



# LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program: *Evaluation Readiness Report*

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## Executive Summary

The purpose of this Evaluation Readiness Report is to comply with School Board Policy 6-26, adopted by the School Board of the City of Virginia Beach on September 5, 2007. According to the policy, “Existing programs will be evaluated based on an annual Program Evaluation Schedule which will be developed by the Program Evaluation Committee and approved by the School Board annually.” On September 6, 2017, the School Board approved the 2017-2018 Program Evaluation Schedule in which the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program (AAP) was recommended for an Evaluation Readiness Report. Based on School Board Policy 6-26, for programs scheduled for an Evaluation Readiness Report, the Department of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability (PIA) will “assist program staff in defining measurable goals and objectives, as well as linkages with activities and outcomes.” According to the policy, an Evaluation Readiness Report focusing on the outcomes of this process and recommendations regarding continued evaluation of the program will be presented to the Superintendent and School Board.

## Results of the Evaluation Readiness Process

- The Aspiring Administrators Program (AAP), which is the first tier of the comprehensive LEAD Virginia Beach plan of succession, is intended to identify, select, and prepare instructional personnel to become effective assistant principals.
- The AAP evaluation readiness committee and staff from PIA’s Office of Research and Evaluation met to discuss the evaluation process. Measurable goals and objectives were developed, along with a proposed evaluation plan for the AAP during the 2018-2019 school year.
- The first goal is that the AAP will add qualified applicants to the candidate pool from which Virginia Beach City Public Schools selects assistant principals. Specific objectives include:
  - Having the program attract a qualified pool of aspiring administrators.
  - Having the program successfully prepare them for administrative leadership.
  - Having the program and its effectiveness be favorably perceived.
- The second goal is that the participants who complete the program will manifest dispositions that exemplify transformational leadership. Specific objectives include producing program completers who:
  - Build leadership capacity in others,
  - Actively promote a shared vision for improving teaching and learning,
  - Promote continuous improvement,
  - Inspire critical reflection, and
  - Promote professional learning as a life-long process.
- The third goal is that the participants who complete the program will exhibit management skills that facilitate the effective operation of the school. Specific objectives include producing program completers who feel comfortable with and adept at:
  - Communicating with students, staff, parents, and community stakeholders;
  - Addressing student discipline issues;
  - Developing effective operational plans and schedules; and
  - Understanding school division policies and regulations, organizational/school culture, facility and building management, and budget development and management.

- The fourth goal is that participants who complete the program will exhibit instructional leadership skills that lead to student academic progress and continuous school improvement. Specific objectives include producing program completers who feel comfortable with and adept at:
  - Instructional coaching;
  - Interpreting and effectively explaining curriculum goals and instructional objectives;
  - Assisting teachers to develop effective learning plans for individual students;
  - Using varied methods to monitor student progress; and
  - Implementing a systematic instructional supervision program.
- The evaluation plan includes evaluation questions focused on the operation of the AAP, including the participant selection criteria, conceptual frameworks that influenced course content, content delivery processes, and exit criteria. Other evaluation questions address the characteristics of the participants, progress toward meeting goals and objectives, stakeholder perceptions, and cost.

## Recommendation and Rationale

**Recommendation: Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program in 2018-2019 with a report provided to the School Board during fall 2019. (Responsible Group: Department of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability)**

**Rationale:** It is proposed that a comprehensive evaluation of the AAP be conducted during 2018-2019. The evaluation will focus on the most recent cohort to participate in the program because a new cohort will not be active during 2018-2019 due to the division's current staffing needs. The comprehensive evaluation will examine the operation of the program as it relates to preparing the aspiring administrators to be appointed to an assistant principal position or into other leadership roles within VBCPS. It will also examine the program's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives, including the examination of participants' professional activities and roles following their exit from the program. Having completed the evaluation readiness process, which resulted in the development and refinement of the programs goals and measurable objectives and the development of an evaluation plan, a comprehensive evaluation is now recommended.

## Background

### Program Description and Purpose

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. In short, LEAD Virginia Beach was designed to help participants prepare themselves 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*.

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 already have demonstrated leadership potential by holding leadership roles in the school (e.g., Professional Learning Community facilitator, department head, instructional leader, etc.). 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.

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. During its two-year span, the most recent cohort of approximately 25 program participants engaged in five sessions of course work per year. Each AAP session convened for two hours either from 4 to 6 p.m. or from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m., depending on the day, to avoid job-related scheduling conflicts. Facilitators from various departments and schools led these sessions, which focused on topics such as school climate and

culture, teaching and learning, continuous improvement, and organizational leadership and management. Table 1 provides an overview of the topics covered during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years for the most recent AAP cohort.

