



# Principal Pipeline Project

Susanna Loeb

Institute for Research on Education Policy & Practice (IREPP)

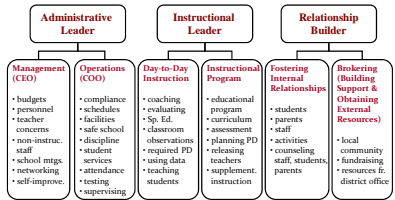
School of Education



## Abstract

This research project focuses on school principals, asking: what are the paths to the principalship, how do district policies affect who becomes a principal, what skills do principals have, what do principals do during the day, and how are these skills and tasks associated with school outcomes. We compare principals based on their background and experiences and compare schools based on their student populations and history of student learning. The project combines multiple sources of data across multiple districts over time to develop a detailed and comprehensive depiction of the job of principals.

### Principal Job Tasks



### Research Group:

Jason Grissom, Alicia Grunow, Eileen Horng, Heather Hough, Marsha Ing, Demetra Kalogrides, Daniel Klasik, Ken Montgomery, Jeannie Myung, Ashlyn Nelson, Christine Ruckdaschel, Imeh Williams, Devon Williamson

## Education Challenge

Effective principals are essential for successful schools. Although there is consensus on the importance of principals, there is little understanding of what exactly makes some principals more effective than others – including school contexts, job responsibilities, the structure of the job, institutional supports and barriers, as well as individuals' characteristics, orientations, skills and experiences.

## Project Goals

### BROAD AREAS OF INQUIRY

- ❖ **PRINCIPAL LABOR MARKET:** What motivates individuals to become and remain principals in different schools?
- ❖ **PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS:** What makes principals more or less effective in different schools?

We are particularly interested in policy levers which can reduce principal turnover and improve principal effectiveness.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

### PRINCIPAL LABOR MARKET

- Who becomes a principal? Who stays and for how long?
- How can school districts find, develop and keep good school leaders?
- Who wants to be a principal and why?
- Who is tapped for the principalship? What effect does tapping have?

### PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS

- How do principals spend their time at work?
- What management skills, leadership orientations, and executive behaviors do principals possess and need to be effective?
- How do principals view their effectiveness at the multitude of job tasks for which they are responsible?
- How do principals' use of informal classroom observations vary across school contexts?
- What are principals' school-based budgeting practices? How do these vary across principals and school contexts?

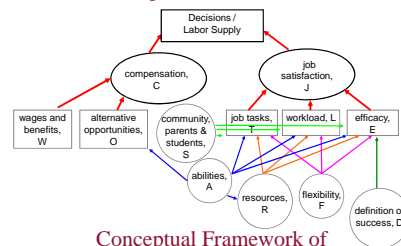
## Project Design

IREPP has been working with the School Redesign Network's LEADS (Leadership for Equity and Accountability in Districts and Schools) program to establish a national research partnership with urban school districts across the country. IREPP designed this project to address the districts' interest in better understanding the career paths of current and prospective principals, district policies that affect the distribution of human resources across schools, and the impact of educator characteristics and mobility patterns on a variety of school outcomes.

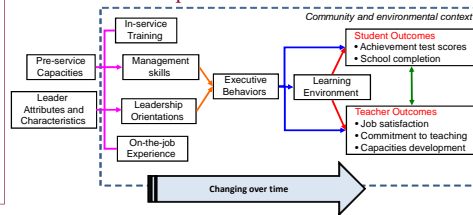
### DATA SOURCES

- ❖ Longitudinal school district administrative data on schools, staff and students
- ❖ Surveys of principals, assistant principals and teachers
- ❖ Observational time-use data from the shadowing of principals
- ❖ Interviews of principals and school district administrators

### Conceptual Framework of Principal Labor Market

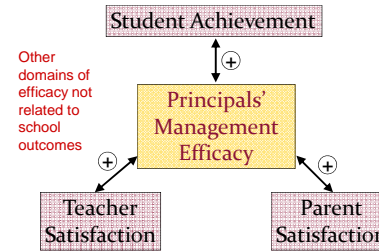


### Conceptual Framework of Principal Effectiveness

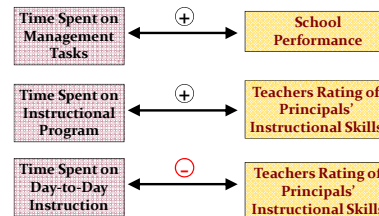


## Preliminary Results

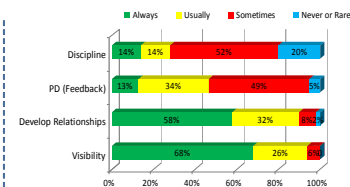
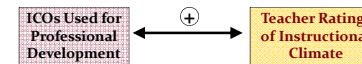
- Principals' own perceptions of their effectiveness in MANAGEMENT are positively associated with student outcomes, teacher satisfaction and parental assessment of the school. This contrasts with effectiveness in instruction, operations and interpersonal relations which are not associated with school outcomes.



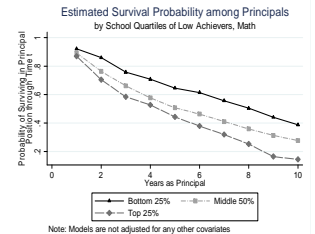
- Principal behaviors are related to school outcomes and mirror principal efficacy results.



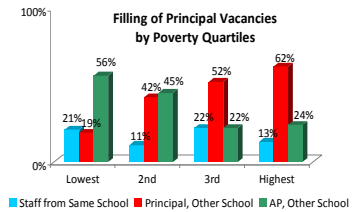
- Informal classroom observations are not related to school performance. This is likely because most principals use observations for visibility rather than to coach teachers.



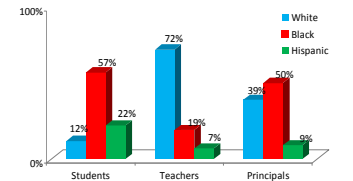
- Principals at schools with many poor, minority and/or low-achieving students are more likely to transfer and more likely to leave the profession entirely.



- When principal leaves high poverty school, usually replaced by an AP, whereas when principal leaves low poverty school, usually replaced by another principal



- Race is salient in the path to the principalship.



## Impact and Future Directions

These results are based upon data from two school districts. We have shared our findings with the LEADS network and other districts have expressed strong interest in being involved with this research project.