LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program: *Comprehensive Evaluation*

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Table of Contents

Tables

Figure

Introduction

Background

LEAD Virginia Beach is a professional development program for aspiring and current administrators. It constitutes a three-tiered comprehensive plan of succession – from instructional staff to assistant principal, from assistant principal to principal, and from new principal to veteran principal. LEAD Virginia Beach was designed to help participants prepare for professional advancement by excelling in the areas of leadership responsibility linked to improved student achievement and to provide mentors and mentorship experiences for new administrators. The Aspiring Administrators Program (AAP) is the first tier of LEAD Virginia Beach. The AAP is specifically intended to identify, select, and prepare talented teachers and other instructional personnel to become effective assistant principals. The program aligns with Goal 4 (culture of growth and excellence) of *Compass to 2020*. The AAP was designed to operate on a two-year cycle. Cohorts are selected and the program is implemented according to anticipated need for assistant principal candidates in upcoming school years.

This evaluation focuses on the most recent AAP cohort that started the program during the 2016-2017 school year. Figure 1 illustrates a simplified version of the possible paths participants could have taken. Depending on participants' trajectories, they could have completed one or two years of the program. Some participants that started in 2016-2017 were promoted for 2017-2018, and new participants filled the openings in the program during 2017-2018. Therefore, the program was extended into 2018-2019 for the participants who began in 2017-2018. No new AAP cohort began the program in 2018-2019.

Figure 1: Aspiring Administrators Program Participant Pathways
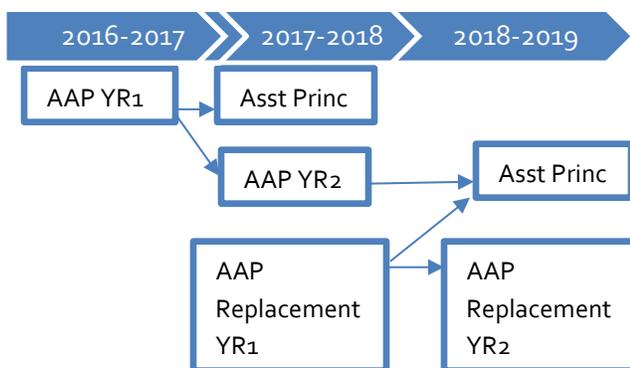
Purpose

The AAP was selected and approved for the Program Evaluation Schedule based on criteria specified in School Board Policy 6-26. Initially, the School Board approved the 2017-2018 Program Evaluation Schedule on September 6, 2017, which recommended the evaluation readiness process for the AAP during 2017-2018 where goals and objectives for the program were defined and the evaluation plan was developed. The School Board received the evaluation readiness report on August 28, 2018, and on September 11, 2018, the School Board approved the recommendation for a comprehensive evaluation of the program during the 2018-2019 school year with a report to the School Board in fall 2019.

Goals and Objectives

As a result of the evaluation readiness process, 4 goals and 17 objectives were developed. The goals focused on ensuring that the program helps develop (1) a qualified candidate pool for assistant principals, (2) participants' transformational leadership skills, (3) participants' management skills that facilitate the effective operation of the school, and (4) participants' instructional leadership skills that lead to student academic progress and continuous school improvement. The objectives for each goal focused on indicators of program success, as well as on AAP participants' development of specific attributes related to transformational learning, management, and instructional leadership. The specific goals and objectives will be outlined in the Results section of the report where progress toward meeting the goals and objectives is discussed.

Data Collection and Methodology

Data Collection

The Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability invited AAP participants and supervisors/mentors to complete a survey regarding their perceptions of the program. For this evaluation, the evaluators used the following survey instruments:

AAP Participant Survey – The online survey was administered to 39 AAP participants during the spring of 2019. Three participants had left the school division and were not included in the survey. The survey included items about program involvement; critical components (e.g., professional development,

curriculum); and perceptions. A total of 22 participants responded to the survey for a response rate of approximately 56 percent.

AAP Supervisor/Mentor Survey – The online survey was administered to all principals in the division as possible supervisors or mentors of AAP participants. A total of 47 respondents answered the survey for an overall response rate of 57 percent. However, the first question on the survey asked respondents if they were a supervisor or mentor of an AAP participant. Sixteen of the 47 respondents (34%) indicated that they were a supervisor or mentor. Those who were not a supervisor or mentor were exited from the survey.

Data regarding staffing location, position, credentials, and basic demographics of AAP participants were provided by the Office of Human Resources. Data about the cost of the AAP program was provided by the program manager.

Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions for this report were determined as part of the evaluation planning process. The evaluation questions established for the comprehensive evaluation follow.

1. **What were the operational components of the AAP implementation?**

   a. What were the criteria for identifying, recruiting, and selecting aspiring administrators to participate in the AAP?
   b. What were the processes for selecting and preparing the experienced administrators who facilitated the AAP coursework?
   c. What were the processes for selecting and preparing the supervisors and/or project consultants who guided the participants' portfolio and project?
   d. What was the AAP session content and how was it delivered?
      i. How did the conceptual components (e.g., the Dispositions of Leadership and the Leadership Domains) influence the AAP's implementation and selection of course content, as well as future program development?
      ii. What were the instructional methods and processes for delivering program content to the participants?

   e. What was the process for monitoring participants' progress towards completion of the AAP?
      i. What were the processes for formatively monitoring the participants' progress over the course of the program?
      ii. What were the exit criteria for determining that program participants had successfully completed the program?

2. **What were the characteristics of the program participants enrolled in the AAP during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years?**

   a. What were the demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity) of the AAP participants?
   b. What were the background characteristics (e.g., years and nature of teaching and leadership experience, certification types, institutions attended, and degrees) of the AAP participants?
   c. What were the aspiring administrators' motivations for participating in the AAP?

3. **What progress was made toward meeting the AAP's goals and objectives?**

4. **What were the key stakeholders' perceptions of the AAP (i.e., program participants, school-based supervisors/project consultants/principals)?**

5. **What was the additional cost of the AAP to the school division during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years?**

Results

Operational Components

Participant Selection

To be eligible to participate in the AAP, which is marketed via solicitation memos in the Principals' Packet, candidates must be current VBCPS employees with a minimum of three years of successful performance as a teacher. They must have demonstrated leadership potential by holding leadership roles in the school (e.g., Professional Learning Community facilitator, department head, instructional leader). In addition, they must have exhibited a commitment to professional learning and reflective practices. Accordingly, candidates are recommended by a current supervisor, principal, or central office administrator; or they may be recruited by

the Department of School Leadership. Candidates may also nominate themselves for acceptance into the program but must have a principal's or supervisor's approval.