**Table 1: AAP Session Topics**

| Session Date | Topic Title  |
|--------------|--|
| 10/06/2016   | Leading Through the Myers-Briggs Type Indicators (MBTI)    |
| 10/27/2016   | Continuous Improvement: Overview of <i>Compass to 2020</i> |
| 12/08/2016   | Building School and Community Relationships                |
| 02/08/2017   | School Culture: A Foundation for Success                   |
| 03/16/2017   | Leadership, Communication, and Morale                      |
| 10/25/2017   | Collaborative Instructional Leadership                     |
| 12/13/2017   | Using Data to Improve Student Performance                  |
| 01/24/2018   | Instructional Leadership to Improve Reading and Math       |
| 02/14/2018   | Focused and Sustained Professional Learning                |
| 03/28/2018   | Student Response Teams                                     |

The 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 pre-session reading and other preparatory activity. 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. This was because VBCPS fills assistant principal vacancies on the basis of need rather than a candidate's interest. Accordingly, the program strives to maximize participants' prospects for promotion by preparing aspiring administrators to succeed at any school level.

The participants also attended a one-day summer institute on June 21, 2017 that centered on “nuts and bolts” aspects of VBCPS operations. The institute consisted of several 20- to 30-minute sessions intended to increase attendees' knowledge and familiarity. Each session was presented by an expert from a different department. They included professional growth and innovation, school division services, programs for

exceptional children, human resources, budget and finance, and media and communications.

In addition, 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, for instance, 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 from other relevant professional learning and formal course work 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 pursues 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 serves as a significant indicator of an aspiring administrator’s level of motivation and commitment to professional learning and continual improvement.

Participants who completed the program 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 4-6 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 manager and program staff. The panel members asked clarifying questions about the project during or immediately after a participant’s presentation. However, panelists did not ask participants about either their overall experience in the program or self-perceptions of their readiness for promotion to an assistant principal position.

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 varies from year to year. Rather, AAP participants who completed the program join a pool of candidates that consists not only of AAP participants but also of aspiring assistant principals who did not participate in the program.

So as not to create a “log jam” for aspiring administrators, VBCPS leadership decided that the current pool of candidates and the anticipated availability of positions did not warrant forming a new cohort during the 2018-2019 school year. As reference, no new cohort had been formed during the 2015-2016 school year, either.

## Literature Review

To provide an overall context for designing and planning an evaluation of the AAP, the Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE) conducted a review of the literature in the area of administrator preparation programs. The literature review examined professional standards for administrators, research regarding the characteristics and competencies of administrators, and program evaluations of administrator preparation programs in operation elsewhere.

The literature review found that administrator preparation programs have been undergoing a transformation during the last two decades in response to research, as well as to criticism of existing administrator preparation programs. For example, university-based programs of educational leadership have been criticized for focusing more on foundational theory than on practical competence, leaving their participants poorly prepared for the actual exigencies of serving as a public school administrator.<sup>1</sup> This is one reason why an increasing number of school districts have initiated their own leadership programs.<sup>2</sup> Such innovation is relatively new, which may explain why ORE evaluators had difficulty finding relevant research and program evaluation reports that specifically address district-based, preservice administrator preparation programs. A similar difficulty was encountered by other literature reviewers, such as Hanover Research, who refer to the amount of relevant research as “scant.”<sup>3</sup>

The literature review conducted by ORE found that the transformations in district-based administrator preparation programs tended to involve shifts in emphasis from building management skills to academic leadership.<sup>4</sup> In turn, leadership theory has begun to shift its focus from discrete sets of skills onto fluency in three leadership domains: the instructional, the relational, and the situational.<sup>5</sup> Accordingly, delivery methods have been changing from occasional in-service training sessions to extended practicum experiences and personalized mentoring.<sup>6</sup>

## Selection and Approval of Programs for Evaluation

The AAP was selected and approved for the Program Evaluation Schedule based on criteria specified in School Board Policy 6-26, adopted by the School Board on September 5, 2007. The following excerpt is from School Board Policy 6-26:

Existing programs will be evaluated based on an annual Program Evaluation Schedule which will be developed by the Program Evaluation Committee and approved by the School Board annually....On a yearly basis, the Program Evaluation Committee will present a list of programs recommended for evaluation to the Superintendent and the School Board. This listing will include the rationale for each recommendation based on an approved set of criteria. All programs will be prioritized for evaluation based on the following factors:

1. Alignment with the school division's strategic plan and School Board goals;
2. Program cost;
3. Program scale;
4. Cross-departmental interest;
5. Community/stakeholder interest in the program;
6. Availability of information on the program's effectiveness; and
7. Date of most recent evaluation.

On July 13, 2017, members of the Program Evaluation Committee reviewed and ranked a list of existing educational programs based on the criteria above. Rankings were compiled and shared with the committee at the meeting, and programs to be recommended for evaluation were determined. The AAP was recommended for inclusion on the Program Evaluation Schedule due primarily to its potential to have a large, positive impact on VBCPS reaching its goals, as well as the lack of formal evaluation by the

Department of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability (PIA) Office of Research and Evaluation (ORE). It was determined that the AAP would be scheduled for an Evaluation Readiness Report in order to define measurable goals and objectives and to develop an evaluation plan. The proposed Program Evaluation Schedule was presented to the School Board on August 15, 2017. The School Board approved the 2017-2018 Program Evaluation Schedule on September 6, 2017.

