000

<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>
The Role of the Principal	Professional Development	Compensation, Incentives, and Accountability
MSDE and all 24 local school systems will “clear the plate” of extraneous responsibilities assigned principals to ensure they have sufficient time to fulfill their primary role as instructional leader/facilitator	In conjunction with the Maryland Partnership for teaching and Learning K-16, the local school systems and/or school system consortia will develop comprehensive, job-embedded programs for the identification and professional development of principal candidates and of current principals.	Local school systems will adjust principal salary and compensation packages to better reflect the responsibilities, accountability, and stressors of the principalship.
<b><u>Strategies</u></b>	<b><u>Strategies</u></b>	<b><u>Strategies</u></b>
<p>I. With education stakeholders, the MSDE workgroup will develop administrative staffing and support standards. Local school systems will give principals sufficient staff/support and the power to use staffing creatively to build a leadership team that best serves the school community.</p> <p>II. MSDE will establish a workgroup charged with recommending triennially to the State Superintendent of Schools which state-level tasks, responsibilities, duties and regulations can be removed from the principalship. The committee will also establish a model that local school systems can use to remove local tasks.</p>	<p>I. MSDE will clearly articulate standards and develop a prototype framework to serve as the focus of identification and in-depth professional development of principal candidates.</p> <p>II. Local school systems and/or school system consortia will develop comprehensive, job-embedded programs for the on-going professional development of current principals.</p> <p>III. IHE’s-in collaboration with MSDE, the Maryland Partnership for Teaching and Learning K-16, and local school systems and/or school system consortia – will align their school administration programs with state standards and the prototype frameworks</p>	<p>I MSDE, MSTTA, BTU, PSSAM, MABE, MAESP, MASSP, MBRT, the Maryland PTA, and MNS will develop a model principal compensation package as a comparative standard for evaluating principals’ salaries across Maryland. This standard will address salary, standards benefits, perquisites, incentives, and accountability.</p> <p>II Working with PSSAM and the MNS, MSDE will establish web-based data on administrative salaries, benefits, and incentives statewide.</p> <p>III MSDE will convene a small workgroup of human resource and benefits administration experts from MSTTA, BTU, PSSAM,</p>

<p>III. MSDE will support the redefinition of the role of the principalship as instructional leader by awarding grants to at least five local school systems for current and proposed efforts focused on redefining the principalship. The results will be shared as part of principals' professional development.</p>	<p>to connect theory with practice. MSDE program approval if IHE programs will be contingent upon such alignment.</p> <p>IV MSDE will facilitate the development and maintenance of an electronic clearinghouse for exemplary approaches and/or promising practices for principal's continuing growth and professional development.</p>	<p>MAESP, MASSP, and MBRT to develop specific incentives that will attract, retain, and reward high-performing principals.</p> <p>IV To ensure adequate security for principals who take difficult challenges and to link performance and accountability, MSDE, MSTA, BTU, MABE, MAESP, MASSP, and MNS will examine the feasibility of instituting specific-term contracts and/or appointments for principals governing service and performance incentives, coupled with appropriate accountability measures.</p>
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## Appendix B

### Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium

#### Standards for School Leaders

**Standard 1: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.**

#### Knowledge

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:

- learning goals in a pluralistic society
- the principles of developing and implementing strategic plans
- systems theory
- information sources, data collection, and data analysis strategies
- effective communication
- effective consensus-building and negotiation skills

#### Dispositions

The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:

- the educability of all
- a school vision of high standards of learning
- continuous school improvement
- the inclusion of all members of the school community
- ensuring that students have the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become successful adults
- a willingness to continuously examine one's own assumptions, beliefs, and practices
- doing the work required for high levels of personal and organization performance

#### Performances

The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- the vision and mission of the school are effectively communicated to staff, parents, students, and community members
- the vision and mission are communicated through the use of symbols, ceremonies, stories, and similar activities
- the core beliefs of the school vision are modeled for all stakeholders
- the vision is developed with and among stakeholders
- the contributions of school community members to the realization of the vision are recognized and celebrated
- progress toward the vision and mission is communicated to all stakeholders
- the school community is involved in school improvement efforts
- the vision shapes the educational programs, plans, and actions
- an implementation plan is developed in which objectives and strategies to achieve the vision and goals are clearly articulated

