



Personnel Policy Study: Educational Leader Supply and Demand in Louisiana

Funded by
The Wallace Foundation Louisiana Grant
August 2009

Study Conducted by
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Rationale for the Study

There is a perceived shortage of qualified, certified educational leaders ready to step into principalship positions in Louisiana, as well as a concern that retirement will consume a large percentage of the current leaders within the next ten years. Additionally, there is a perception that districts are seeking leaders with a specific skill set in order to turn around failing schools. Consequently, the Board of Regents dispatched a request for proposals to all of the higher education institutions in Louisiana that offer redesigned educational leadership programs. With the use of external reviewers, LSU in Baton Rouge was granted the contract.

Research Questions

1. ***Hiring and Placement Policies and Practice:***
What are the current district hiring and placement policies to assign personnel to positions requiring state certification as principals in schools or educational leaders in district offices?
2. ***Hiring and Placement Policies and Practice:***
What is the number of existing educational leaders, district-by-district, who are currently certified and following district processes to be placed into leadership positions?
3. ***Educational Leader Supply and Demand:***
Which districts would be considered to have a dire need for educational leaders due to retirements within the next five years, attrition and/or lack of availability?

Findings

1. There is no evidence of a current, critical shortage of certified educational leaders in any public school district in Louisiana. But certain regions of the state demonstrate a greater need for certified educational leaders than do others.
2. Despite the fact that all Louisiana school districts reported having a larger pool of certified personnel than the number of open educational leader slots, districts in every region reported that not having enough applicants posed challenge.
3. Locating the right applicants for leadership positions posed the greatest hiring and placement challenge for districts in every region.
4. Common search criteria are compounding the challenges related to the hiring and placement of new leaders perceived as capable of meeting the heightened expectations of educational leader, within one to two years of their certification. (Nearly 70% of districts reported a preference for hiring leaders from within their school systems.)
5. State-level policy progress in terms of preparing and supporting educational leaders is less evident at the district level.

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LOUISIANA EDUCATIONAL LEADERS NETWORK

The goal of the Louisiana Educational Leadership Network, funded by the Wallace Foundation, is to develop, test and share useful approaches for improving the training of education leaders and the conditions that support their ability to significantly lift student achievement across entire state and districts, especially in high-needs schools.

Implications for State and District Policy Formation

The study produced a number of implications for policy. A few of these include state and/or district policy that

- Encourages districts to hire newly certified leaders.
- Provides incentives for the movement of certified leaders into leadership positions accompanied by provisions for periodic policy review and monitoring.
- Allows legislation for a recalculation of the minimum salaries for school-based leaders.
- Analyzes the impact of court ordered desegregation policy on district hiring and placement policies.
- Explores making educational leader preparation programs the joint responsibility of university-district partnerships.
- Improves the working conditions and ameliorating administrative burdens that interfere with effective leadership, accompanied by provisions for periodic policy review and monitoring.
- Provides localized analysis aimed at determining the ways in which national and state accountability policies influence potential leaders' attitudes about leadership and decisions to assume leadership positions.
- Identifies promising labor policies that could be used to attract leaders to Louisiana's other high-demand work-force sectors, as well as a plan for adapting these policies to meet the personnel needs of public school districts.

The complete research report can be found at www.leadlouisiana.net.

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