## Overview of Current Goals and

According to the LEAD Virginia Beach home page on the division's Intranet site, "the Aspiring Administrators Program is designed to identify, select, and prepare talented teachers and other instructional personnel for administration."<sup>7</sup> Other goals were not articulated, and no measurable objectives were identified.

The next section of the report describes the process undertaken to articulate goals and specify measurable objectives. In formulating the goals and objectives, the intent was to honor the program's purpose as described on the AAP webpage while also identifying critical program components and indicators of their effective implementation and successful outcomes.

## Process for Developing Revised

According to School Board Policy 6-26, for programs selected for an Evaluation Readiness Report, PIA evaluators will "assist program staff in defining measurable goals and objectives, as well as linkages with activities and outcomes. An Evaluation Readiness Report focusing on the outcomes of this process and baseline data (if available) will be presented to the Superintendent and School Board...." The process to complete an Evaluation Readiness Report began during the 2017-2018 school year with a review of existing documentation about the AAP (history, purpose, and available goals) by program evaluators from the Office of Research and Evaluation. In addition, the best practices literature and other evaluations of aspiring administrator programs were reviewed.

A meeting was held on December 21, 2017 with the AAP program manager and the ORE evaluators. The meeting focused first on the AAP's history, as well as

various operational aspects of the program. More specifically, discussion focused on when the program began as it currently operates, how many cohorts have completed the program, the status of the current cohort, the evaluative criteria that the program manager has used internally to monitor the program's success, and the short-term future of the AAP. Also discussed were the nature of the evaluation readiness process and the proposed scope of the evaluation that would be conducted during the 2018-2019 school year. It was decided that it would be advisable to create an Evaluation Readiness Committee to articulate overarching program goals and measurable objectives.

An initial meeting was held on March 6, 2018 with the AAP Program Evaluation Readiness Committee and the Office of Research and Evaluation. The committee consisted of a representative from each of the following VBCPS departments: School Leadership, Human Resources, Professional Growth and Innovation, School Division Services, Teaching and Learning, and Technology. At the start of the meeting, participants introduced themselves, explaining how they were involved with the program. The committee members then were asked to review a summary of the available information regarding the AAP's background and purpose. They then identified additional program elements that would be important to address in the evaluation plan to provide a more complete and accurate picture of the AAP.

One of the evaluators from ORE differentiated goals from objectives, whereupon the remainder of the meeting was devoted to defining goals and measurable objectives for the AAP. First, the committee members brainstormed responses to a goal-related question: "If the LEAD-AAP were successful, in general, what would success look like?" The committee members individually jotted ideas onto post-it notes, with one idea per post-it note. After approximately ten minutes, the committee members shared their ideas with the group, whereupon the ORE evaluators placed each post-it note onto large sheets of paper. When all the ideas had been shared, the group then discussed how best to cluster the post-it notes to constitute goal areas.

To define measurable objectives, a second question was then asked: "If the LEAD-AAP were successful, what specific outcomes would be expected?" The same process of brainstorming ideas onto separate post-it notes was employed. After approximately ten minutes, the committee members again shared their ideas with the group, and the post-it notes were placed onto the appropriate sheets of paper. Discussion then ensued

about how best to cluster and prioritize the objective-related post-it notes.

After the meeting, the ORE evaluators formulated 4 goals and 17 measurable objectives based on the discussion. The goals and objectives, as well as how each was worded, reflected not only the Evaluation Readiness Committee's proceedings but also VBCPS's documents. These included the VBCPS job description of assistant principals,<sup>8</sup> the rubric associated with the Disposition of Leadership component of Transformational Learning (see Appendix A), and a crosswalk document between the leadership dispositions and the three leadership domains – the instructional, the relational, and the situational (see Appendix B).

Of the four goals, the first focused on the program while the other three focused on the transformational, management, and instructional leadership traits to be developed by the program participants. The wording of each objective stated explicitly the manner in which the objective will be measured and evaluated during the evaluation process. A draft of the goals and objectives was sent to the Program Evaluation Readiness Committee for feedback before finalization.

## Revised Goals and Objectives

As a result of the evaluation readiness process, 4 goals and 17 objectives were developed. These focused on indicators of program success, as well as on AAP participants' development of specific attributes related to transformational, management, and instructional leadership.

### **Goal #1: The LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program will add qualified candidates to the pool from which VBCPS selects assistant principals.**

**Objective 1:** The AAP attracts qualified candidates to the program, as indicated by the number of applications received and the number of candidates completing the program according to program records.

