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PLI Impact Report: Breadth of Regional Impact and Strength of Model

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PLI

UC Berkeley Principal Leadership Institute

Impact Report

Breadth of Regional Impact and Strength of Model

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research confirms that the influence of the school principal on student achievement is second only to that of teachers. However, the growing demands and difficult working conditions have reduced the pool of principals prepared to face these challenges, particularly in underperforming schools. California must face the urgent necessity to attract and prepare school leaders to meet the challenges of working in urban schools. Since its founding in 2000, the Principal Leadership Institute (PLI) at UC Berkeley has been answering this call. Over its twelve-year history, PLI has successfully recruited and prepared 432 diverse and highly skilled school leaders; 98% of whom currently work in education, 90% of whom work in California, and 88% of whom work in the greater Bay Area.

In this report, we describe the breadth of UC Berkeley's Principal Leadership Institute's regional impact in the area of staffing with a special focus on our four district partners Berkeley Unified School District, Oakland Unified School District, San Francisco Unified School District, and West Contra Costa Unified School District. In addition, we describe the strength of our preparation model from recruitment to design. In future reports, we plan to detail other types of impact including alumni feedback and student level indicators.



University of California, Berkeley
Principal Leadership Institute

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

The Principal Leadership Institute is the best preparation program I've seen anywhere and I've been a school administrator in eight states. Unlike most other programs, PLI focuses on what it takes to improve student learning in schools. Graduates of PLI are grounded in instructional practice, committed to learning as a way of being for everyone in schools, and prepared for the challenges of state and federal accountability. They know how to engage staff in bringing about changes in schools that lead to improved learning outcomes.

Bruce Harter, Superintendent
West Contra Costa Unified School District

INTRODUCTION

A growing body of research has brought unprecedented national attention to the impact of teacher quality upon student learning.¹ Research also shows that the influence of school principals is profound—second only to that of teachers, with as much as a 25% influence on student achievement (potentially even higher in California's struggling schools).² This means that California's principals face increasing demands as instructional leaders in their schools, while also juggling responsibilities in areas outside of teaching and learning, such as budget, personnel, and facilities management.³ Further, budget cuts mean that California's school leaders need to do more with less, including fewer assistant principals, counselors, and district supports and lower per-pupil expenditures as enrollment increases.⁴ The struggle to meet all of these competing demands leads many to believe the principal's job is unmanageable, overwhelming, and unsustainable.⁵ And in California's underachieving schools, this sense is ever heightened.

As the challenges of the principal's job increase, the pool of principals in California prepared to face these challenges continues to shrink. A report just released by the California Department of Education indicates that though there are more licensed administrators in California than there are projected job openings, candidates are not applying for school leadership positions, thereby creating a principal "shortage." This situation is particularly acute in schools that lack resources and serve high-need students.⁶ Research tell us that there are virtually no struggling schools turned around without a highly effective leader,⁷ thus California must face the urgent necessity to attract and prepare school leaders to meet the challenges of working in urban schools.

OUR IMPACT

Since 2000, the Principal Leadership Institute (PLI) at UC Berkeley has answered this critical need for highly effective leaders. PLI's fourteen-month intensive preparation program is grounded in principles of equity and social justice informed by research and practice. The Principal Leadership Institute graduates educational leaders who are well prepared for leadership positions in high-needs schools and districts in the Bay Area. In addition, these graduates are sustaining their work in places that have been traditionally mired with high turnover in leadership.⁸

Over its twelve-year history, PLI has successfully recruited and prepared **432** diverse and highly skilled school leaders; **98% of whom currently work in education, 90% of whom work in California, and 88% of whom work in the greater Bay Area.**

In the 2011-2012 school year, **66% of PLI graduates held school or district administrator positions and 24% worked in teacher leader roles such as out of classroom coaches** (See Figure 1). Of the graduates who held school administration positions, 54% served as principals (See Figure 2).

