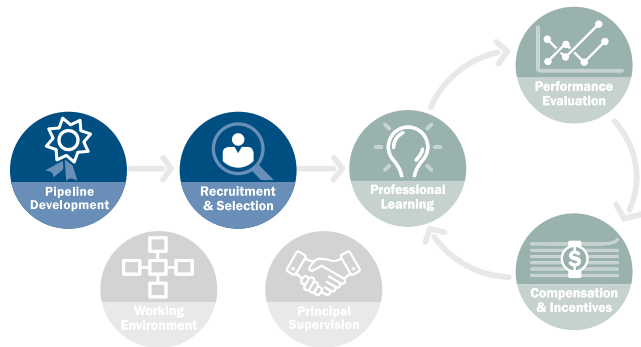


## Prince George's County Public Schools



**Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) is one of the 25 largest school districts in the United States, serving almost 130,000 students in Maryland. PGCPS is one of the Wallace Foundation's Principal Pipeline Initiative grantee districts, a five-year grant initiative that supports improvements to the school leadership pipeline. Through this initiative, PGCPS has developed a number of new practices aimed at improving school leadership. We focus here on their work on pre-service preparation.**

### Practice Overview

The district has made improvements in their principal preparation efforts in two ways—first, by relying on and deepening relationships with external partners who have a track record of preparing the types of leaders needed inside PGCPS. Second, the district has improved their own, internal system of preparation through a year-long training program for assistant principals. PGCPS' eight leader standards serve as the foundation of the pipeline, setting high expectations for achievement and clearly establishing the criteria for an effective principal in the district.

### Internal System of Preparation and Selection

That internal, district-led program for sitting assistant principals, the Aspiring Leaders Program for Student Success (ALPSS), has operated since 2012. To enter this highly selective and rigorous program, prospective principals go through a comprehensive selection process that consists of multiple screening requirements and activities that evaluate their leadership skills and related competencies. The qualifications for

program entry are also quite high; assistant principals must have at least two years of experience in that role, a master's degree, and an Administrator II certification (principal license in Maryland). Participants meet at least twice per month, completing assignments and practicum experiences between those meetings. ALPSS completers must still go through a rigorous selection process for a principal position, but the district structures the program to give participants the experiences they need to stand out in the principal selection process. Program completers must commit to three additional years of service to the district.

PGCPS also offers a Resident Principal Program (12-18 months) that serves as an extension for 3-4 selected graduates of the ALPSS program. This program aims to provide aspiring principals with the tools to meet anticipated needs, particularly for the district's two international high schools that require principals with particular skills. The district structures the ALPSS program to give participants the experiences they need to stand out in the principal selection process.

### External Partnerships

Another part of PGCPS's strategy to improve principal preparation calls for close partnerships with external preparation programs that allow programs to effectively meet the district's needs. More specifically, there are four pre-service preparation programs that PGCPS designed collaboratively with each of its university partners. Each preparation program is uniquely designed to address a need in the district and diversifies the system's offerings: (1) Bowie State University (Building Teacher Leaders); (2) Johns Hopkins University (Urban Leadership); (3) University of Maryland (STEM); and, (4) McDaniel College (Universal Administrator Program). All of the university partners use the district's eight leader standards to align program content. With this approach, PGCPS will be able to not only sustain but also build on these models with other universities in the future.

### Evidence of Success

Since the inception of ALPSS, PGCPS has been able to place 13 graduates as principals in the district; four are in resident principal positions and one is in a central office leadership position. Before 2011, PGCPS had just one university partnership specifically geared at leadership development. Now, in addition to the four signature university programs for leadership development, PGCPS has two doctoral programs (University of Maryland & Howard University) for Central Office Leaders and Principals. To date, PGCPS has a total of 17 strategic partnerships with universities from across the country.

Source: Information for this "District to Watch" example was collected through a phone interview with **Dr. Douglas W. Anthony, Associate Superintendent, Office of Talent Development;** **Damaris Blondonville, Project Manager, Office of Talent Management.**