- assessment data related to student learning are used to develop the school vision and goals
- relevant demographic data pertaining to students and their families are used in developing the school mission and goals
- barriers to achieving the vision are identified, clarified, and addressed
- needed resources are sought and obtained to support the implementation of the school mission and goals
- existing resources are used in support of the school vision and goals
- the vision, mission, and implementation plans are regularly monitored, evaluated, and revised

**Standard 2: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.**

**Knowledge**

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:

- student growth and development
- applied learning theories
- applied motivational theories
- curriculum design, implementation, evaluation, and refinement
- principles of effective instruction
- measurement, evaluation, and assessment strategies
- diversity and its meaning for educational programs
- adult learning and professional development models
- the change process for systems, organizations, and individuals
- the role of technology in promoting student learning and professional growth
- school cultures

**Dispositions**

The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:

- student learning as the fundamental purpose of schooling
- the proposition that all students can learn
- the variety of ways in which students can learn
- life long learning for self and others
- professional development as an integral part of school improvement
- the benefits that diversity brings to the school community
- a safe and supportive learning environment
- preparing students to be contributing members of society

**Performances**

The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- all individuals are treated with fairness, dignity, and respect



- professional development promotes a focus on student learning consistent with the school vision and goals
- students and staff feel valued and important
- the responsibilities and contributions of each individual are acknowledged
- barriers to student learning are identified, clarified, and addressed
- diversity is considered in developing learning experiences
- life long learning is encouraged and modeled
- there is a culture of high expectations for self, student, and staff performance
- technologies are used in teaching and learning
- student and staff accomplishments are recognized and celebrated
- multiple opportunities to learn are available to all students
- the school is organized and aligned for success
- curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular programs are designed, implemented, evaluated, and refined
- curriculum decisions are based on research, expertise of teachers, and the recommendations of learned societies
- the school culture and climate are assessed on a regular basis
- a variety of sources of information is used to make decisions
- student learning is assessed using a variety of techniques
- multiple sources of information regarding performance are used by staff and students
- a variety of supervisory and evaluation models is employed
- pupil personnel programs are developed to meet the needs of students and their families

**Standard 3: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.**

#### Knowledge

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:

- theories and models of organizations and the principles of organizational development
- operational procedures at the school and district level
- principles and issues relating to school safety and security
- human resources management and development
- principles and issues relating to fiscal operations of school management
- principles and issues relating to school facilities and use of space
- legal issues impacting school operations
- current technologies that support management functions

#### Dispositions

The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:

- making management decisions to enhance learning and teaching
- taking risks to improve schools
- trusting people and their judgments
- accepting responsibility
- high-quality standards, expectations, and performances

- involving stakeholders in management processes
- a safe environment

#### Performances

The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- knowledge of learning, teaching, and student development is used to inform management decisions
- operational procedures are designed and managed to maximize opportunities for successful learning
- emerging trends are recognized, studied, and applied as appropriate
- operational plans and procedures to achieve the vision and goals of the school are in place
- collective bargaining and other contractual agreements related to the school are effectively managed
- the school plant, equipment, and support systems operate safely, efficiently, and effectively
- time is managed to maximize attainment of organizational goals
- potential problems and opportunities are identified
- problems are confronted and resolved in a timely manner
- financial, human, and material resources are aligned to the goals of schools
- the school acts entrepreneurially to support continuous improvement
- organizational systems are regularly monitored and modified as needed
- stakeholders are involved in decisions affecting schools
- responsibility is shared to maximize ownership and accountability
- effective problem-framing and problem-solving skills are used
- effective conflict resolution skills are used
- effective group-process and consensus-building skills are used
- effective communication skills are used
- there is effective use of technology to manage school operations
- fiscal resources of the school are managed responsibly, efficiently, and effectively
- a safe, clean, and aesthetically pleasing school environment is created and maintained
- human resource functions support the attainment of school goals
- confidentiality and privacy of school records are maintained