Because no new AAP cohort began the program during the 2018-2019 school year, the evaluation focused on the most recent AAP cohort. Some program participants started in the program during the 2016-2017 school year, while other cohort members joined the cohort as replacement members during 2017-2018.

Course Facilitator Selection

According to the AAP program manager, in order to be an AAP course facilitator, the person must have been identified by a supervisor or staff member as having expertise in a particular area such as community engagement, student discipline, or data utilization. Facilitators from various VBCPS departments, offices, and schools lead the AAP sessions, including staff from professional growth and innovation, school division services, programs for exceptional children, human resources, budget and finance, and communications and community engagement. Topics focused on school climate and culture, teaching and learning, continuous improvement, and organizational leadership and management.

Supervisor/Project Consultant Selection

According to the AAP program manager, all AAP participants were to complete a portfolio/project under the guidance of a supervisor/mentor. The projects were intended to benefit the school and be approved by the school's leadership prior to beginning. Aspiring Administrators Program supervisors/mentors were principals or assistant principals at the AAP participant's school. If the participant was not a school-based staff member, they had to seek out a school-based supervisor at a school that would support their project. The AAP program manager indicated that there were no formal trainings for supervisors/mentors in 2016-2017 through 2018-2019, but there is a plan for providing guidance or training in the 2019-2020 school year.[1]

Session Structure and Content

The instructional methods for the AAP professional development sessions included lectures or presentations, whole-group discussions, and small-group work involving role-playing activities or a

book talk. Further, program participants were to engage in significant amounts of presession reading and other preparatory activities. After each session, the participants were also to engage in significant amounts of written reflection or discourse-driven follow up.

Individual session content and emphases were not differentiated on the basis of school level – elementary school, middle school, or high school. The program strives to maximize participants' prospects for promotion by preparing aspiring administrators to succeed at any school level. As part of the trainings, AAP participants were introduced to the Transformational Learning "Disposition of Leadership" (see Appendix A), and this framework was embedded in the professional learning activities provided to participants. There were initial conversations about aligning the coursework with instructional, relational, and situational "Leadership Domains." However, due to leadership changes and the divisionwide emphasis on Transformational Learning, the leadership domains were not integrated into existing trainings for participants completing their coursework in 2018-2019. The Office of Professional Growth and Innovation is working toward embedding the leadership domains in trainings with new cohorts.[2]

Table 1 displays the sessions offered during 2018-2019 to AAP participants. A total of six sessions were offered from October 2018 to March 2019 for participants, in addition to five sessions that were offered in previous years of their program participation.

Table 1: 2018-2019 AAP Sessions

Session Date	Topic Title
10/24/2018	The Formative Process: A Tool for Professional Growth
11/14/2018	Lei-ing The Foundation for Culturally Responsive Practices
12/12/2018	Building Coherence Through Learning Leadership
01/23/2019	Effective Leadership
02/13/2019	Discipline and the Student Code of Conduct
3/27/2019	Resume Writing and Interview Skills

In addition to attending sessions, each program participant designed and conducted a job-embedded, school-based action research project intended to address a specific need. The need was identified by the participant in consultation with the school's principal. School-based AAP participants typically conducted their project at their own school. In contrast, an AAP

participant who worked as a specialist in the Department of Teaching and Learning would need to identify a need and a school and make arrangements with the principal for conducting the project. During the completion of the project, the consulting principal provided encouragement and timely, critical feedback.

Throughout the program, each AAP participant developed a personalized portfolio, continually populating it with artifacts from their AAP activities – for example, agendas, notes, article excerpts, and journal entries. The journal entries may have included insights gained from their reading, from discussions, and from other program activities, including the action research project. The portfolios may also have included artifacts or self-reflections (see Appendix B) from other relevant professional learning and formal coursework in which participants may independently have chosen to engage – for example, by taking leadership courses at Old Dominion University (ODU) in Norfolk. The degree to which a participant pursued such "extended learning opportunities" is important for increasing the breadth and depth of his or her own learning. For the AAP manager and division leadership, it served as a significant indicator of an aspiring administrator's level of motivation and commitment to professional learning and continual improvement.

Figure 2 displays the percent of survey participants who were satisfied with AAP course components. Overall, the responses were very positive with almost all survey statements receiving 100 percent agreement except for the statement about course content, which had a 94 percent agreement level.

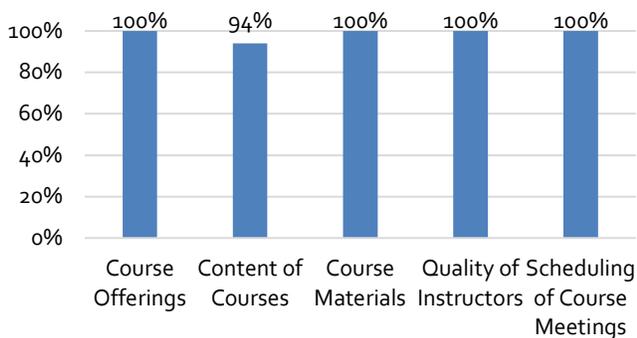**Figure 2: Percent of AAP Participants Satisfied With Course Structure, Materials, and Instructors**

Figure 3 displays the percent of survey participants who were satisfied with AAP course activities. Overall, the responses were very positive with agreement levels at or above 94 percent for all items except for the statement about after-class written reflections, which had a 76 percent agreement level. Survey comments

indicated that the written reflections were too time consuming and that they may not be authentic.

Figure 3: Percent of AAP Participants Satisfied With Course Activities
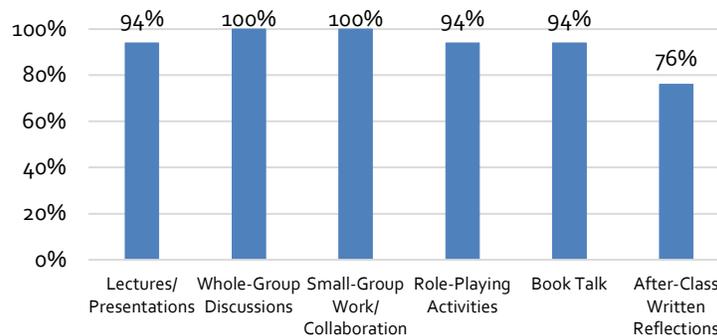
Progress Monitoring and Program Completion

As participants worked their way through the AAP, their progress was monitored by program staff. Program staff monitored participants' progress through reviewing the weekly/monthly logs completed by participants. Program staff utilized the monthly meeting to monitor participants' progress as well as address any areas where assistance was needed. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to schedule one-on-one meetings with program managers and supervisors to seek assistance as needed to complete the program.