In 2011-2012, PLI graduates and students worked in 101 different districts, diocese, independent school networks, or charter organizations. Of PLI graduates and students who worked in K-12 schools during the 2011-12 academic year, 93% worked in public schools, 6% worked in charter schools, and 1% worked in private schools.

PLI graduates are consistently recognized by regional and state organizations for their outstanding achievements as school leaders and teachers. Between 2008-2012, PLI graduates have been leaders in Bay Area schools that have won 13 separate California Department of Education Academic Achievement Awards, which recognize under-performing schools serving low-income students that have significantly closed the achievement gap. In the same period, three California Blue Ribbon School Awards were awarded to schools led by PLI graduates. Between 2005-2012, ten California Distinguished School Awards, honoring California schools that have demonstrated educational excellence and made significant gains in narrowing the achievement gap, were awarded to schools led by PLI graduates.

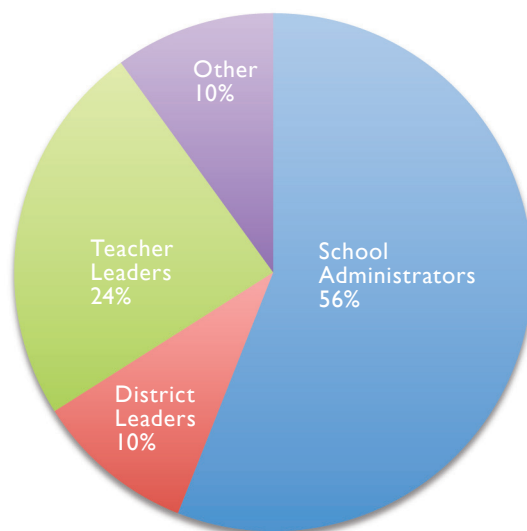


Figure 1: POSITIONS HELD BY PLI GRADUATES, 2011-12

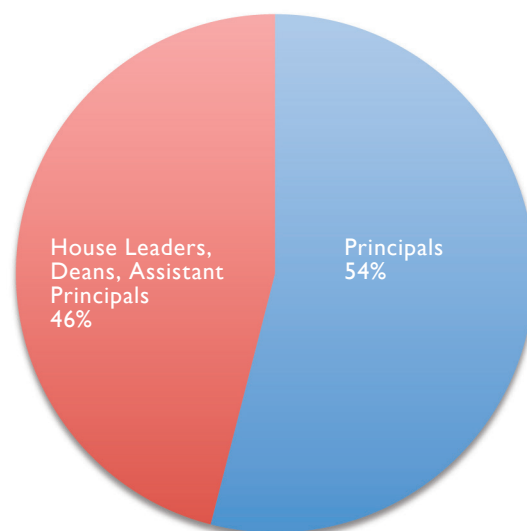
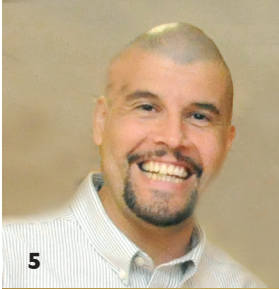
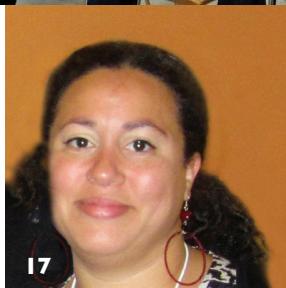
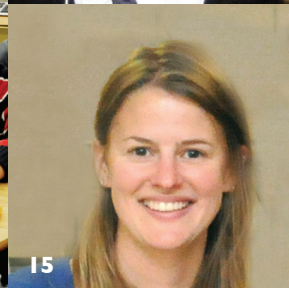
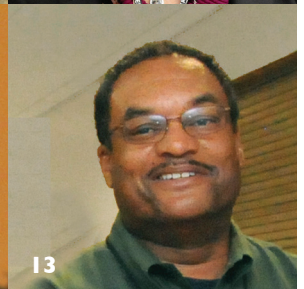


Figure 2: POSITIONS HELD BY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS, 2011-12