**Objective 2:** The program successfully prepares participants for administrative leadership, as indicated by the proportion of vacancies filled by program participants based on data from the Department of Human Resources and the nonadministrative leadership roles assumed by program participants based on program records and survey responses.

**Objective 3:** The program is perceived as preparing participants for the role of assistant principal, as indicated by perceptions of preparation and program satisfaction levels from program completers and from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Goal #2: Participants who complete the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program will manifest dispositions that exemplify transformational leadership.**

**Objective 1:** The aspiring administrator exerts a multiplier effect by building leadership capacity in others by enabling and empowering others to act, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 2:** The aspiring administrator embodies shared leadership and actively promotes a shared vision for improving teaching and learning by strategically engaging the school community to share in learning, thinking, and decision making, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 3:** The aspiring administrator embodies change leadership and actively promotes continuous improvement and the pursuit of goals that lead to positive change in instructional practice and the learning environment, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 4:** The aspiring administrator embodies and actively promotes innovative leadership that challenges processes and inspires a shared vision where critical reflection leads to new ideas, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 5:** The aspiring administrator embodies learning leadership and actively promotes professional learning as a life-long process, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Goal #3: Participants who complete the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program will exhibit management skills that facilitate the effective operation of the school.**

**Objective 1:** The aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and is adept at communicating with students, staff, parents, and community stakeholders, as

indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 2:** The aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and is adept at addressing student discipline issues, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 3:** The aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and is adept at designing operational plans and schedules that facilitate appropriate course progression for students, as well as sufficient time for instruction, teacher planning, and collaboration, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 4:** The aspiring administrator obtains an understanding of school division policies and regulations, organizational/school culture, facility and building management, and budget development and management, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Goal #4: Participants who complete the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program will exhibit instructional leadership skills that lead to student academic progress and continuous school improvement.**

**Objective 1:** The aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and is adept at instructional coaching, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or mentor.

**Objective 2:** The aspiring administrator is able to interpret and effectively explain curriculum goals and instructional objectives to teachers, students, parents, and the community, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants

**Objective 3:** The aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and is adept at assisting teachers to develop effective learning plans for individual students, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 4:** The aspiring administrator uses varied methods to monitor students' progress toward meeting curricular goals and instructional objectives, as

indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

**Objective 5:** The aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and is adept at planning and implementing a systematic instructional supervision program that uses learning walks, observations, documentation, and follow-up conferences, as indicated by self-assessment and survey responses from supervisors and/or project consultants.

While data for program objectives will be collected in 2018-2019 as part of the proposed comprehensive evaluation, this section provides baseline data regarding the cohort of aspiring administrators that participated in the AAP during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years.

When it initially was formed at the start of the 2016-2017 school year, the cohort consisted of 25 aspiring administrators. At the end of the cohort's first year, the program manager and the Department of School Leadership (DOSL) decided to remove nine of the participants from the program because the participants were already receiving excellent on-the-job preparatory training for becoming assistant principals in their role as administrative assistants at schools.<sup>9</sup> In fact, a total of 12 AAP participants – including 7 of the 9 administrative assistants – were promoted into assistant principal positions for the 2017-2018 school year despite not completing the program. In addition, two additional participants left the program for personal reasons. Thus, at the end of the cohort's first year, only 11 of the original 25 participants remained in the program. Consequently, in a closed process, the AAP manager and DOSL selected 17 new aspiring administrators to join the cohort for its second year, raising the total number of AAP participants in 2017-2018 to 28. 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 replacements 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.

Table 2 presents the background characteristics of the 42 aspiring administrators who participated in the program during its first and/or second year, 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 serving currently as central office staff. Table 2 shows that the average years of teaching experience across the entire cohort was 13 years. Of the 42 program participants, 27 (64%) had ten years or more of teaching experience; 12 participants (29%) had between six and nine years of teaching experience; and 3 participants (7%) 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%                                |
| African American                             | 17%        | 11%                                |
| Hispanic                                     | 2%         | 3%                                 |
| Other Ethnicity                              | 0%         | 3%                                 |
| Percentage With Advanced Degrees             | 95%        | 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 2 of the 42 participants (95%) held an advanced degree, with 15 (36%) having earned either an Ed.D. or Ed.S. degree. Four universities accounted for two-thirds (67%) of the advanced degrees: Old Dominion University (33%), George Washington University (14%), Regent University (10%), and Virginia Tech (10%). 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.

## Evaluation Plan and Recommendation

According to School Board Policy 6-26, an Evaluation Readiness Report will focus on the outcomes of the evaluation readiness process and “will be presented to the Superintendent and School Board with a recommendation regarding future evaluation plans for

the program. If appropriate, based on the evaluation readiness process, the program will be scheduled for a comprehensive evaluation.” In accordance with this policy, a comprehensive evaluation of the AAP is recommended and the proposed plan of action for the evaluation is described below.

