

# Overview of Program Components

There are three PRN pathways, the Classic, Extended Time and Leader of Record. The curriculum and core of the program is similar for all three pathways; however, the structures are different. Throughout this document, it is noted where and how the pathways differ.

The heart of the PRN is the intensive residency, wherein Aspiring Principals (APs) learn side-by-side with an exceptional Mentor Principal (MP). A tight structure, guided by the Rhode Island Leadership Standards and the following learning components, is what makes this authentic and individualized learning powerful.

## **Sharing, Reflecting, and Active Learning**

### ***Shadowing***

Aspiring Principals shadow their Mentor Principal and other principals for one consecutive week within the first few weeks of the school year.

### ***Written Reflection***

APs write reflections that they share with MPs, and receive feedback from MPs regularly.

### ***Aspiring and Mentor Meetings***

Each team meets daily for at least a half hour to check-in on logistical matters and to promote continual communication. In addition, teams are expected to schedule weekly extended meetings to debrief the events of the week and to plan the coming week. At these meetings, mentors give critical feedback to their AP's and discuss ways in which the AP's can improve their practice. To prepare for these meetings, APs reflect on a leadership dilemma to discuss with their mentor. AP and MP pairs check in on progress of the learning plan monthly.

### ***Readings***

Aspiring principals are required to read current publications, articles, and books with their cohort, and on their own to meet their specific needs. The learning plan identifies required and recommended readings.

### ***Institutes and Cohort Meetings***

Institutes and network meetings allow program participants to spend concentrated, in-depth time together as a learning community. A combination of AP only and combined AP and MP meetings happen each month. The cohort shares their work and receives critical feedback. A calendar is developed in June to be sure all participants can attend all the meetings.

### ***School Visits***

Aspiring principals visit numerous schools that represent a diversity of demographics, level and or size of program. The purpose of these visits is twofold – to expose participants to a variety of school practices, designs, and cultures, and to network with other school principals. The PRN organizes some of these school visits and APs arrange for others.

### ***Networking and other Formal Learning***

APs join two networks, the Learning Leader Network and the Rhode Island Association of School Principals. APs also attend regional, state, and district workshops, training, and courses as these are available and as they suite the APs specific needs.

## **Assessment and Performances**

This handbook includes instructions and a rubric for each assessment. Each AP will have a PRN advisor assigned to them to serve as a guide, coach, and evaluator. The assignments are turned in to the PRN advisor electronically or by paper and the advisor provides feedback via the rubrics, indicating if parts will need to be revised. On many assessments and performances, the mentor, school members, and PRN cohort also provide feedback.

### ***Learning Plan and the Residency***

Each AP develops an individualized learning plan that determines her/his particular program of study. The AP crafts the learning plan in conjunction with the MP and their advisor, ensuring that it will allow the AP to develop proficiency in all the R.I. Leadership Standards. The learning plan remains a work in progress that the AP revises and turns in regularly. It outlines proposed project work, leadership experiences, research, and readings that the AP is engaged in to ensure they take an active leadership role across all the standards.

There are also common core experiences each aspiring principal is expected to participate in, lead, read, or complete. Aspiring principals document these, as well as all their other work, in the learning plan and provide evidence of accomplishment in the portfolio.

### ***Action Research Project***

Aspiring principals choose a challenging action research project focused on closing an equity achievement gap in their schools through which they develop essential skills in instructional leadership. Project-based work involves identifying a problem or need based on school-based data, developing strategies for change, engaging a feedback circle of stakeholders to build consensus, planning and implementing the plan of action, evaluating outcomes, and making mid-course corrections. APs review critical literature associated with their project and receive feedback from a variety of mentor and aspiring principals to inform their planning and decision-making.

### ***Vision Paper***

Aspiring principals articulate their vision of education and explain how it developed, how it guides their work and what questions or puzzles still remain. They examine their own vision in light of the school's philosophy and structure and then describe how their action research supports their vision and contributes to school improvement efforts.

### ***Portfolios***

Aspiring principals develop an extensive electronic portfolio that illustrates their action research work, other residency work, writing, reflection, research, and readings. The portfolios manifest both the depth and the breadth of residency-based study and provide evidence of proficiency in each of the six leadership standards.

### ***Exhibitions***

At mid-year and end-of-year exhibitions, aspiring principals present their learning to a panel of other APs, MPs, and J&W faculty. These presentations, called exhibitions, give participants a chance to reflect on the growth awarded by their in-school experiences, connect that growth to the leadership standards, receive critical feedback, and identify learning areas that demand further work. At each exhibition, panel members fill out feedback forms that help inform subsequent revisions of the learning plan and document the participants' leadership development.

### ***Mid-Year Assessment Process***

Aspiring and mentor principals write detailed narratives assessing the AP's work following a standards-based assessment. These documents outline the project work done in the school and give critical feedback to the AP.

### ***Final Paper***

The final paper is an opportunity for the aspiring principal to reflect on the growth of their leadership, learning throughout the residency, and plans for future learning. Drafts are distributed to three mentors for review and feedback.

### ***Final Assessment***

Mentor principals complete a final assessment of the aspiring principal and determine the AP's level of proficiency on each standard. A designation of less than proficient requires additional time beyond the one- or two-year residency; however, every effort is made to identify and subsequently address these needs at the mid-year assessment.