- 1 Karen Haynes
(PLI Cohort 5)
- 2 Richard Zapien
(PLI Cohort 3)
- 3 Daniel Roose
(PLI Cohort 8)
- 4 Pasquale Scuderi
(PLI Cohort 6)
- 5 Jorge Melgoza
(PLI Cohort 8)
- 6 Sharon Baltazar
(PLI Cohort 11)
- 7 Kristin Glenchur
(PLI Cohort 8)



- 8 Alyse Castro
(PLI Cohort 3)
- 9 Jerome Gourdine
(PLI Cohort 1)
- 10 Ray Cagan
(PLI Cohort 10)
- 11 Nancy Ivey
(PLI Cohort 4)
- 12 Ron Smith
(PLI Cohort 4)
- 13 Vernon Walton
(PLI Cohort 7)
- 14 Roma Groves
(PLI Cohort 5)
- 15 Ashley Milton
(PLI Cohort 10)
- 16 Cliff Hong
(PLI Cohort 8)
- 17 Eyana Spencer
(PLI Cohort 3)
- 18 David Luongo
(PLI Cohort 6)



There is no doubt that graduates of UC Berkeley's Principal Leadership Institute have made significant contributions to Oakland's schools, students, and families.

Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Associate Superintendent of Leadership, Curriculum, Instruction, Oakland Unified School District

WHERE WE WORK

The Principal Leadership Institute recruits students who upon graduation are committed to working in underserved schools throughout the Bay Area. Since 2000, PLI has worked closely with four urban Bay Area districts in this endeavor. These districts—**Berkeley Unified School District**, **Oakland Unified School District**, **San Francisco Unified School District**, and **West Contra Costa Unified School District**—represent where a large number of PLI students work while they are in the program and where 49% of all PLI graduates work when they graduate (See Figure 3). During the 2011-12 school year, for example, four schools in partner districts had administrative teams composed 100% of PLI graduates and all four districts had PLI graduates in district leadership roles.

Research endorses the effectiveness of this type of university-district partnership model. Preparation programs with partnerships have been cited to have “higher levels of graduate-reported learning, aspirations to take on leadership roles, and leadership advancement,” as well as having “more high-quality attributes than conventional programs in the same institutions.”⁹ The joint work undertaken by PLI and its partner districts has led to the development of a de facto leadership pipeline for these local districts that results in more high-quality candidates being hired and retained in school leadership roles in some of the Bay Area's most underserved schools.

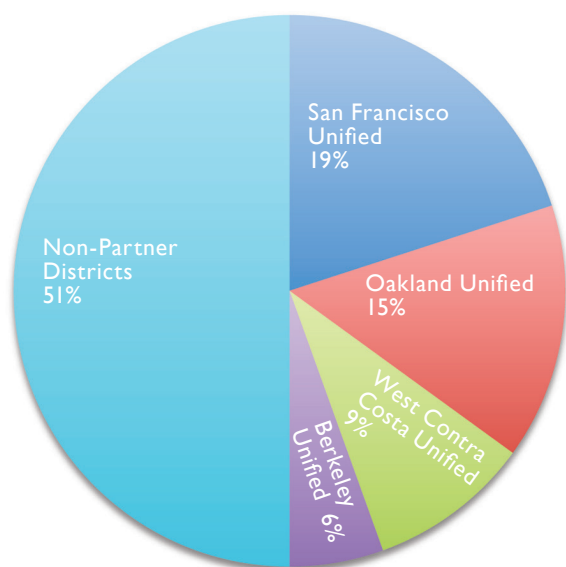


Figure 3: PLI GRADUATES BY PARTNER DISTRICT, 2011-12

THE 51% OF GRADUATES WHO WORK OUTSIDE OF OUR PARTNER DISTRICTS WORK IN SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES SUCH AS:

- **Hayward Unified School District**
- **Vallejo City Unified School District**
- **Mt. Diablo Unified School District**
- **San Lorenzo Unified School District**
- **San Leandro Unified School District**
- **Alameda City Unified School District**

OUR PARTNER DISTRICTS

BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

In the 2011-12 school year:

- 24 PLI graduates/students worked in BUSD.
- 100% of BUSD early childhood administrators graduated from PLI.
- 36% of BUSD elementary schools had a PLI principal and/or teacher, with a concentrated presence at three sites
- 100% of BUSD middle schools had PLI presence. 2 of 3 middle schools had a PLI administrator.
- 100% of the administration at Berkeley High School graduated from PLI.