## Scope and Rationale of Proposed Evaluation

The AAP evaluation will primarily be formative in nature, gathering information to inform program development and improvement. Secondly, the evaluation will also serve the summative purpose of determining the effectiveness of the program. More specifically, the comprehensive evaluation will provide information on five areas related to the AAP.

### 1. Implementation/Operation

➤ Rationale: It is standard practice within an evaluation framework to examine issues related to implementation.

### 2. Characteristics of AAP participants (demographics, current job assignments, personnel qualifications)

➤ Rationale: Identifying characteristics of staff members participating in the AAP will enable better understanding the population of aspiring administrators.

### 3. Meeting Goals and Objectives

➤ Rationale: Assessing progress made toward meeting the program-related and leadership goals and objectives will help to determine the extent to which the program is successful. Rates of promotion will be assessed and job performance on relevant indicators of effective leadership will be measured.

### 4. Stakeholder Perceptions

➤ Rationale: Surveying the perceptions of AAP participants and of their supervisors/project consultants will identify program strengths and possible areas for program improvement.

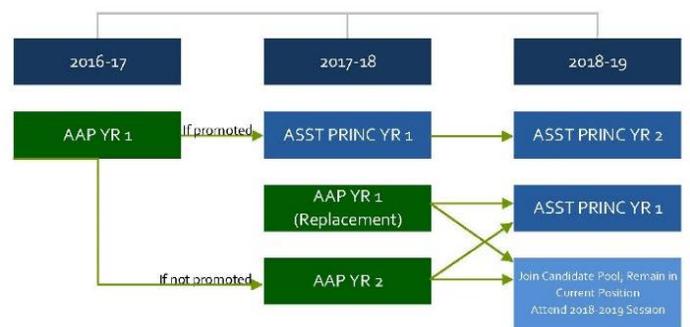
### 5. Cost

➤ Rationale: Determining the additional cost of the AAP will provide information about the benefit of the program in relation to its overall cost.

## Proposed Evaluation Method

Because no new AAP cohort would begin the program during the 2018-2019 school year, the proposed evaluation will focus on the most recent AAP cohort. As explained previously and as illustrated in Figure 1, some cohort members participated in the program during the 2016-2017 and/or 2017-2018 school years while other cohort members joined the cohort as replacement members during 2017-2018.

Figure 1: The History of the 2016-2017 AAP Cohort



At the end of the 2016-2017 school year, after just one year in the program, several program participants were promoted to assistant principal positions. They were replaced by aspiring administrators. Some participants completed the entire two-year program in one year during 2017-2018. The others will continue to participate in sessions during 2018-2019. This led to the existence of six distinct groups of participants, based on the combination of time in the program and whether or not they were promoted into an assistant principal position. These six groups are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Aspiring Administrators Participant Groups**

| Group | Years in Program | Participation Years | Years as Assistant Principal* |
|-------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| I     | 1                | 2016-17             | 2                             |
| II    | 2                | 2016-17 and 2017-18 | 1                             |
| III   | 1                | 2017-18             | 1                             |
| IV    | 2                | 2016-17 and 2017-18 | 0                             |
| V     | 1                | 2017-18             | 0                             |
| VI    | 2                | 2017-18 and 2018-19 | 0                             |

\* By the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

Examining the perceptions and outcomes of these six groups may yield important information to influence the program's future design and implementation.

The evaluation will utilize mixed-methods methodology to address each of the evaluation questions, as well as the progress that the program made toward attaining its goals and objectives. The majority of quantitative data will be extracted from the VBCPS human resources database, including staff demographics and personnel data. To gather perception data, surveys will be administered to all key stakeholder groups, especially program participants and the experienced administrators who helped them with their projects or supervised them when they were promoted. Additional qualitative data will come from open-ended survey items, as well as from interviews and focus groups when appropriate and feasible. Further, information garnered from AAP documentation and from the best practices research literature will also be utilized in the evaluation.

### Evaluation Design and Questions

To the greatest extent possible, the proposed evaluation methods align with information in the literature about best practices in the evaluation of aspiring administrators programs. The purpose, as stated previously, is to provide information about program processes, participants, and perceptions to the program manager and other decision makers about the AAP's operation and effects. In addition, to help measure the program's effectiveness, the proposed evaluation will compare the program participants with the nonprogram participants who were newly

appointed assistant principals during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years.

The evaluation questions to be addressed in the 2018-2019 comprehensive evaluation, which will be submitted to the School Board in fall 2019, are listed below.

- 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 course work?
  - c. What were the processes for selecting and preparing the supervisors and/or project consultants who guided the participants' portfolio and project?
  - d. 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?
  - e. What were the instructional methods and processes for delivering program content to the participants?
  - f. What were the processes for formatively monitoring the participants' progress over the course of the program?
  - g. 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, program instructors, school-based supervisors/project consultants, and school principals)?
5. What was the additional cost of the AAP to the school division during the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years?