**Standard 4: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.**

#### Knowledge

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:

- emerging issues and trends that potentially impact the school community
- the conditions and dynamics of the diverse school community
- community resources
- community relations and marketing strategies and processes
- successful models of school, family, business, community, government and higher education partnerships

## Dispositions

The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:

- schools operating as an integral part of the larger community
- collaboration and communication with families
- involvement of families and other stakeholders in school decision-making processes
- the proposition that diversity enriches the school
- families as partners in the education of their children
- the proposition that families have the best interests of their children in mind
- resources of the family and community needing to be brought to bear on the education of students
- an informed public

## Performances

The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- high visibility, active involvement, and communication with the larger community is a priority
- relationships with community leaders are identified and nurtured
- information about family and community concerns, expectations, and needs is used regularly
- there is outreach to different business, religious, political, and service agencies and organizations
- credence is given to individuals and groups whose values and opinions may conflict
- the school and community serve one another as resources
- available community resources are secured to help the school solve problems and achieve goals
- partnerships are established with area businesses, institutions of higher education, and community groups
- to strengthen programs and support school goals
- community youth family services are integrated with school programs
- community stakeholders are treated equitably
- diversity is recognized and valued
- effective media relations are developed and maintained
- a comprehensive program of community relations is established
- public resources and funds are used appropriately and wisely
- community collaboration is modeled for staff
- opportunities for staff to develop collaborative skills are provided

**Standard 5: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.**

**Knowledge**

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:

- the purpose of education and the role of leadership in modern society
- various ethical frameworks and perspectives on ethics
- the values of the diverse school community
- professional codes of ethics
- the philosophy and history of education

**Dispositions**

The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:

- the ideal of the common good
- the principles in the Bill of Rights
- the right of every student to a free, quality education
- bringing ethical principles to the decision-making process
- subordinating one's own interest to the good of the school community
- accepting the consequences for upholding one's principles and actions
- using the influence of one's office constructively and productively in the service of all students and their families
- development of a caring school community

**Performances**

The administrator:

- examines personal and professional values
- demonstrates a personal and professional code of ethics
- demonstrates values, beliefs, and attitudes that inspire others to higher levels of performance
- serves as a role model
- accepts responsibility for school operations
- considers the impact of one's administrative practices on others
- uses the influence of the office to enhance the educational program rather than for personal gain
- treats people fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect
- protects the rights and confidentiality of students and staff
- demonstrates appreciation for and sensitivity to the diversity in the school community
- recognizes and respects the legitimate authority of others
- examines and considers the prevailing values of the diverse school community
- expects that others in the school community will demonstrate integrity and exercise ethical behavior
- opens the school to public scrutiny
- fulfills legal and contractual obligations
- applies laws and procedures fairly, wisely, and considerately

**Standard 6: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.**

#### Knowledge

The administrator has knowledge and understanding of:

- principles of representative governance that undergird the system of American schools
- the role of public education in developing and renewing a democratic society and an economically productive nation
- the law as related to education and schooling
- the political, social, cultural and economic systems and processes that impact schools
- models and strategies of change and conflict resolution as applied to the larger political, social, cultural and economic contexts of schooling
- global issues and forces affecting teaching and learning
- the dynamics of policy development and advocacy under our democratic political system
- the importance of diversity and equity in a democratic society

#### Dispositions

The administrator believes in, values, and is committed to:

- education as a key to opportunity and social mobility
- recognizing a variety of ideas, values, and cultures
- importance of a continuing dialogue with other decision makers affecting education
- actively participating in the political and policy-making context in the service of education
- using legal systems to protect student rights and improve student opportunities

#### Performances

The administrator facilitates processes and engages in activities ensuring that:

- the environment in which schools operate is influenced on behalf of students and their families
- communication occurs among the school community concerning trends, issues, and potential changes in the environment in which schools operate
- there is ongoing dialogue with representatives of diverse community groups
- the school community works within the framework of policies, laws, and regulations enacted by local, state, and federal authorities
- public policy is shaped to provide quality education for students
- lines of communication are developed with decision makers outside the school community