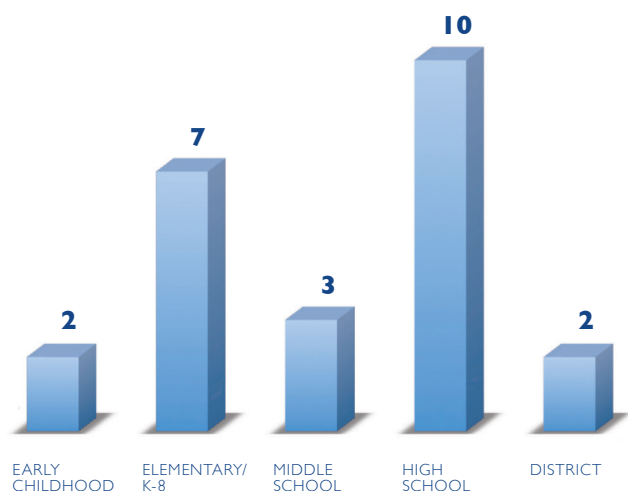


Figure 4: WHERE PLI GRADUATES AND STUDENTS WORKED IN BUSD, 2011–2012

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

In the 2011-12 school year:

- 64 PLI graduates/students worked in OUSD
- 50% of the PLI presence in OUSD was in school leadership
- 28% of OUSD elementary schools were led by PLI principals
- 44% of OUSD middle schools had PLI trained leaders
- 42% of OUSD high schools had PLI trained leaders

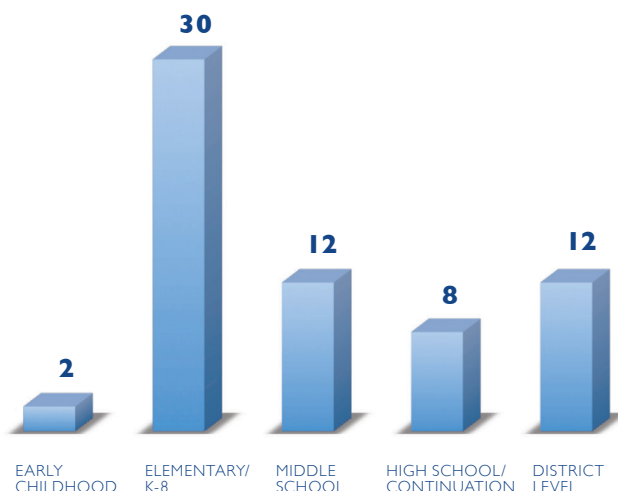


Figure 5: WHERE PLI GRADUATES AND STUDENTS WORKED IN OUSD, 2011–2012

From teacher leaders to school principals to leaders in the district office, UC Berkeley's Principal Leadership Institute is preparing SFUSD's next generation of leaders who will meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Davida (Dee Dee) Desmond, Assistant Superintendent of Superintendent's Zone K-12 Bayview Team, San Francisco Unified School District

SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

In the 2011-12 school year:

- 84 graduates/students worked in SFUSD
- 56% of PLI graduates working in SFUSD were school leaders
- More than 25% of SFUSD principals were PLI graduates
- 30% of assistant principals in the district were PLI graduates
- For 3 of the last 5 years, a PLI graduate won the SFUSD First-Year Administrator Award