Participants who completed the program attended all of the sessions offered over two years by the AAP and ultimately had to demonstrate and provide documentation of their leadership competencies and proficiency. To accomplish this, the aspiring administrators individually presented their projects and portfolios to a four- to six-person panel of the AAP program manager, division leadership, and other experienced administrators. To standardize the process, each participant's presentation was rated according to evaluative criteria contained in a scoring rubric designed by the AAP program manager and program staff (see Appendix C). The panel members asked clarifying questions about the project during or immediately after a participant's presentation.

It should be noted that completing the program and receiving a favorable presentation rating does not guarantee that a participant will be promoted to an assistant principal position. Promotion depends on multiple factors, including the number of assistant principal vacancies, which vary from year to year. Rather, AAP participants who completed the program joined a pool of candidates that consisted not only of

AAP participants but also of aspiring assistant principals who did not participate in the program.

Demographics

When the cohort was initially formed at the start of the 2016-2017 school year, the program consisted of 25 aspiring administrators. At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, 11 of the original participants remained in the program after 12 participants were promoted to assistant principal positions before completing the program, and 2 participants left the program for personal reasons. Consequently, the AAP program manager and Department of School Leadership (DOSL) selected 17 new aspiring administrators to join the cohort for its second year in 2017-2018. Because they had missed the first year's AAP sessions, the replacements were provided with special make-up classes to expose them to the same content and materials. It was decided in August 2018 that the program would offer the new participants an opportunity during the 2018-2019 school year to attend additional program sessions, as well as to have additional time to work on their action research projects and portfolios. Overall, for the most recent cohort, a total of 42 aspiring administrators participated over multiple years.

Table 2 displays the background characteristics of the 42 aspiring administrators who participated in the program, as well as the divisionwide instructional staff characteristics, which are provided for reference. Of the 42 program participants, 33 (79%) were school-based instructional staff. The other nine participants were former teachers who worked in central office. Table 2 shows that a slightly higher percentage of participants were male and African American compared to the division's instructional staff. The average years of teaching experience across the entire cohort was 13 years. Of the 42 program participants, 26 (62%) had ten years or more of teaching experience; 14 participants (33%) had between six and nine years of teaching experience; and 2 participants (5%) had between three and five years of teaching experience.

Table 2: Characteristics of Program Participants

Staff Characteristics and Qualifications	AAP (n=42)	Division Instructional (n= 5,176)
Male	26%	18%
Female	74%	82%
Caucasian	81%	83%

Staff Characteristics and Qualifications	AAP (n=42)	Division Instructional (n= 5,176)
African American	17%	11%
Hispanic	2%	3%
Other Ethnicity	0%	3%
Percentage With Advanced Degrees	97%	55%
Percentage With National Board Certification	10%	4%*
Average Years of Teaching Experience	13 years	15 years

* Estimate based on 130 division teachers.

All but 1 of the 42 participants (97%) held an advanced degree, with 15 (36%) having earned either an Ed.D. or Ed.S. degree. Five universities accounted for 74 percent of the advanced degrees: Old Dominion University (33%), George Washington University (15%), Regent University (10%), and Virginia Tech (10%), and University of Virginia (7%). Further, 38 of the 42 AAP participants (90%) had earned an endorsement in Administration and Supervision, PK-12. Four participants (10%) were National Board Certified teachers.

Participants' open-ended survey responses were analyzed to determine AAP participants' motivations to apply and accept enrollment into the program. After comments were analyzed, there were three main categories of responses including participants wanted to obtain their professional goals, learn about VBCPS leadership, and collaborate and network with VBCPS leadership. Table 3 displays the number and percent of respondents for each category of response.

Table 3: Number and Percent of Participant Survey Respondents by Motivation Category

Motivation for Enrolling in AAP	# of AAP Survey Respondents
Professional goal attainment	11 (50%)
Learn about VBCPS leadership	11 (50%)
Collaborate and network with VBCPS leadership	6 (27%)

Note: Total percentage is greater than 100 percent due to respondents' statements being coded into two categories.

Progress Toward Meeting Goals and Objectives

Goal #1: Add qualified candidates to the assistant principal pool

Goal 1 of program states that the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program will add qualified candidates to the pool from which VBCPS selects assistant principals. There were three objectives identified under this goal.

The first objective under Goal 1 is to ensure that the AAP is attracting qualified applicants that will complete the program. The candidate selection criteria were previously discussed. For the initial 2016-2017 cohort, the AAP received 64 applications and enrolled 25 aspiring administrators for an acceptance rate of 39 percent. As discussed previously, 12 of the original participants were promoted and 2 left the program for personal reasons, which led to these openings in the program being filled with 17 new participants for 2017-2018. These participants were selected through a separate process and were not included in the acceptance rate of the initial cohort. Several of these new participants were also promoted to assistant principals prior to completing the two years of coursework. Due to participants being promoted during their program participation prior to completion, a program completion rate is not calculated.

The second objective under Goal 1 is to successfully prepare AAP participants for administrative leadership roles. Table 4 displays the number and percent of AAP participants placed in administrative leadership roles. Prior to the 2018-2019 school year, 29 percent of participants were already in administrative leadership roles. After the end of the 2018-2019 school year, an additional 31 percent of participants were hired in administrative leadership roles. Overall, 60 percent of AAP participants were promoted to leadership roles during or after their enrollment in the AAP.

Table 4: Number and Percent of Participants Promoted to Leadership Roles

| Status	# of AAP Participants
Promoted to leadership role	25 (60%)*
Not promoted as of September 2019	17 (40%)

*One participant no longer in a leadership role.

Based on review of the data provided by the Department of Human Resources, of the 25 participants promoted to a leadership position, 18 participants (72%) were promoted to assistant principal, 4 (16%) were promoted to administrative assistant, 2 (8%) were promoted to central office positions as coordinators, and 1 (4%) was promoted to an instructional specialist position.