Table 4 outlines the process of collecting data to address Evaluation Question 3 noted above. For reference, the goals and objectives can be found on page 10.

**Table 4: Data Collection Process for Program Objectives**

| Program Objective            | Data Used to Evaluate Progress Toward Meeting Objectives   | Measure   | Data Source                                |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>Goal 1</b><br>Objective 1 | Number of applicants to the program, number of accepted applicants, number of participants who completed the program.  | Acceptance rate: accepted applicants/total applicants.<br><br>Completion rate: completers/program participants.   | AAP records                                |
| <b>Goal 1</b><br>Objective 2 | Number of administrative vacancies, number of administrative vacancies filled by program participants, number of participants assuming greater roles and responsibilities due to their participating in the program. | Promotion rate: promoted participants/total number of vacancies.<br><br>Leadership roles other than assistant principal: total number of program participants reporting in participant survey that they assumed "other leadership roles" (not an AP position) due to their program participation. | AAP and HR records<br><br>Survey responses |
| <b>Goal 1</b><br>Objective 3 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the program prepares participants for the role of assistant principal.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing.<br>Percentage of respondents feeling satisfied.   | Survey                                     |
| <b>Goal 2</b><br>Objective 1 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator builds leadership capacity in others.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing.   | Survey                                     |
| <b>Goal 2</b><br>Objective 2 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator embodies shared leadership.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing.   | Survey                                     |
| <b>Goal 2</b><br>Objective 3 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator embodies change leadership.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing.   | Survey                                     |
| <b>Goal 2</b><br>Objective 4 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator embodies innovative leadership.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing.   | Survey                                     |

| Program Objective     | Data Used to Evaluate Progress Toward Meeting Objectives   | Measure                             | Data Source |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| Goal 2<br>Objective 5 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator embodies learning leadership.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 3<br>Objective 1 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and adept at communicating with students, staff, parents, and community stakeholders.  | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 3<br>Objective 2 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and adept at addressing student discipline issues.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 3<br>Objective 3 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and adept at designing operational plans and schedules.  | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 3<br>Objective 4 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator understands school division policies and regulations, organization/school culture, facility and building management, and budget development and management. | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 4<br>Objective 1 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and adept at instructional coaching.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 4<br>Objective 2 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator is able to interpret and effectively explain curriculum goals and instructional objectives.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 4<br>Objective 3 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and adept at assisting teachers to develop effective learning plans for individual students.   | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 4<br>Objective 4 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator uses varied methods to monitor students' progress.  | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |
| Goal 4<br>Objective 5 | Data regarding perceptions from participants and supervisors/project consultants that the aspiring administrator feels comfortable with and adept at implementing a systematic instructional supervision program.  | Percentage of respondents agreeing. | Survey      |

## Results of the Evaluation

- The AAP, which is the first tier of the comprehensive LEAD Virginia Beach plan of succession, is intended to identify, select, and prepare instructional personnel to become effective assistant principals.
- The AAP evaluation readiness committee and staff from PIA's Office of Research and Evaluation met to discuss the evaluation process. Measurable goals and objectives were developed, along with a proposed evaluation plan for the AAP during the 2018-2019 school year.
- The first goal is that the AAP will add qualified applicants to the candidate pool from which VBCPS selects assistant principals. Specific objectives include:
  - Having the program attract a qualified pool of aspiring administrators.
  - Having the program successfully prepare them for administrative leadership.
  - Having the program and its effectiveness be favorably perceived.
- The second goal is that the participants who complete the program will manifest dispositions that exemplify transformational leadership. Specific objectives include producing program completers who:
  - Build leadership capacity in others,
  - Actively promote a shared vision for improving teaching and learning,
  - Promote continuous improvement,
  - Inspire critical reflection, and
  - Promote professional learning as a life-long process.
- The third goal is that the participants who complete the program will exhibit management skills that facilitate the effective operation of the school. Specific objectives include producing program completers who feel comfortable with and adept at:
  - Communicating with students, staff, parents, and community stakeholders;
  - Addressing student discipline issues;
  - Developing effective operational plans and schedules; and
  - Understanding school division policies and regulations, organizational/school culture, facility and building management, and budget development and management.
- The fourth goal is that participants who complete the program will exhibit instructional leadership skills that lead to student academic progress and continuous school improvement. Specific objectives include producing program completers who feel comfortable with and adept at:
  - Instructional coaching;
  - Interpreting and effectively explaining curriculum goals and instructional objectives;
  - Assisting teachers to develop effective learning plans for individual students;
  - Using varied methods to monitor student progress; and
  - Implementing a systematic instructional supervision program.
- The evaluation plan includes evaluation questions focused on the operation of the AAP, including the participant selection criteria, conceptual frameworks that influenced course content, content delivery processes, and exit criteria. Other evaluation questions address the characteristics of the participants, progress toward meeting goals and objectives, stakeholder perceptions, and cost.