## Appendix C

## Maryland Instructional Leadership Framework

Instructional Leadership Outcome	Evidence in Practice
1. Facilitate the Development of a School Vision	<p>The principal is able to demonstrate that there is/are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 A written school vision that encompasses values, challenges, and opportunities for the academic, social, and emotional development of each student</li> <li>1.2 A process for ensuring that all staff and other stakeholders are able to articulate the vision</li> <li>1.3 Procedures in place for the periodic, collaborative review of the vision by stakeholders</li> <li>1.4 Resources aligned to support the vision</li> </ul>
2. Align All Aspects of a School Culture to Student and Adult Learning	<p>The principal is able to demonstrate that there is/are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Mutual respect, teamwork, and trust in dealings with students, staff, and parents</li> <li>2.2 High expectations for all students and teachers in a culture of continuous improvement</li> <li>2.3 An effective school leadership team</li> <li>2.4 Effective professional learning communities aligned with the school improvement plan, focused on results, and characterized by collective responsibility for instructional planning and student learning</li> <li>2.5 Opportunities for leadership and collaborative decision making distributed among stakeholders, especially teachers</li> </ul>

Instructional Leadership Outcome	Evidence in Practice
<p>3. Monitor the Alignment of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment</p>	<p>The principal is able to demonstrate that there is/are:</p> <p>3.1 Ongoing conversations with teachers as to how state content standards, voluntary state curriculum and/or local curriculum, and research-based instructional strategies are integrated into daily classroom instruction</p> <p>3.2 Teacher assignments that are rigorous, purposeful, and engaging</p> <p>3.3 Student work that is appropriately challenging and demonstrates new learning</p> <p>3.4 Assessments that regularly measure student mastery of the content standards</p>
<p>4. Improve Instructional Practices Through the Purposeful Observation and Evaluation of Teachers</p>	<p>The principal is able to demonstrate that there is/are:</p> <p>4.1 A process to determine what students are reading, writing, producing, and learning</p> <p>4.2 Use of student data and data collected during the observation process to make recommendations for improvement in classroom instruction</p> <p>4.3 Formal feedback during observation conferences as well as ongoing informal visits, meetings, and conversations with teachers regarding classroom instruction</p> <p>4.4 Regular and effective evaluation of teacher performance based on continuous student progress</p> <p>4.5 Identification and development of potential school leaders</p>