Additional data from the Department of Human Resources showed that for 2017-2018, of the 13 VBCPS employees promoted to an assistant principal position, 9 or 69 percent of them had participated in the AAP. This percentage varies by year based on the number of vacancies and the number of AAP participants.

Additionally, program participants were asked on the survey to indicate whether they were able to obtain a leadership role in the school division after their participation in the program. Of the 22 survey respondents, 68 percent indicated they had obtained a leadership role in the division. Of that 68 percent, 9 (64%) were assistant principals, 4 (27%) were administrative assistants, 1 (7%) was a Teaching and Learning specialist, and 1 (7%) was a Teaching and Learning coordinator.

The third objective under Goal 1 is to ensure that the AAP is perceived as preparing participants for the role of assistant principal and that participants were satisfied with their experience. Figure 4 displays the percent of respondents that agreed with the survey statement regarding AAP participants being prepared to serve as an assistant principal. Over 90 percent of participants agreed that they were prepared to serve as an assistant principal and 81 percent of supervisors agreed to the same statement about participants' preparedness.

Figure 4: Percent of Survey Respondents Who Agreed AAP Participants Were Prepared to Be an Assistant Principal
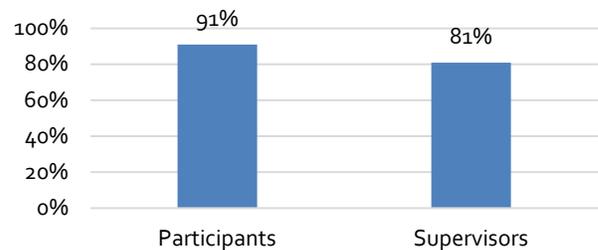
Survey respondents from both groups were asked about the overall satisfaction with the AAP. Figure 5 displays the percentage of survey respondents who indicated they were satisfied with the AAP. A majority from both respondent groups were satisfied with the AAP; however, there was a 13-percentage point difference between participants (94%) and supervisors (81%). Additionally, 94 percent of AAP participants indicated that the program met or exceeded their expectations and all participants would recommend the program to a colleague who was interested in being an aspiring administrator.

Figure 5: Percent of Respondents Who Were Satisfied With the AAP
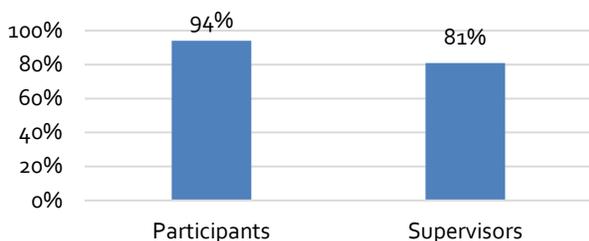
Goal #2: Manifest dispositions that exemplify transformational leadership

Goal 2 states that "participants who complete the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program will manifest dispositions that exemplify transformational leadership." VBCPS define transformational leaders as "leaders who engage in shared leadership, can lead change, are innovative, and are willing to learn." A majority of AAP and AAP supervisors agreed with statements about the program preparing participants to be transformational leaders. Table 5 displays the percent of respondents that agreed with survey statements regarding aspects of transformational leadership that were the focus of five objectives for Goal 2. In the survey, descriptors for each transformational learning element were provided for respondents to assist them with responding to the survey item. AAP participants' agreement percentages were higher than supervisors' agreement levels for each question. Survey statements about embodying change leadership and innovative leadership had at least a 10-percentage point difference between the groups; however, all agreement percentages for both groups were higher than 80 percent.

Table 5: Percent of Survey Respondents Who Agreed AAP Provided Participants With Skills Related to Transformational Leadership

Objective	% Participant Agreement	% Supervisor Agreement
Obj. 1: AAP prepared participants to build leadership capacity in others	86	81
Obj. 2: AAP provided participants with skills to demonstrate shared leadership	95	94
Obj. 3: AAP provided participants with skills to demonstrate change leadership	100	88
Obj. 4: AAP provided participants with skills to demonstrate innovative leadership	91	81
Obj. 5: AAP provided participants with skills to demonstrate learning leadership	100	94

Goal #3: Exhibit management skills that facilitate the effective operation of the school

Goal 3 states that "participants who complete the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program will exhibit management skills that facilitate the effective operation of the school." There were four objectives identified under Goal 3.

The first objective under Goal 3 is to ensure that AAP participants feel comfortable and adept at communicating with stakeholders from all levels. Table 6 displays the percent of respondents that agreed with survey statements regarding effective communication with the specified groups. Overall a majority of respondents from both groups indicated that the program prepared participants to effectively communicate with various groups. The AAP participants had higher levels of agreement than the supervisors/mentors. The difference in percentages ranged from 1 percentage point for communication with students to 19 percentage points for communication with community members.

Table 6: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Communicate Effectively

AAP Prepared Participants to Communicate Effectively With…	% Participant Agreement	% Mentor/ Supervisor Agreement
Students	95	94
Parents	91	93
School staff	100	88*
Central office staff	91	88*
Community members	100	81

*The question on the supervisor survey was asked generally about "staff."

The second objective under Goal 3 is that AAP participants are comfortable and adept at addressing student discipline issues. Figure 6 displays the percent of respondents who agreed with the related survey item. The participants had a notably lower percentage who agreed (67%) that the AAP prepared them to effectively address student discipline issues compared to the supervisors/mentors (94%).

