



Innovative efforts are underway in North Carolina to train and evaluate school leaders.

Research indicates that principals are the second most influential school-based factor for student achievement, and no low-performing school has exhibited a turnaround without an effective principal at the helm. Yet in 2006, a survey by Public Opinion found that 61 percent of superintendents, and 66 percent of principals, believed the training they received in schools of education was out of touch with the realities of today's schools and districts.¹ Despite a growing awareness of the important role that principals play in driving student achievement in their schools, there are still gaps in research on effective school leadership and models for developing and retaining such leaders.

Efforts are underway in North Carolina to develop innovative models to train new principals and to advance research on what it takes to create a pipeline of effective school leaders. Additionally, the State Board of Education recently revised the state's principal evaluation instrument to include the principal's contribution to student achievement.

Charlotte-Mecklenberg Schools (CMS) receives \$7.5 million to develop a model pipeline of school leadership.

CMS was recently named one of six sites to receive a five-year grant from the Wallace Foundation to develop comprehensive methods to identify, train, evaluate, and support principals. CMS was selected from 90 possible sites after demonstrating that the district is already engaged in innovative efforts to improve school leadership, such as its partnership with New Leaders for New Schools and its Strategic Staffing Initiative, which identifies effective principals and places them in the district's most challenged schools.

Using the Wallace Foundation award, CMS will create a district-wide system that produces a large number of effective principals and creates mechanisms to measure whether student achievement rises as a result. This work has the potential to make CMS a leading model for principal development in North Carolina and across the nation.

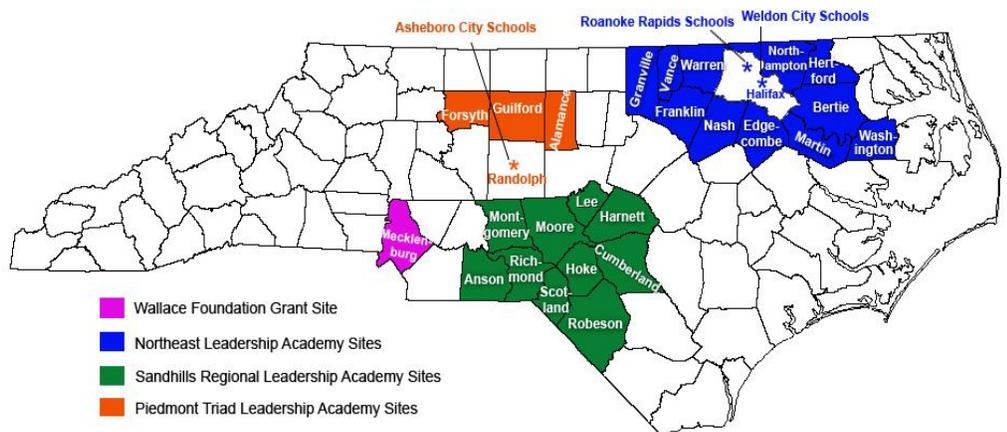
Leadership Academies are developing innovative, targeted training models.

Among the research that exists on school leadership, it is clear that a one-size-fits-all approach is not an effective means to train school leaders. In North Carolina, three leadership academies have been established to develop leaders who are prepared to meet the needs of schools in their respective regions. These leadership academies will develop field- and mentor-based training models to produce a new pool of turnaround specialists across the state. The academies are funded by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation and North Carolina's Race to the Top grant through the year 2014-15.

- **The Northeast Leadership Academy (NELA)**, led by NC State's College of Education, will train more than 60 school leaders to lead rural, low-performing, high-poverty schools in 14 northeastern counties.

- **The Piedmont Triad Leadership Academy (PTLA)** is a partnership among four school districts, UNC-Greensboro, and the Piedmont Triad Education Consortium. PTLA will train 63 principals to provide data-driven leadership in the region's high need schools.

- **The Sandhills Regional Leadership Academy (SRLA)** is a partnership among 10 school districts, Fayetteville State University, UNC-Pembroke, and the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching. SRLA is preparing a new base of principals to assume leadership in the region's schools, which will face roughly 80 principal vacancies over the next four years.



NC School Executive Evaluation now includes student growth.

In July 2011, the State Board of Education added a new standard to the North Carolina Standards for School Executives which are used to evaluate principals and assistant principals. This standard requires that the work of the principal or assistant principal results in "acceptable, measurable progress for students" based on student achievement data. The State Board also adopted a similar standard for teachers requiring student growth to be included in each educator's evaluation. These changes for school executives and teachers are effective in the 2011-2012 school year.

¹ Reality Check 2006 available at <http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/rc0604.pdf> (see page 22)