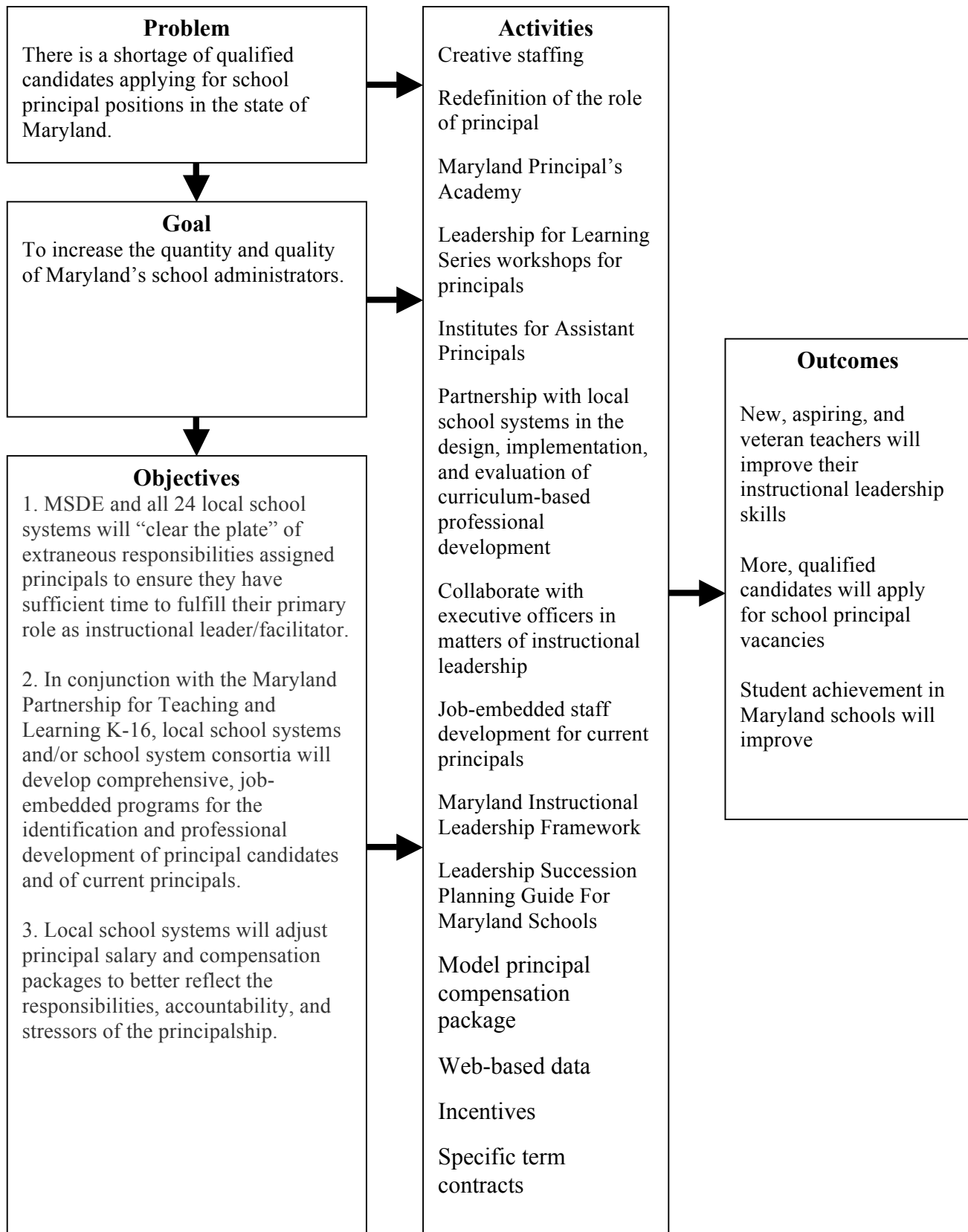
Instructional Leadership Outcome	Evidence in Practice
5. Ensure the Regular Integration of Appropriate Assessments into Daily Classroom Instruction	<p>The principal is able to demonstrate that there is/are:</p> <p>5.1 Multiple and varied assessments that are collaboratively developed</p> <p>5.2 Formative assessments that are a regular part of the ongoing evaluation of student performance and that serve as the basis for adjustments to instruction</p> <p>5.3 Summative assessments that are aligned in format and content with state assessments</p> <p>5.4 Appropriate interventions for individual students based on results of assessments</p>
6. Use Technology and Multiple Sources of Data to Improve Classroom Instruction	<p>The principal is able to demonstrate that there is/are:</p> <p>6.1 Effective use of appropriate instructional technology by students, staff, and administration</p> <p>6.2 Regular use of the MSDE websites (Maryland Report Card and School Improvement)</p> <p>6.3 Review of disaggregated data by subgroups</p> <p>6.4 Ongoing root cause analysis of student performance that drives instructional decision making</p> <p>6.5 Regular collaboration among teachers on analyzing student work</p>



Instructional Leadership Outcome	Evidence in Practice
<p>7. Provide Staff with Focused, Sustained, Research-based Professional Development</p>	<p>The principal is able to demonstrate that there is/are:</p> <p>7.1 Results-oriented professional development that is aligned with identified curricular, instructional, and assessment needs and is connected to school improvement goals</p> <p>7.2 Opportunities for teachers to engage in collaborative planning and critical reflection during the regular school day (job-embedded)</p> <p>7.3 Differentiated professional development according to career stages, needs of staff, and student performance</p> <p>7.4 Personal involvement in professional development activities</p> <p>7.5 Professional development aligned with the Maryland Teacher Professional Development Standards</p>
<p>8. Engage All Community Stakeholders in a Shared Responsibility for Student and School Success</p>	<p>The principal is able to demonstrate that there is/are:</p> <p>8.1 Parents and caregivers welcomed in the school, encouraged to participate, and given information and materials to help their children learn</p> <p>8.2 Parents and caregivers who are active members of the school improvement process</p> <p>8.3 Community stakeholders and school partners who readily participate in school life</p>