Figure 6: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Address Student Discipline Issues Effectively
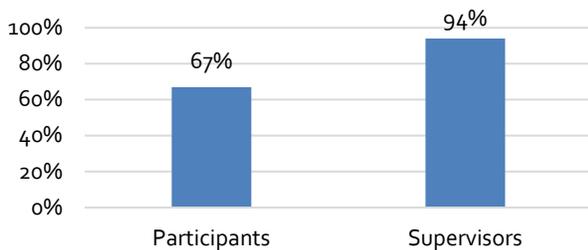
The third objective under Goal 3 is that AAP participants are comfortable and adept at designing operational plans and schedules. A majority of participants (81%) agreed that the program prepared them to effectively design operational plans and schedules that facilitate appropriate course progression for students and 88 percent of supervisors agreed to the same statement (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Effectively Design Operational Plans for Students
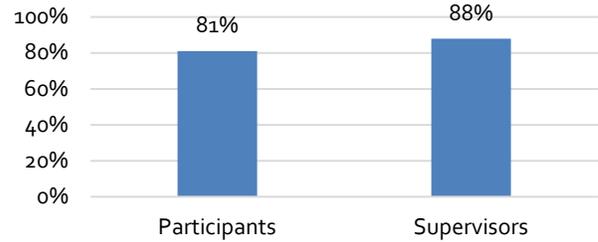
Overall, a majority of survey respondents agreed that the program prepared them to effectively design operational plans and schedules for teachers. There was a 13-percentage point difference between participants (81%) and supervisors (94%) (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Effectively Design Operational Plans for Teachers
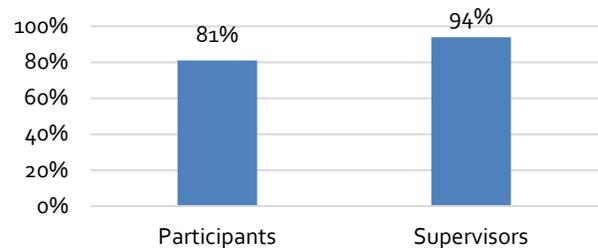
The fourth objective under Goal 3 is that AAP participants obtain an understanding of school division policies and regulations, organizational/school culture, facility and building management, and budget development and management. Table 7 displays the percent of respondents that agreed with the survey items asking if participants understand these various components. Agreement levels for items regarding policies and regulations, organizational/school culture, and facility and building management were all above 80 percent for both participants and supervisors/mentors. Lower percentages of participants (68%) and supervisors (63%) agreed that the AAP helped participants understand budget development and management.

Table 7: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Helped Participants Understand AAP Concepts

AAP Participants Understand…	% Participant Agreement	% Mentor/ Supervisor Agreement
VBCPS policies and regulations	95	94
Organization/school culture	100	88
Facility and building management	95	81
Budget development and management	68	63

Goal #4: Exhibit instructional leadership skills that lead to student academic progress and continuous school improvement

Goal 4 states that "participants who complete the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program will exhibit instructional leadership skills that lead to student academic progress and continuous school improvement." There were five objectives identified under Goal 4.
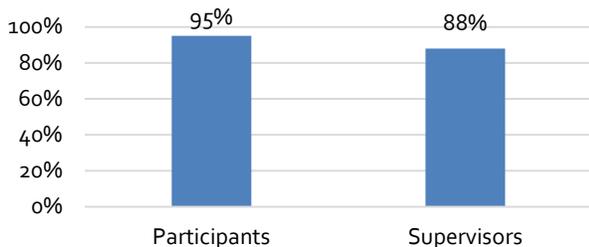
The first objective under Goal 4 is that AAP participants are comfortable and adept at instructional coaching. A large majority of participants (95%) and supervisors (88%) agreed the AAP prepared participants to provide instructional coaching (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Provide Instructional Coaching

The second objective under Goal 4 is that AAP participants can interpret and effectively explain curriculum goals and instructional objectives. A majority of participants (86%) agreed that the program prepared them to effectively interpret and explain curriculum goals and instructional objectives, and 94 percent of supervisors agreed to the same statements regarding participants (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Percent of Survey Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Interpret and Explain Curriculum Goals and Instructional Objectives
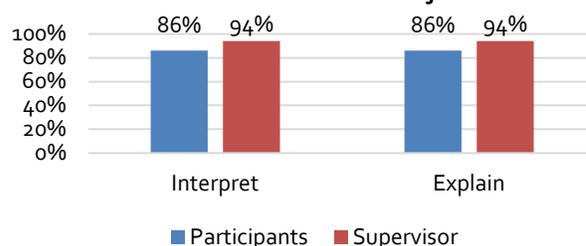
The third objective under Goal 4 is that AAP participants are comfortable and adept at assisting teachers to develop effective learning plans for individual students. Two-thirds (67%) of participants agreed that the program prepared them to assist teachers to develop effective learning plans for individual students, and 88 percent of supervisors agreed that participants were prepared to develop effective learning plans (see Figure 11).

Figure 11: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Assist in Developing Learning Plans
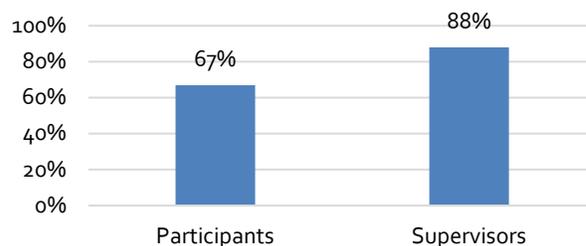
The fourth objective under Goal 4 is that AAP participants use a variety of methods to monitor students' progress toward meeting curricular goals and instructional objectives. A large majority of both participants (90%) and supervisors (94%) agreed that the AAP prepared participants to effectively monitor students' progress toward goals and objectives using a variety of methods (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Monitor Students' Progress Using a Variety of Methods
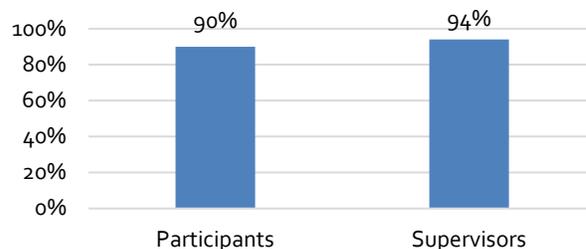
The fifth objective under Goal 4 is that AAP participants are comfortable and adept at planning and implementing a systematic instructional supervision program. This includes using learning walks, observations, documentation, and follow-up conferences. Overall, at least 85 percent of participants and supervisors agreed that the AAP prepared participants to effectively implement an instructional supervision program (see Figure 13).

Figure 13: Percent of Respondents Who Agreed AAP Prepared Participants to Implement an Instructional Supervision Program
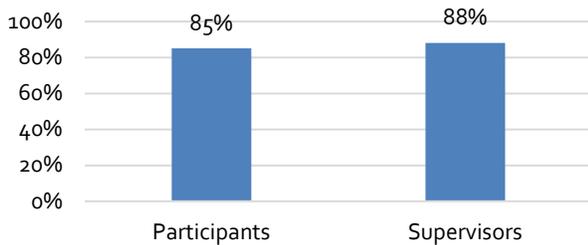
Stakeholder Perceptions

Figure 14 displays the percent of program participants who were satisfied with various program components of the AAP. With one exception, overall satisfaction levels were high across most components with at least 82 percent of participants indicating that they were satisfied. The percent of participants who were satisfied with the portfolio/action research project was notably lower at (67%). Comments from the survey noted the following improvements to the portfolio/action research project: breaking up the requirements into stages, offering more structure and support for the project, providing clearer expectations, following through with the final project to ensure that all participants were able to present their project and receive feedback after their presentation, and considering implementing a digital portfolio. Another comment noted that it was challenging to collect data and complete the portfolio/action research project when moving to a new school.