## Recommendation and Rationale

**Recommendation: Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the LEAD Aspiring Administrators Program in 2018-2019 with a report provided to the School Board during fall 2019.** *(Responsible Group: Department of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability)*

**Rationale:** It is proposed that a comprehensive evaluation of the AAP be conducted during 2018-2019. The evaluation will focus on the most recent cohort to participate in the program because a new cohort will not be active during 2018-2019 due to the division's current staffing needs. The comprehensive evaluation will examine the operation of the program as it relates to preparing the aspiring administrators to be appointed to an assistant principal position or into other leadership roles within VBCPS. It will also examine the program's progress toward meeting its goals and objectives, including the examination of participants' professional activities and roles following their exit from the program. Having completed the evaluation readiness process, which resulted in the development and refinement of the programs goals and measurable objectives and the development of an evaluation plan, a comprehensive evaluation is now recommended.

## 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.



### 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.

## Appendix B: Dispositions of Leadership/Leadership Domains Crosswalk

| Transformational Learning Disposition - Shared Leadership  |  |
|--|--|
| Probing Question   | Aligned Leadership Domain Indicator  |
| How do you utilize digital data to drive instruction that is personalized?   | <b>Instructional:</b><br>Fosters transparency of multiple sources of data on student progress with teachers; supports the planning of targeted next steps and scaffolded support for teachers to address student needs.                                |
| How do you know that shared leadership is transforming learning in your school to personalize learning?              | <b>Relational:</b><br>Creates an environment of trust, honest and respectful dialogue and discussion, accountability, the collaborative study of results and the collegial interchange among professionals.  |
| What is your plan for professional learning to grow your staff in the area of technology integration and innovation? | <b>Relational:</b><br>Intellectual risks are applauded and mistakes are embraced as learning opportunities; alternative viewpoints are sought and expected; posing questions and seeking feedback are consistently modeled and the collaborative norm. |
| How do you utilize “power users” on each grade level or in each content area to build capacity in the building?      | <b>Relational:</b><br>Models and expects intellectual inquiry and curiosity, promotes data driven feedback. Collaborative structures for adults to observe and learn from each other are embedded and consistent.                                      |

| Transformational Learning Disposition – Change Leadership   |  |
|---|--|
| Probing Question  | Aligned Leadership Domain Indicator  |
| How do you encourage PLCs to focus on the use of technology as an integrated part of the instructional conversation?                              | <b>Situational:</b><br>Consistently explains the reasons for the change; the process for the roll out of the change; the losses and gains to anticipate; the support and resources which will be offered as the change is navigated; and emotional support throughout the process. |
| How do you motivate teachers to support their colleagues?   | <b>Relational:</b><br>Models seeking to understand and taking the perspective of another; withholds judgment and practices active listening; recognizes emotion in other people and seeks to provide emotional support.  |
| How do you proactively build a culture in which students, teachers, parents feel both empowered and accountable to themselves and to one another? | <b>Relational:</b><br>Creates an environment of trust, honest and respectful dialogue and discussion, accountability, the collaborative study of results and the collegial interchange among professionals.  |

### Transformational Learning Disposition – Change Leadership

| Probing Question   | Aligned Leadership Domain Indicator   |
|--|---|
| How do you encourage sharing across grade levels and/or content areas in your school?      | <b>Relational:</b><br>Creates an environment of trust, honest and respectful dialogue and discussion, accountability, the collaborative study of results and the collegial interchange among professionals.             |
| How do you build a culture of trust and encourage relationship building across the school? | <b>Relational:</b><br>Models seeking to understand and taking the perspective of another; withholds judgment and practices active listening; recognizes emotion in other people and seeks to provide emotional support. |

### Transformational Learning Disposition – Innovative Leadership

| Probing Question   | Aligned Leadership Domain Indicator   |
|--|---|
| How have you developed a culture in which teachers are willing to take risks with innovative instructional practices?              | <b>Relational:</b><br>Intellectual risks are applauded and mistakes are embraced as learning opportunities; alternative viewpoints are sought and expected; posing questions and seeking feedback are consistently modeled and the collaborative norm.  |
| How have you coached instructional staff to use innovative instructional practices for the purpose of increasing student learning? | <b>Instructional:</b><br>Provides data driven feedback. Consistently poses coaching questions to deepen reflection and investigation of teaching methodology to increase student achievement.<br><br><b>Situational:</b><br>Consistently communicates with faculty to address a variety of conference purposes, and consistently matches the conference skill and type with the appropriate context and teacher need. |
| What have you done to develop a systematic way of recognizing teachers for effective use of innovative instructional practices?    | <b>Relational:</b><br>Intellectual risks are applauded and mistakes are embraced as learning opportunities; alternative viewpoints are sought and expected; posing questions and seeking feedback are consistently modeled and the collaborative norm.  |
| How are you soliciting feedback from stakeholders regarding the innovative instructional practices your school has implemented?    | <b>Relational:</b><br>Creates an environment of trust, honest and respectful dialogue and discussion, accountability, the collaborative study of results and the collegial interchange among professionals  |