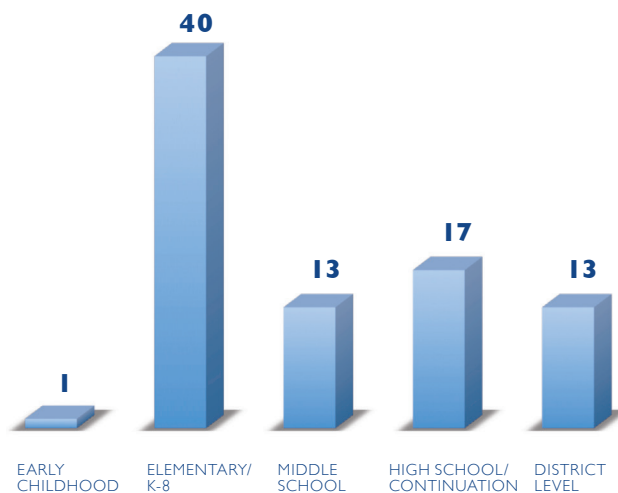


Figure 6: WHERE PLI GRADUATES AND STUDENTS WORKED IN SFUSD, 2011–2012

WEST CONTRA COSTA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

In the 2011-12 school year:

- 40 PLI graduates/students worked in WCCUSD
- PLI graduates worked in 30 of 57 WCCUSD school sites (53%)
- 70% of PLI presence in WCCUSD was in school administration
- 36% of WCCUSD schools were led by PLI principals
- 58% of high school assistant principals in WCCUSD were PLI graduates
- 100% of the school leadership team at El Cerrito High School was composed of PLI graduates

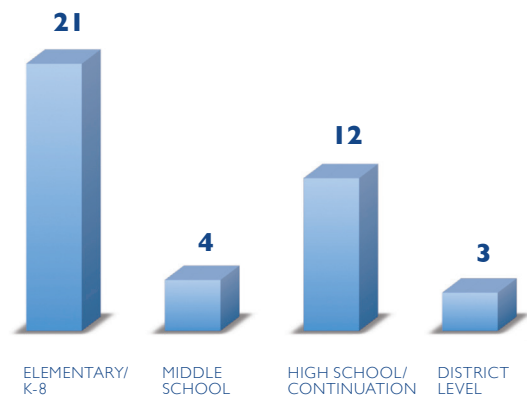


Figure 7: WHERE PLI GRADUATES AND STUDENTS WORKED IN WCCUSD, 2011–2012

- **Percentage of Schools with PLI Principals:**
 Elementary Schools 28% (21 of 75)
 Middle Schools 25% (3 of 12)
 High Schools 20% (4 of 20)
- **Percentage of SFUSD Schools with PLI Assistant Principals:**
 Elementary Schools 47% (7 of 15)
 Middle Schools 28% (5 of 18)
 High Schools 25% (8 of 32)

ANSWERING THE CHALLENGES

Research has identified three major problems contributing to the shortage of school leaders in the United States: lack of attraction of high-quality candidates to school leadership preparation programs, working conditions that lead to low principal retention, and the poor preparation and support of school leaders.¹⁰ To alleviate these challenges and improve schools, researchers recommend, “recruiting the right people, preparing them comprehensively, and supporting them as they lead schools.”¹¹ The UC Berkeley Principal Leadership Institute and Leadership Support Program have been actualizing these recommendations for more than ten years.

For the past 12 years, Berkeley Unified School District has relied on the Principal Leadership Institute at UC Berkeley for diverse, talented, hardworking, passionate, and equity minded leaders. PLI is an important partner who contributes to the success of our students.

*Neil Smith, Interim Co-Superintendent,
Berkeley Unified School District*

RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS

A report recently released by the California Department of Education’s Taskforce on Educator Excellence recommends that California, “Recruit a culturally diverse, high-quality teaching and school leadership workforce to meet California’s needs.”¹² Since its inception in 2000, the Principal Leadership Institute has been committed to recruiting and admitting students who are highly diverse in their professional experiences, race and ethnicity, and areas of specialization. (See Graphic 8.)