Figure 14: Percent of AAP Participants Who Were Satisfied With AAP Components
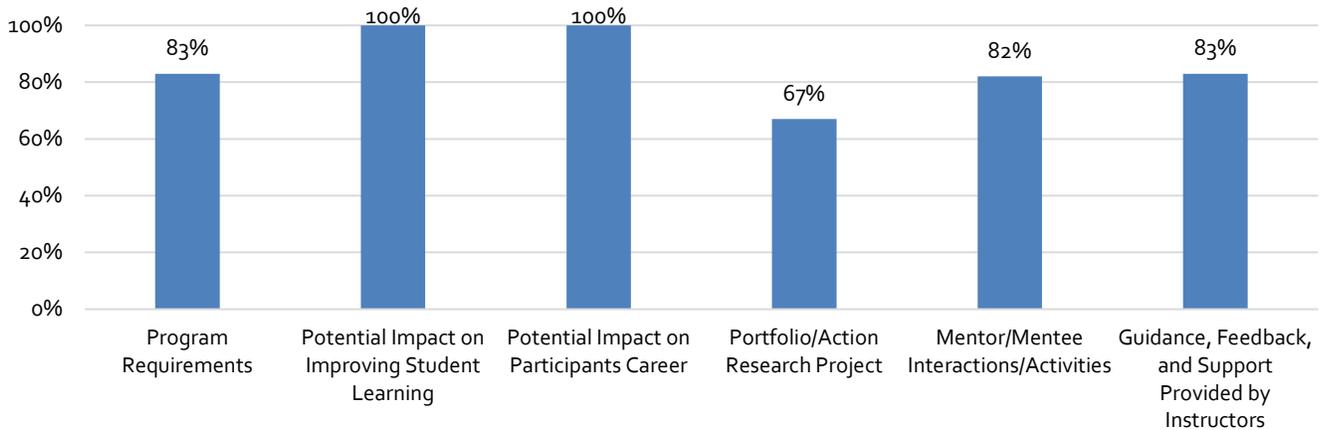
Figures 15 and 16 display the percent of participants who agreed with survey statements regarding their overall perceptions of the AAP. A large majority of participants, ranging from 89 to 100 percent, agreed that the program and coursework were beneficial to their work, engaging and stimulating, challenging, and well-aligned with their professional needs. Additionally, participants agreed that the AAP increased their professional knowledge, enhanced instructional skills, enhanced administrative skills, strengthened leadership skills, helped build and expand professional networks, enabled participants to lead instructional improvement efforts, and prepared participants to lead at all levels.

Figure 15: Percent of AAP Participants Who Agreed the AAP Was Beneficial, Engaging, Challenging, and Aligned

Category	Percent
Program content was beneficial to my work	100%
Program was engaging and stimulating	100%
Coursework was challenging	94%
Coursework was well-aligned with my professional needs	94%
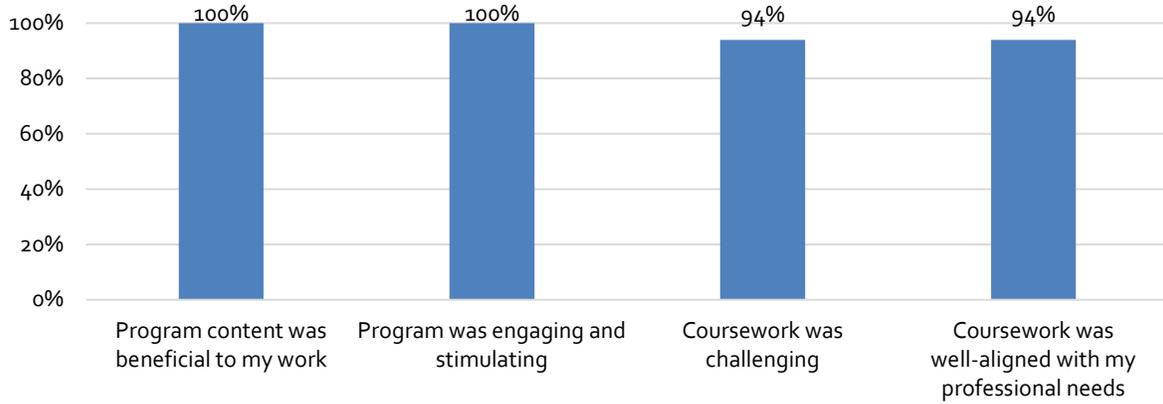
Figure 16: Participants Overall Perceptions of AAP

Category	Percent
Increased my professional knowledge	100%
Enhanced my instructional skills	89%
Enhanced my administrative skills	100%
Strengthened my leadership skills	100%
Helped me build and expand my network of professional contacts	100%
Enabled me to lead instructional improvement efforts	100%
Prepared me to lead at all levels	94%
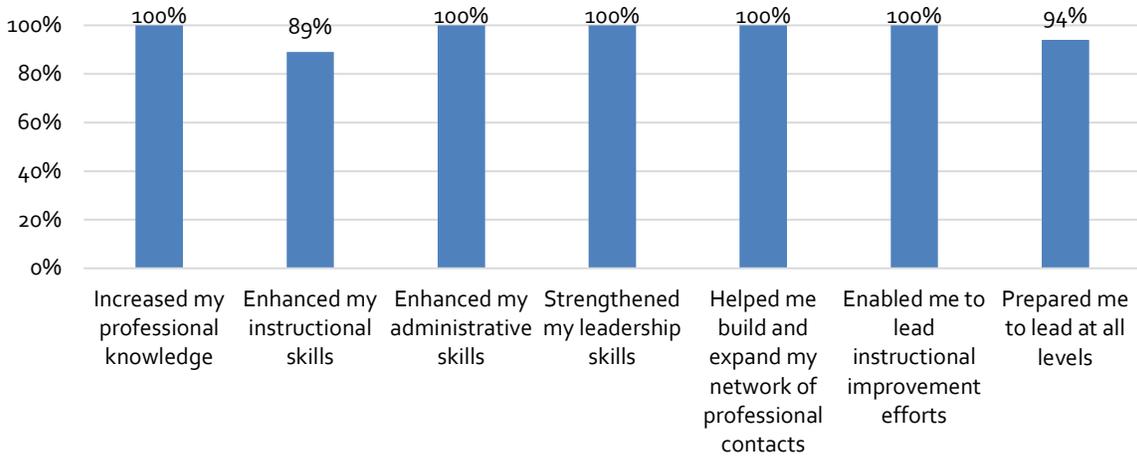
Additional Cost