## Appendix D

## Logic Model Description of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship



## Appendix E

### Initial Email Sent to Maryland Elementary and Secondary Principals

IUP Letterhead

#### Informed Consent Cover Letter

Month, Day, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

You are invited to participate in a study being conducted by Mr. Michael E. Rowe under the supervision of Dr. Joseph Marcoline of the Administration and Leadership Studies Program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

The Maryland Department of Education has been proactive in addressing the shortage of qualified candidates for principal and assistant principals, beginning with the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship in 2000. The pilot study intends to survey principal's perceptions of how well the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented in Maryland public schools. The study also intends to survey principal's perceptions as to whether the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship have had a positive impact on improving the quality and quantity of perspective school principals and assistant principals.

The online survey should take approximately 20 minutes to complete and will ask a series of questions focused on your school district's implementation for the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Indiana University of Pennsylvania respects the protection of participants in research studies. The study has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the protection of Human Subjects. (Phone #: 724-357-7730) There is no known discomfort or risks involved in participating in this study. If you choose to participate, all information will be held in strict confidence. Your response will be considered only in combination with those from other participants. Your identity will be kept strictly confidential at all times.

If you are willing to participate in this pilot study, please sign the voluntary consent form below and return it using the stamped return envelope.

As a school principal myself, I understand how busy your days are. I truly thank you in advance for participating in this valuable study. If you have any questions or seek any additional information, please contact either of the individuals below. If you would like to see the results of my study once completed, please contact me at [mbegrowe@comcast.net](mailto:mbegrowe@comcast.net) I will be happy to share them with you.

Sincerely,

**Michael E. Rowe, Doctoral Candidate**

804 Hawk Valley Drive

Leechburg, PA 15656

(724) 567-5486

mbegrowe@comcast.net

**Dr. Joseph Marcoline**

311 Davis Hall,

Indiana, PA 15705

The study has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the protection of Human Subjects.

## Appendix F

## Survey of Maryland School Principals

**Part I: Demographics**

*Please check the appropriate response for each item.*

1. 1. What grade levels are included in your school? (check all that apply)

2. I have been a principal:

☐ less than 2 years   ☐ 2-5 years   ☐ 6-9 years   ☐ 10-13 years   ☐ more than 13 years

3. The school district where I work is:

☐ Urban (Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Montgomery, Prince Georges, Anne Arundel, Frederick)  
☐ Rural (All other school systems)

4. How many students does your school serve?

☐ Less than 100   ☐ 100-349   ☐ 350-599   ☐ 600-849   ☐ 850 or more

5. How many assistant principals does your building have?

☐ 0   ☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3   ☐ 4   ☐ More than 4

**Part II: Principal Shortage**

*Please check the appropriate response to each question.*

1. There is a shortage of candidates applying for principal or assistant principal positions in my school district.

Strongly Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Strongly Disagree   No Knowledge  
☐5   ☐4   ☐3   ☐2   ☐1

2. Candidates applying for principal or assistant principals in my district are quality candidates.

Strongly Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Strongly Disagree   No Knowledge  
☐5   ☐4   ☐3   ☐2   ☐1

### **Part III: Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Recommendation #1:**

Recommendation #1 of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states, “All 24 local school systems will “clear the plate” of extraneous responsibilities assigned principals to ensure they have sufficient time to fulfill their primary role as instructional leader/facilitator. Listed below are nine recommendations the Task Force had for local school systems.