Widely considered one of the most diverse graduate programs at UC Berkeley, PLI students are selected for their demonstration of excellence in teaching and evidence of their teacher leadership experience and potential. Most incoming students have served in leadership roles, such as instructional coaches, instructional reform facilitators, department chairs, and lead teachers before entering the program. The criteria used for admission into the Principal Leadership Institute are consistent with recommendations made by the California Department of Education, the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the Wallace Foundation, among others.¹³

PLI uses a nontraditional and rigorous process for admissions. Unlike many other graduate programs, PLI does not require GRE scores. Instead, applicants are expected to submit personal statements, a lesson plan and accompanying video of the applicant recently teaching students, as well as proof of support from their districts verifying that the candidate has demonstrated potential for formal leadership. The admissions process also includes a daylong interview process with several group and individual activities used to assess candidate potential.

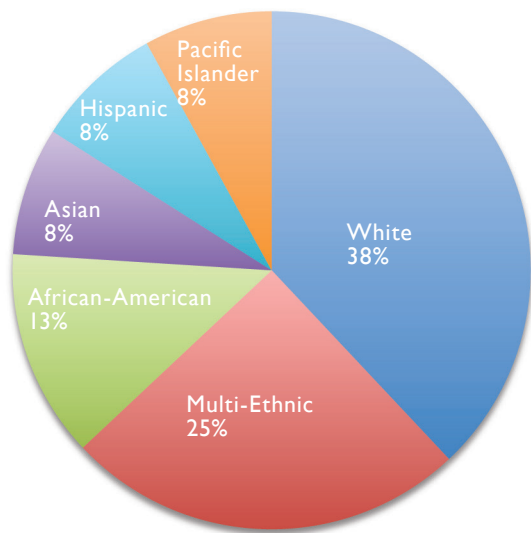


Figure 8: PLI COHORT 13 BY RACE/ETHNICITY

OUR CURRENT COHORT

The summer of 2012 marked the start of the thirteenth cohort of PLI. Demographically, Cohort 13 is typical of our program in its representation of the plurality of California schools in that at least 50% of the cohort are educators of color (See Figure 8).

In addition, Cohort 13 is also typical in that the students represent a diverse set of professional experiences, demonstrate excellence in teaching, and exhibit leadership potential—attributes strongly associated with future success and retention in school leadership roles.¹⁴

THE CURRICULUM

Principal preparation programs have long been denigrated for their outdated content, lack of connection between theory and practice, and absence of meaningful field experiences.¹⁵ In contrast, since 2000, the Principal Leadership Institute has coherently:

- articulated a clear theory of leadership grounded in principles of equity and social justice
- selected content that is rigorous, dynamic, and timely
- utilized student-centered learning activities that are practice-based
- required leadership field experiences that are supported with coaching

All of these practices reflect research-based characteristics of high quality leadership preparation programs.¹⁶

In PLI, students undertake a fourteen-month intensive program, including two summers and one academic year. Students enter PLI with a cohort of approximately 25-35 peers, all of whom work in schools in the greater Bay Area. Students complete all courses with this cohort in order to develop strong working relationships and a deep sense of collegiality. In addition, collaborative tasks and problem-based learning are emphasized, allowing students to develop facilitation and team-building skills.

PLI is firmly rooted in both research and practice. Instructors include both UC Berkeley faculty and practitioners from local districts, and courses are frequently team-taught by both. Over the fourteen months of the program, students have multiple opportunities to apply their knowledge of theory in practical settings. This includes analysis of case studies, assessed role-plays, and the design and implementation of a Master's project known as the Leadership Action Research Project (LARP). To support them further in their leadership development, throughout the academic year students complete extensive field experiences (225 hours) under the supervision of a university coach. All PLI coaches are experienced school leaders who have familiarity with the local educational context. These learning tasks and assessments are all research-based and are exceptional in the leadership preparation landscape.¹⁷

THE LEADERSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAM

Upon graduation from the Principal Leadership Institute, students receive a California Tier I Administrative Services credential and a Master of Arts degree. PLI graduates and other local school leaders who require a California Tier II Administrative Services credential may enroll in the Leadership Support Program (LSP). LSP is a two-year program that supports early career school leaders in their continued leadership development through retreats, monthly meetings, and one-on-one coaching. As of June 2012, 110 school leaders have completed LSP; 75 Bay Area school leaders are enrolled in the program for the 2012-13 academic year.