The Office of Research and Evaluation worked with staff in the Office of Professional Growth and Innovation to determine areas of additional cost for the AAP. The areas for additional expenditures were limited because most of the professional development sessions were conducted by VBCPS personnel as part of their ongoing job duties. However, the Department of School Leadership did have two additional expenses for the AAP including $3,375 in 2016-2017 for the administration and scoring of the Myers-Briggs Personality Test by a member of the Virginia Tech faculty and $7,500 for Ed Leadership's Simulation in 2017-2018. Overall, the total additional cost of the program for the 2016-2017 cohort of AAP participants was $10,875.

Summary

LEAD Virginia Beach was designed to help participants prepare for professional advancement and to provide mentors and mentorship experiences for new administrators. The full program consists of a three-tiered comprehensive plan of succession – from instructional staff to assistant principal, from assistant principal to principal, and from new principal to veteran principal. The AAP is the first tier of LEAD Virginia Beach. The AAP is specifically intended to identify, select, and prepare talented teachers and other instructional personnel to become effective assistant principals.

Participants must be a VBCPS employee with three years of successful performance as a teacher with demonstrated leadership skills and a commitment to professional learning. Overall, the AAP received 64 applications for the initial cohort that began during 2016-2017. Initially, 25 participants were accepted into the program (39%). When participants were promoted prior to completing the full program, other participants were added to the cohort for 2017-2018, and these participants had the option of continuing their coursework and projects during 2018-2019. Overall, a total of 42 aspiring administrators participated as part of the most recent cohort over a period of three years. Program participants who responded to a survey were highly satisfied with the program and course content with satisfaction rates ranging from 94 to l00 percent for most survey statements about AAP course content, facilitation, and activities. Only one activity had a satisfaction rate below 94 percent. The statement regarding after-class written reflections had the lowest

level of satisfaction at 76 percent. Additionally, when participants were asked about components of the AAP, satisfaction levels ranged from 67 to 100 percent with all components having satisfaction rates higher than 80 percent except for the portfolio/action research project (67%).

When participants and supervisors were surveyed regarding their perceptions of whether the AAP helped participants handle different tasks, agreement rates were within 10 percentage points of each other. There were three areas where there was a large difference between participants' and supervisors' perceptions. When asked whether the AAP helped prepare participants to handle student discipline issues, 67 percent of participants agreed the program helped prepare them, while 94 percent of supervisors agreed. When asked if the program helped prepare AAP participants to develop learning plans, 67 percent of participants and 88 percent of supervisors agreed. Additionally, agreement percentages were relatively low for both groups when respondents were asked if the AAP helped prepare participants to understand budget development and management, with 68 percent of participants and 63 percent of supervisors agreeing to the statements.

The overall goal for participants is to complete the AAP and be prepared for a leadership role in VBCPS. According to data provided by the Department of Human Resources, 25 of the 42 AAP participants (60%) had received and accepted a job offer in a leadership role. Of those 25 who moved into a leadership role, 72 percent were assistant principals, 16 percent were administrative assistants, 8 percent were central office coordinators, and 4 percent were instructional specialists.

Recommendations and Rationale

Recommendation: Continue the Aspiring Administrators Program with the following recommendation. *(Responsible Group: Department of School Leadership and Office of Professional Growth and Innovation)*

Rationale: Continuing the Aspiring Administrators Program is recommended because participants and supervisors report overall high levels of satisfaction with the program components, staffing, and outcomes and the program has a limited cost to the division. The program enrolled a total of 42 participants in the most recent cohort with some participants beginning in 2016-2017 and others beginning in 2017-2018. Data from the Department of Human Resources showed that 25 of the 42 participants (60%) secured an administrative leadership position during or after their participation in the program. Of those 25 who moved into a leadership role, 72 percent were assistant principals, 16 percent were administrative assistants, 8 percent were central office coordinators, and 4 percent were instructional specialists.

Recommendation: Review and adjust course content and program components as needed based on survey results to meet participants' and the division's needs. *(Responsible Group: Department of School Leadership and Office of Professional Growth and Innovation)*

Rationale: The second recommendation is to review and adjust several course content areas and the portfolio/action research project component based on participants' and supervisors' survey results. Specifically, reviewing the course content in the areas of handling student discipline, assisting teachers with the development of learning plans, and budget development and management is recommended because survey results indicated that these were the areas with the lowest perceptions for AAP participants. Based on the survey data, 67 percent of participants indicated they thought the program helped prepare them to handle student discipline issues and helped prepare them to develop learning plans. Additionally, 68 percent of participants and 63 percent of supervisors indicated that the program helped AAP participants understand budget development and management. Regarding program activities, most program components were perceived very positively with the exception of the portfolio/action research project. Of the survey respondents, 67 percent reported being satisfied with the portfolio/action research project. Comments suggested that participants needed more structure and support for the project, clearer expectations, and more feedback after their presentation. Reviewing and adjusting course content and program activities as needed to meet participants' needs will better serve the participants and VBCPS.

Appendix A: Transformational Learning - Leadership Disposition

During the 2016-2017 school year, the Digital Learning Anchor Schools took the lead in defining these essential elements which were then translated into specific dispositions of leaders, teachers, students, the learning environment and the community that support transformational learning. Woven throughout the dispositions were the foundations of the Digital Learning Anchor Schools' and Design Fellows' work: student-centered learning, student agency, and the purposeful use of digital tools and resources to maximize opportunities for students to engage in learning aligned to their unique needs and interests. The following sections describe each of the dispositions that support transformational learning.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING

is the active acquisition of knowledge and skills using student-centered practices that foster student agency and provide students with the opportunity to create and apply new knowledge across contexts. **Personalized learning, supported through the purposeful use of technology, is the primary mechanism for achieving transformational learning.**

Disposition of Leadership	Disposition of Teachers	Disposition of Students	Disposition of the Learning Environment	Disposition of the Community
Leaders who engage in shared leadership, can lead change, are innovative, and are willing to learn.	Teachers who engage in highly effective collaborative planning, student-centered teaching practices, and balanced assessment.	Students who regularly self-assess and reflect on the learning process, work towards mastery on content-specific and globally competitive skills, and use digital tools to support their learning and the learning of others.	A learning environment that supports flexible grouping options, inquiry-based learning, and collaboration.	A community that understands and supports transformational learning and engages in purposeful partnerships with the school.

