

Tailored

Strengthening Leadership and Delivering Results through Customizable, Evidence-Based Programming



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nearly two decades ago, New Leaders pioneered a new approach to principal training that required aspiring leaders to learn by doing. The Aspiring Principals residency combines rigorous, research-based content, expert coaching, and authentic, job-embedded assessment. Multiple independent studies have confirmed that this approach prepares principals who are strong instructional leaders capable of shifting educators' practice and measurably improving student achievement. Over time, we introduced comprehensive training for other education leaders, most notably teacher leaders trained via Emerging Leaders.

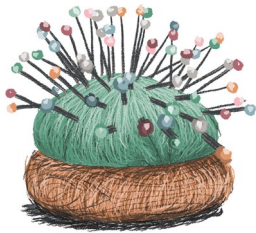
In listening to our partners, we have learned that districts, charter management organizations (CMOs), and states value our comprehensive programs and they want to involve *even more* educators in leadership development in *more targeted ways*.

In response to that need, New Leaders has adopted a more adaptable approach. Today, in deep collaboration with our district, CMO, and state partners, we are infusing effective leadership practices across the continuum by leveraging our proven model to train to an even wider network of leaders—at the classroom, school, and system levels—tailored to meet unique local needs.

As ever, our new partnerships reflect New Leaders' steadfast commitment to preparing *all* students for success in college, career, and wherever their aspirations take them, with a special focus on serving the schools and communities with greatest need—including in both urban and rural contexts.

We are learning a great deal about how to make this new, more nimble approach to leadership development work well for our school system partners, the leaders we train, and, ultimately, the students and communities we collectively serve. As we learn, we are committed to sharing our lessons with the field.

This report, made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Investing in Innovation (i3) program, describes the new New Leaders approach and incorporates research conducted over the course of the i3 grant (2012—2019). The report draws on a range of data sources—interviews with New Leaders staff and district, CMO, and state partners, internal data analyses on program implementation, and an independent evaluation by the RAND Corporation—to codify programmatic changes introduced over the course of the grant and present lessons learned from our early efforts to create and deliver tailored leadership training. These programmatic shifts and key takeaways are presented below.



Programmatic Shift: New Leaders Offers Expanded, Tailored Leadership Solutions for School System Partners

The scope of New Leaders' programming has expanded from providing comprehensive, "ready-to-wear" programs for aspiring principals and teacher leaders, to creating more nimble pathways for leaders at all levels of the system—from teacher leaders to principals and their supervisors.

In addition to expanding *who* we train, we have strengthened *how* we partner with districts, CMOs, and states to more deeply understand their areas of need, their areas of promise, and their areas of success.



Programmatic Shift: New Leaders' Proven Leadership Training Can Now Be Customized in a Number of Ways

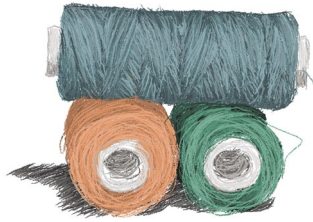
Audience: Our leadership development training can be targeted to meet the needs of teacher leaders, instructional leadership teams, assistant principals, aspiring principals, novice or experienced principals, principal supervisors, and/or cohorts that include a diverse cross-section of leaders from within a school, district, charter network, or state.

Cohort Size: In the past, our programs were designed around specific cohort sizes that were premised on a standard set of personalized support provided by program directors. As the parameters of our program partnerships have shifted, we are now able to deliver successful programming for both larger and smaller groups of leaders.

Content: New Leaders draws from a comprehensive library of leadership development content based on our Transformational Leadership Framework™ (TLF), aligned to nationally-recognized, research-based standards, and focused on the leadership actions associated with improved school and student outcomes. Overall, programming now includes an even heavier emphasis on strengthening and aligning instructional leadership practices. Depending on partner needs, programming may focus, for example, on effective instructional leadership for math or literacy, or data-driven instructional leadership.

Delivery Methods: Programming typically includes both in-person training sessions and on-the-job practice, and it may include personalized coaching for program participants. In addition, both learning, coaching, and peer-to-peer collaboration may take place face-to-face, online, or via a combination of in-person and virtual settings.

Intensity and Outcomes: Programming can be designed with varying degrees of intensity and expected outcomes. For example, some districts, CMOs, or states may seek a "high-touch" program with multiple outcomes, while others may seek to establish common language and a shared set of practices through a "light-touch" program.



Key Takeaway: Strong Relationships and Regular, Data-Driven Conversations are Crucial to the Success of Tailored Partnerships

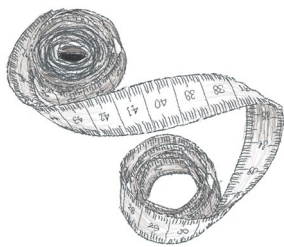
One promise of tailored programming is that it enables partnerships to evolve over time in response to the emerging needs and dynamic contexts of districts, CMOs, and states. To realize this benefit, individuals involved in overseeing and executing partnerships must have regular touchpoints, focused on data, during which they can engage in open, honest conversations about what's working and what can be improved. Together, program staff and district, CMO, and state officials can work together to make strategic adjustments.



Key Takeaway: Effective Partnerships Can Build School and System Capacity and Promote Sustainability

The deep collaboration required to develop and implement successful tailored programming yields benefits that extend beyond program participants to other school and system-level leaders and staff. Partners have reported growing in their ability to identify high-potential leaders and implement other research-based best practices as a result of their work with New Leaders.

Through their partnerships with New Leaders, districts, CMOs, and states benefit from both our leadership training and other resources. Partners have shared how they have continued to use New Leaders' research, reports, and tools to reach additional educators, expanding the scope of the partnerships' initial vision of impact and supporting the sustainability of the system's overall leadership strategy.



ABOUT NEW LEADERS

New Leaders transforms underperforming schools by developing outstanding leaders at every level of the education system—from teacher leaders to principals and their supervisors. We work in deep partnership with our state, district, and charter partners, delivering leadership solutions that build on their strengths and address their most-pressing priorities. Our evidence-based programming cultivates diverse, equity-driven leaders equipped with the skills to elevate instruction, enhance learning, and build vibrant, inclusive school communities. To encourage widespread adoption of effective, sustainable leadership practices, we also advocate for federal and state policies that support the work of school leaders everywhere. To date, New Leaders has trained 3,900 education leaders who annually reach nearly half a million PK-12 students, mostly students of color and children from low-income families. Our programs deliver breakthrough academic results and help build brighter futures for high-need urban and rural communities nationwide.