*Please indicate your level of agreement as to your districts participation with each of the recommendations.*

1. My school district has provided an assistant principal for each 350 students.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

2. My district has provided a full-time Individualized Education Plan (IEP) team manager for each school.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

3. My district has redesigned the timeframe in which principals are required to formally evaluate staff.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

4. My district has reviewed and adheres to an established clerical and certificated staffing ratio.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5. My district has hired building-based business managers for all schools.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

6. My district provides appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

7. My district provides an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

8. My district provides appropriate staffing to monitor buses, cafeteria, athletic events, and extracurricular activities.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

9. My district provides the necessary staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

#### **Part IV: Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Recommendation #2:**

Recommendation # 2 of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states, "In conjunction with the Maryland Partnership for teaching and Learning K-16, the local school systems and/or school system consortia will develop comprehensive, job-embedded programs for the identification and professional development of principal candidates and of current principals." Listed below are recommendations the Task Force had for local school systems.

*Please indicate your level of agreement as to your districts participation with each of the recommendations.*

1. My district and/or my local school system consortia has developed identification and professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school system staffing.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

2. Professional development programs in my district are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

3. My district and/or school system consortia submits professional development program proposals to the Maryland Department of Education for approval and supplemental funding.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

4. My district and/or school system consortia provides a comprehensive mentorship program for first-and second-year principals.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

5. My district and/or school system consortia coordinates intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

### **Part V: Maryland Task Force on the Principalship Recommendation #3:**

Recommendation #3 of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship states that, "Local school systems will adjust principal salary and compensation packages to better reflect the responsibilities, accountability, and stressors of the principalship." Listed below are recommendations the Task Force had for local school systems.

*Please indicate your level of agreement as to your districts participation with each of the recommendations.*

1. My district has established a principal's salary scale that has as its minimum entry point the equivalent of what the highest paid twelve month teacher would be compensated plus an absolute minimum of 10%.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

2. My district provides additional compensation beyond the steps on its salary scale for principals based on the size of the school assigned, the organizational level (elementary, middle, high school), and staffing patterns within that building.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1



3. My district provides additional compensation for principals due to defined needs in a specific school based on established priorities that are clearly communicated in advance and the achievement of those priorities.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

4. My district provides a multi-year commitment (no less than three year) and additional compensation for principals who take on difficult challenges and who meet established priorities.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5. My district, based on local fiscal capacity, includes additional compensation/benefits for all principals consistent with the district collective bargaining agreement. These additional benefits include:

5a. Health insurance

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5b. Life insurance

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5c. Disability insurance

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5d. Deferred compensation

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5e. Sabbatical leave

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5f. Dues/membership in professional organizations

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5g. Technology (cell phones, laptops, palm pilots)

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5h. Professional development opportunities

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

5i. National and state conferences

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

#### **Part VI: Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates:**

*Please check the appropriate response to each question.*

1. My school district is having difficulty in attracting a sufficient number of candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

2. My school district is having a difficult time attracting quality candidates to interview for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

3. My school district has implemented recommendations from the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship in an effort to improve the quality and quantity of candidates applying for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Knowledge
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1

*Please answer question 4 and 5 only if you checked "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" for question 3.*

4. The quantity of principal and/or assistant principal candidates in my school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

5. The quality of principal and/or assistant principal candidates in my school district has improved as a result of implementing the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

6. Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school staffing.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

*Please answer questions 7 and 8 only if you checked "strongly agree" or "somewhat agree" for questions 6.*

7. The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals' participation in internships which are long-term, full-time, comprehensive and part of school staffing.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

8. The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals' participation in internships which are long-term, full-time, comprehensive and part of school staffing.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

9. Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

*Please answer questions 10 and 11 only if you checked “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” for questions 9.*

10. The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.

Strongly Agree    Somewhat Agree    Somewhat Disagree    Strongly Disagree    No Knowledge  
☐5                      ☐4                      ☐3                      ☐2                      ☐1

11. The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in professional development activities which are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices.

Strongly Agree    Somewhat Agree    Somewhat Disagree    Strongly Disagree    No Knowledge  
☐5                      ☐4                      ☐3                      ☐2                      ☐1

12. Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in comprehensive mentorship programs for first- and second-year principals.

Strongly Agree    Somewhat Agree    Somewhat Disagree    Strongly Disagree    No Knowledge  
☐5                      ☐4                      ☐3                      ☐2                      ☐1

*Please answer questions 13 and 14 only if you checked “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” for questions 12.*

13. The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first- and second-year principals.

Strongly Agree    Somewhat Agree    Somewhat Disagree    Strongly Disagree    No Knowledge  
☐5                      ☐4                      ☐3                      ☐2                      ☐1

14. The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in comprehensive mentorship programs for first- and second-year principals.