Disposition of Leadership

Transformational learning requires leaders to engage in four different types of leadership: shared leadership, change leadership, innovative leadership and learning leadership. In shared leadership, the leader engages the school community in a strategic manner to share in learning, thinking and decision making. The leader enables and empowers others to act and creates a culture of shared ownership between

students, teachers and the school community. **Change leadership** is demonstrated by a leader who is able to successfully lead change within the school and focus teacher practices on creating a personalized learning environment for students. A critical part of being a change leader is encouraging and motivating individuals to contribute to change in meaningful ways and creating an environment in which failing-forward is embraced. Transformational learning also requires **innovative leadership**. The innovative leader understands and promotes the idea that iteration is the key to innovation. Further, the leader encourages risk-taking and innovation by providing staff with frequent recognition and support for good ideas. The final aspect of leadership necessary for transformational learning is **learning leadership**. Learning leadership is demonstrated by a leader who is willing to be a learning partner with staff, frequently modeling and learning alongside faculty. This type of leadership involves modeling a daily commitment to learning and setting an example that creates progress and momentum. Appendix A contains the reflection rubric for the dispositions of leadership.

Disposition of Teachers

Transformational learning requires teachers who engage in highly effective collaborative planning, student-centered teaching practices and balanced assessment. It has implications for each of the three areas outlined in the T&L Framework.

Transformational learning requires that when teachers **plan**, they collaboratively work in a professional learning community (PLC) structure with a shared vision and prioritization of analyzing student work, reflecting on data, and responding with plans that meet student needs. It also means that teachers' instructional plans provide for personalized learning opportunities that authentically engage students in critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity. Digital tools are used in the planning process for communication and collaboration among teachers and are also incorporated within the planned learning opportunities for students.

Transformational learning requires that when teachers **teach**, they use personalized, student-centered strategies that include opportunities for students to engage in reflection, goal setting and action planning as ways to support the development of student agency. It also requires teachers to facilitate learning through opportunities for students to collaborate and make relevant connections to content. Differentiated instruction continues to play an important role in meeting student needs with deliberate gradual release promoting independent mastery of skills and concepts. Transformational learning is further supported through the use of digital tools that are purposefully leveraged to support individual students' needs and support collaboration.

Monthly Log and Reflection Form

(Real Life Application Linked to Coursework)

Name:_____ Cohort: _____ Year: _____

Month of: _____

Description of Activity (Attach Documentation)	Summary Notes	Alignment to Professional Standards for Educational Leaders	Date
Reflection:			

Month's Reflection:

Identify the activity or activities.

Provide an analysis of why certain actions were taken or discussed.

Give an assessment of how the event affected relationships or the school environment.

Tell what you learned from the experience.

What questions does it raise for you? What do you wonder?

Principal's Signature: _____ Date:_____

Aspiring Administrator's Signature: _____ Date:_____

LEAD VIRGINIA BEACH
Growing & Nurturing School Administrators

Appendix C: Aspiring Administrator Project Rubric

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Developing	Needs Improvement	Comments/Feedback
Purpose and Rationale	The presentation includes a very clearly stated purpose and rationale.	The presentation includes a clearly stated purpose and rationale.	The presentation includes a minimally defined purpose and rationale.	The presentation does not include a minimally defined purpose and rationale.	
School-wide Implications	An issue with school-wide implications is clearly identified and effectively addressed.	An issue with school-wide implications is identified and appropriately addressed.	An issue with school-wide implications is vaguely identified and addressed.	No issue with school-wide implications is identified nor addressed.	
Division-wide Connections	A division-wide connection is clearly identified.	A division-wide connection is identified.	A division-wide connection is vaguely identified.	No division-wide connection is identified.	
Data	Data collected fully supports conclusions or outcomes.	Some data is collected but does not fully support conclusions or outcomes.	Insufficient data is collected to support conclusions or outcomes.	No data is collected or does not support stated conclusions or outcomes.	
Leadership	This project effectively demonstrates the presenter's ability to lead by guiding a team through an initiative designed to move the school forward in a specific area.	This project appropriately demonstrates the presenter's ability to lead by guiding a team through an initiative designed to move the school forward in a specific area.	This project moderately demonstrates the presenter's ability to lead by guiding a team through an initiative designed to move the school forward in a specific area.	This project does not demonstrate the presenter's ability to lead by guiding a team through an initiative designed to move the school forward in a specific area.	

Reviewer:_____ **Date:**_____

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Developing	Needs Improvement	Comments/Feedback
Presentation	Presentation is well-organized, very clear, and effectively structured. Presenter effectively communicated. Nonverbal cues/gestures are appropriate to the presentation and flow of ideas. Visual aids and other media used are appropriately professional to the presentation and flow of ideas. Technology is used appropriately and effectively to present the project. Dress and grooming are appropriate to the setting.	Presentation is organized, clear, and structured. Presenter appropriately communicated. Nonverbal cues/gestures are contributed to the presentation and flow of ideas. Visual aids and other media used are appropriate to the presentation and flow of ideas. Technology is used appropriately to present the project. Dress and grooming are appropriate to the setting	Presentation is somewhat organized, moderately clear, and structured. Presenter communicated somewhat appropriately. Nonverbal cues/gestures minimally contributed to the presentation and flow of ideas. Visual aids and other media used are vaguely appropriate to the presentation and flow of ideas. Technology is used to present the project. Dress and grooming are somewhat appropriate to the setting.	Presentation is not organized, clear, or structured. Presenter communicated poorly. Nonverbal cues/gestures did not contribute to the presentation and flow of ideas. Visual aids and other media used are not appropriate to the presentation and flow of ideas. Technology is not used or is ineffectively used to present the project. Dress and grooming are inappropriate to the setting.	

Comments:

Reviewer:_____ **Date:**_____

Endnotes

[1] P. France, Personal Communication, September 9, 2019.
[2] P. France, Personal Communication, August 29, 2019.

Office of Research and Evaluation   LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program Comprehensive Evaluation   23

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