**Transformational Learning Disposition – Innovative Leadership**

| <b>Probing Question</b>   | <b>Aligned Leadership Domain Indicator</b>   |
|---|--|
| How are you intentionally providing time for reflection regarding the use of innovative instructional practices?                          | <p><b>Relational:</b><br/>Intellectual risks are applauded and mistakes are embraced as learning opportunities; alternative viewpoints are sought and expected; posing questions and seeking feedback are consistently modeled and the collaborative norm.</p> <p><b>Instructional:</b><br/>Provides data driven feedback. Consistently poses coaching questions to deepen reflection and investigation of teaching methodology to increase student achievement.</p> |
| What short-term and long-term goals has your team developed to support innovative instructional practices?                                | <p><b>Situational:</b><br/>Strategically thinks through all implications (students, parents, faculty, district office) before a complex decision is made; solicits input and thought partnership in thinking through decisions with multiple implications.</p>   |
| How do you recognize exemplary innovative practices in ways that build capacity, empowering others to adopt those best practices as well? | <p><b>Relational:</b><br/>Intellectual risks are applauded and mistakes are embraced as learning opportunities; alternative viewpoints are sought and expected; posing questions and seeking feedback are consistently modeled and the collaborative norm.</p> <p><b>Instructional:</b><br/>Provides data driven feedback. Consistently poses coaching questions to deepen reflection and investigation of teaching methodology to increase student achievement.</p> |
| What innovative practices have you personally implemented to model innovative instructional practices?                                    | <p><b>Relational:</b><br/>Models and expects intellectual inquiry and curiosity, promotes data driven feedback. Collaborative structures for adults to observe and learn from each other are embedded and consistent.</p>  |
| How have you structured time for stakeholders to collaborate on the development of innovative instructional practices?                    | <p><b>Relational:</b><br/>Creates an environment of trust, honest and respectful dialogue and discussion, accountability, the collaborative study of results and the collegial interchange among professionals.</p>  |

### Transformational Learning Disposition – Learning Leadership

| Probing Question   | Aligned Leadership Domain Indicator  |
|--|--|
| How have you grown as an instructional leader in the area of technology?   | <p><b>Instructional:</b><br/>Fosters transparency of multiple sources of data on student progress with teachers; supports the planning of targeted next steps and scaffolded support for teachers to address student needs.</p>  |
| In what ways are you participating in instructional professional development with your teachers?   | <p><b>Instructional:</b><br/>Fosters transparency of multiple sources of data on student progress with teachers; supports the planning of targeted next steps and scaffolded support for teachers to address student needs.</p>  |
| How are you providing teachers that are less than technologically proficient the proper differentiated professional development?                                     | <p><b>Instructional:</b><br/>Diagnoses mediocrity with specificity and consistently provides appropriate supervisory response to each type of mediocrity (lack of content and planning expertise; limiting beliefs; impact of external influences).</p> <p><b>Situational:</b><br/>Consistently communicates with faculty to address a variety of conference purposes, and consistently matches the conference skill and type with the appropriate context and teacher need.</p> |
| How are you using SAMR to assist with staff conversations and to reflect on growth?  | <p><b>Instructional:</b><br/>Provides data driven feedback. Consistently poses coaching questions to deepen reflection and investigation of teaching methodology to increase student achievement.</p>  |
| How does the administrative leadership team exemplify and articulate transformative uses of technology (i.e., pd delivery, staff meetings, communication with staff) | <p><b>Relational:</b><br/>Models and expects intellectual inquiry and curiosity, promotes data driven feedback. Collaborative structures for adults to observe and learn from each other are embedded and consistent.</p>  |

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Hanover Research (2015): *Principal and Superintendent Preparation Programs: Criticisms of the Status Quo and Innovations in the Field*, p.3: Arlington, VA.
- <sup>2</sup> Hanover Research (2014): *Best Practices for Developing Campus Leaders*, p. 6: Arlington, VA.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 8.
- <sup>4</sup> Davis, S. H., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2012). "Innovative principal preparation programs: What works and how we know." *Planning and Changing*, 43(1/2), pp. 25–45.
- <sup>5</sup> Source: [http://jbsq.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/June\\_2014\\_9.pdf](http://jbsq.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/June_2014_9.pdf)
- <sup>6</sup> Source: <https://www.sreb.org/publication/good-principals-arent-born-theyre-mentored>
- <sup>7</sup> Source: <https://www.vbcps.com/depts/OL/Pages/LEADVirginiaBeach.aspx>
- <sup>8</sup> Source: <https://www.vbschools.com/cms/one.aspx?portalId=78094&pageId=236631#A>
- <sup>9</sup> T. Ferrell, Personal Communication, March 8, 2018.

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