Strongly Agree    Somewhat Agree    Somewhat Disagree    Strongly Disagree    No Knowledge  
☐5                      ☐4                      ☐3                      ☐2                      ☐1

15. Principals, assistant principals, and/or aspiring principals in my school district have participated in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

*Please answer questions 16 and 17 only if you checked “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” for questions 15.*

16. The quantity of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

17. The quality of principal and assistant principal candidates in my district has improved as a result of aspiring principals participating in intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

### **Part VII: Effectiveness of Initiatives to Improve Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates:**

*Please check the appropriate response to each question.*

1. Ensuring that each school has an assistant principal for every 350 students will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

2. Redesigning the timeframe in which principals must complete formal evaluations of staff will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

3. School district reviewing and adhering to established clerical and certificated staffing ratios will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

4. Hiring building-based business managers for all schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

5. School districts providing appropriate levels of security personnel in all middle and high schools will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

6. Employing an appropriate ratio of school psychologists and alternate education personnel in school districts will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

7. Ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor buses, cafeteria, athletic events and extracurricular activities will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

8. Ensuring that all schools provide appropriate staffing to monitor breakfast programs, after-school programs, and summer programs will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

9. School districts and/or local school system consortia developing professional development frameworks for principal candidates, which include internships that are long-term, full-time, comprehensive, and part of school system staffing will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree ☐5    Somewhat Agree ☐4    Somewhat Disagree ☐3    Strongly Disagree ☐2    No Knowledge ☐1

10. School districts providing professional development programs that are consistent with the National Staff Development Council (NSDC) standards and which are linked to student achievement and improved classroom practices encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree    Somewhat Agree    Somewhat Disagree    Strongly Disagree    No Knowledge  
☐5                      ☐4                      ☐3                      ☐2                      ☐1

11. School districts and/or school system consortia coordinating intra-system networking for cooperative problem solving and sharing best practices will encourage more educators to apply for principal and assistant principal positions.

Strongly Agree    Somewhat Agree    Somewhat Disagree    Strongly Disagree    No Knowledge  
☐5                      ☐4                      ☐3                      ☐2                      ☐1

Is there anything you would like to share about your districts efforts to address the shortage of qualified principal and assistant principal candidates?

## Appendix G

### Superintendent Interview Protocol

#### Interview Protocol

Project: The Perceptions of Maryland School Principals on the Quality and Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates and the Role the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship has played in Improving the Quality and Quantity of Principal and Assistant Principal Candidates

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer: Michael Rowe

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

The purpose of this study is to evaluate how well the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship recommendations have been implemented throughout the state of Maryland. The study examines Maryland principal perceptions as to whether or not the task force recommendations have been implemented in their county school districts.

#### Questions:

1. Is your district currently experiencing a shortage of qualified principal and assistant principal candidates?
2. Has as your county implemented any of the three recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship? If yes, please explain in detail how your district has implemented the recommendations of the task force.  
(Note to the interviewer...Ask clarifying questions about each of the three specific Task Force recommendations.) If no, skip to question 7.
3. If yes, has the implementation of any of these recommendations led an improvement in the quality and quantity of principal candidates in your county?
- 3a. In your opinion, which recommendation has had the biggest impact in improving the quality and quantity of principal candidates?
4. Have you experienced any hurdles in implementing the recommendations of the Task Force? If so, please elaborate.
5. If you were a member of a team of educators charged with revising the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship, what, if any additions or revisions would you make to the three current recommendations?



6. Has your district done anything other than implement the recommendations of the Maryland Task Force on the Principalship to address a shortage of qualified principal and assistant principal candidates? If so, what, if anything, has been effective at improving the quality and quantity of administrative candidates?

7. (This question is to be asked only if the interviewee has responded “no” to question 2. Then return to question 5.) Why has your county chosen not to implement any of the Task Force recommendations?