LSP provides a high-quality induction experience and sustained support for practicing school leaders. Research cites leadership induction as integral to increasing the number of educators who are attracted to and retained in the principalship;¹⁸ LSP has been specifically cited by the California Department of Education (2012) as exemplary in this work. Because the Leadership Support Program is based on the same theoretical framework as the Principal Leadership Institute, participants experience consistent values and foci in their leadership development experience as they transition from the pre-service to in-service program. And, as leaders move through LSP, the curriculum evolves to reflect the changing needs of leaders at different stages of their careers.¹⁹ LSP's content and learning activities support leaders in their growth through the stages of the "professional socialization hierarchy."²⁰ For example, the initial stages of shock felt by many new leaders as they manage the complexity and demands of their new roles.

By providing staged support and coaching, LSP increases the number of principals who are not only retained in school leadership, but who are able to more effectively prioritize demands, manage their time, and focus on the number one priority — student learning. LSP's induction support enables school leaders to transition from coping toward transforming. This approach, coupled with school district partnerships, enables LSP to fill an important gap in the California leadership development landscape.

THE LEADERSHIP CONNECTION RUBRIC

The curricula of PLI, LSP, and leadership support services are grounded in the Leadership Connection Rubric. Composed of seven research-based elements, the rubric guides effective leadership preparation, induction, ongoing support, coaching, and supervision of school and district leaders.

LEADERSHIP ELEMENT	URBAN SCHOOL LEADERS
1 Presence and Attitude	Communicate a compelling presence and a steadfast belief in the power of the possible.
2 Identity and Relationships	Demonstrate personal and professional self-awareness and nourish trusting relationships in a culturally and racially diverse learning organization.
3 Equity and Advocacy	Advocate for equitable academic, civic, and social-emotional outcomes for students who have been historically underserved by schools and society.
4 Curriculum and Instruction	Cultivate high expectations and ensure durable academic and social-emotional learning outcomes for students and adults.
5 Organization and Systems	Align systems, structures, and resources that sustain a culturally consonant environment in the service of student learning.
6 Change and Coherence	Engage all adults in change efforts that respond collectively and coherently to the assets and challenges in schools and communities.
7 Assessment and Accountability	Exhibit a persistent focus on teacher and student learning outcomes by developing, aligning, and monitoring an equity-driven assessment system.

NOTES

¹ Bland, et al., 2011; California Department of Education, 2012; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003.

² Darling-Hammond, et al., 2007; Goldhaber, 2009; Gordan, Kane, & Staiger, 2006; Hanushek, et al., 2005; Shelton, 2012; Wright, Horn, & Sanders, 1997.

³ Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005.

⁴ California Department of Education, 2012; Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005

⁵ Darling-Hammond, et al., 2010.

⁶ California Department of Education, 2012.

⁷ Shelton, 2012.

⁸ Bland, et al., 2011.

⁹ Orr and Barber, 2007 in Darling-Hammond, et al., 2010, p. 19.

¹⁰ Darling-Hammond, et al., 2010.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 9.

¹² California Department of Education, 2012, p. 23.

¹³ California Department of Education, 2012; Shelton, 2012; Wallace Foundation, 2012; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2010.

¹⁴ California Department of Education, 2012; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2007.

¹⁵ AACTE, 2001; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2010; Shelton, 2012.

¹⁶ Darling-Hammond, et al., 2010; Shelton, 2012.

¹⁷ California Department of Education, 2012; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2007.

¹⁸ California Department of Education, 2012; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2010; Shelton, 2012; Wallace Foundation, 2012.

¹⁹ Oplatka, 2012.

²⁰ Parkay, Currie, and Rhodes, 1992.

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For further information about how you can become engaged in the work of the Principal Leadership Institute and Leadership Program, contact us at:

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*All data was collected from alumni surveys and publicly accessible records. Data reflects information as of August 2012 and does not reflect changes for the 2012-13 academic year.

